

2013 Annual Report



Sligo County Council
Comhairle Chontae Shligigh

Sligo County Council

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Introduction by Cathaoirleach Councillor Pat McGrath



2013 was a difficult year for all Local Authorities, as they were faced with the challenge of providing a high level of service in the context of reducing staff numbers and financial resources. Nevertheless, Sligo County Council can point to a number of achievements across all directorates, with many important projects delivered or progressed in conjunction with other key agencies or the local communities we serve.

The 'Gathering 2013' was a remarkable illustration of community spirit and endeavour, as local groups showed great ambition and enterprise to host events throughout the County. Nationally, the initiative succeeded in attracting in the region of 325,000 additional overseas visitors to Ireland, generating €170 million in revenue. The people of County Sligo can be proud of their contribution to this initiative, and credit is also due to the Council's 'Local Gathering Steering Group' for coordinating and supporting the various activities.

Sligo County Council continued to make significant investment in its road network. In 2013, €18.3 Million was allocated to improve and maintain the county's road network and many other major projects were progressed.

The process of reforming local government in 2014 will offer new challenges, as the changes to the electoral areas will impact on the way local authorities prioritise and deliver their services. This is a process that will have implications for every household in the county, but I believe in the capacity and will of our local communities to work in active partnership with **their** Council through this period of transformation and change.

Councillor Pat McGrath

Cathaoirleach

Chief Executive's foreword

2014 saw the introduction of a major reform of Irish local Government, with the abolition of the Borough Council, and the establishment of a new 18-member plenary Council made up of two new Municipal Districts. The Council has assumed a new responsibility in the area of economic planning and development, and we will work in active partnership with key local agencies to ensure we deliver on this important new agenda.

The undoubted highlight of 2014 was the outstanding success of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2014, the country's largest celebration of Irish Music and culture. Over 300,000 visitors were welcomed to Sligo for what was widely acknowledged to be one of the most successful and enjoyable events in Fleadh history. The people of Sligo wholeheartedly embraced the Fleadh, with exceptional support from local businesses and schools, voluntary and statutory agencies, arts organisations and sports clubs – it was a concerted community effort with everyone giving of their best. The long-term legacy of the Fleadh in terms of tourism and the local economy has yet to be quantified, but it will be significant, and it certainly represented a unique window to promote and market Sligo to a global audience.

One of the key challenges of the Council in 2014 was to provide the optimum level of service to the people of Sligo in the context of very difficult financial conditions. We will continue to engage with the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government in 2015 with the objective of agreeing a long term, sustainable Financial Plan.

Ciarán Hayes
Chief Executive

Council Members

SLIGO/DRUMCLIFFE ELECTORAL AREA	
<p>Cllr Veronica Cawley Independent: Elected 2004 St. Martin, Rathbraughan, Sligo. 071 9170267/ 087 6494723 cawleyveronica@eircom.net</p>	<p>Cllr Patsy Barry Fianna Fáil: Elected 1999 Grange, Co Sligo. 071 9163168/ 087 2727588 barrypatsy@eircom.net</p>
<p>Cllr Hubert Keaney Fine Gael: Elected 2009 Drum Road, Rathcormac, Co Sligo. 071 9141090/ 087 6892610 hubertkeaney@hotmail.com</p>	<p>Cllr Jude Devins Fianna Fáil: Elected 2004 25 Beechwood Court, Ballytivnan, Sligo. 087 2021566 jude.devins@gmail.com</p>
<p>Cllr Matt Lyons Fine Gael: Elected 2009 5 Rosehill, Sligo. 087 6796519 mattlyons@live.ie</p>	<p>Cllr Joe Leonard Fine Gael: Elected 1985 Cloonaghbawn, Ballinfull, Co Sligo. 071 9163443/ 087 9733773 joeleonardis@gmail.com</p>

SLIGO/STRANDHILL ELECTORAL AREA	
<p>Cllr Declan Bree Independent: Elected 1974 1 High Street, Sligo. 071 9145490/ 087 2470802 dbree@eircom.net</p>	<p>Cllr Jim McGarry Labour: Elected 1991 Oakfield, Sligo. 071 9161515 / 086 6007575 mcgarryjim@eircom.net</p>
<p>Cllr Deirdre Healy McGowan Fianna Fáil: Elected 2004 Breeogue, Knocknahur, Co Sligo. 071 9168604/ 087 9968248 info@oceanwavelodge.com</p>	<p>Cllr Sean MacManus Sinn Féin: Elected 1999 11 The Green, Ocean Links, Strandhill, Co Sligo. 071 9161460/ 086 8198456 seanmacmanus@eircom.net</p>
<p>Cllr Aoiffe McLoughlin Fine Gael: Co-opted March 2011 3 Knocknarea View, Top Road, Strandhill, Sligo. 087 6168514 aoiffemcloughlin@gmail.com</p>	<p>Cllr David Cawley Fine Gael: Co-Opted July 2011 12 The Orchard, Kevinsfort, Strandhill Rd, Sligo. 071 9152854 086 6047300 cllrdavidcawley@eircom.net</p>
<p>Cllr Rosaleen O'Grady Fianna Fáil: Elected 2009 1 The Orchard, Kevinsfort, Sligo. 086 8060171 ogradyrosaleen@eircom.net</p>	

DROMORE ELECTORAL AREA

Cllr Mary Barrett Fine Gael: Elected 1991 "Derk House", Skreen, Co Sligo. 071 9166753/ 086 8102738 barrettmary@eircom.net	Cllr Joseph Queenan Fianna Fáil: Elected 1999 Lacknaslieva, Enniscrone, Co Sligo. 096 36449/ 087 6214422 queenanjoseph@eircom.net
Cllr Michael Clarke Independent: Elected 2009 Knocknacullen, Dromore West, Co Sligo. 087 7708691 michaelclarkesales@eircom.net	Cllr Dara Mulvey Fine Gael: Elected 2009 Rockfield, Coolaney, Co Sligo. 087 6885050 dfmulvey@o2.ie

BALLYMOTE ELECTORAL AREA

Cllr Martin Baker Fianna Fáil: Elected 2004 2 Ardkeerin, Riverstown, Co Sligo. 071 9127472/9165650/ 086 1608334; cllrbaker@gmail.com	Cllr Pat McGrath Fine Gael: Elected 2004 Ardnaglass, Ballymote, Co Sligo. 071 9183225/ 087 6702792 pjmcgrath@unison.ie
Cllr Gerard Mullaney Fine Gael: Elected 2004 Highwood, Kilmastranny, Boyle, Co Sligo. 086 8221995 mullaneygerard@eircom.net	Cllr Thomas Collery Fine Gael: Elected 2009 Dromore, Ballintogher, Co Sligo. 086 0514763 thomascollery@hotmail.com

TUBBERCURRY ELECTORAL AREA

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	Cllr Gerry Murray Fine Gael: Elected 1967 Calterane, Gurteen, Co Sligo. 071 9182016/ 087 6862147 cllrgerrymurray@eircom.net

Strategic Policy Committee Members

SPC 1 – Economic Development and Planning Policy

1. Councillor Jim McGarry – Chair
2. Councillor Veronica Cawley
3. Councillor Thomas Collery
4. Councillor Deirdre Healy McGowan
5. Councillor Matt Lyons
6. Councillor Rosaleen O’Grady
7. Councillor Sean MacManus
8. Mr Gerard Queenan – Farming Pillar
9. Mr Tom Currid – Business Pillar
10. Ms Tracy Godfrey – Environmental Pillar
11. Mr Francis Flanagan – Community Representative
12. Ms Maura McCormack – Community Representative

SPC 2 – Environmental Policy

1. Councillor Pat McGrath - Chair
2. Councillor Mary Barrett
3. Councillor Hubert Keaney
4. Councillor David Cawley
5. Councillor Aoiffe McLoughlin
6. Councillor Dara Mulvey
7. Councillor Marcella McGarry
8. Mr Gerard Queenan – Farming Pillar
9. Mr John Cawley – Trade Union Pillar
10. Mr Guy Marsden – Environmental Pillar
11. Mr Brendan Queenan – Community Representative
12. Ms Kathleen McGuinness – Community Representative

SPC 3 – Transportation and Infrastructural Policy

1. Councillor Patsy Barry - Chair
2. Councillor Michael Clarke
3. Councillor Jude Devins
4. Councillor Margaret Gormley
5. Councillor Jerry Lundy
6. Councillor Gerry Murray
7. Mr Tom Ford - Business Pillar
8. Mr Chris Davis – Community Representative
9. Mr Michael Rochford – Community Representative

SPC 4 – Housing Policy, Social and Cultural Development

1. Councillor Gerard Mullaney - Chair
2. Councillor Martin Baker
3. Councillor Declan Bree
4. Councillor Michael Fleming
5. Councillor Joe Leonard
6. Councillor Joe Queenan
7. Mr Trevor McDaid – Business Pillar
8. Mr Joe McDonagh – Trade Union Pillar
9. Ms Sharon Boles – Community Representative
10. Ms Helen Rochford Brennan

*Housing,
Social & Corporate Affairs,
Emergency Services,
Community & Enterprise
& Arts*



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 Tenant Purchase Scheme, and various Loan options.
- Provision of alternatives to Social Housing such as Rental Accommodation Scheme

Outlined below are some of the specific Housing Services that Sligo County Council provides.

- Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability, Housing Aid for Older People and Mobility Aids Housing Grant Scheme,
- Provision of social housing under traditional design and build and open market acquisitions.
- Loans for house purchase,
- Mortgage allowance scheme for tenants surrendering local authority or rental subsidy accommodation and purchasing or building a house for their own occupation,
- Maintenance, and management of local authority housing and traveller accommodation,
- Rental accommodation scheme,
- “Tenant Purchase” sale of local authority houses to tenants
- Support for the provision of social housing projects by voluntary housing bodies under the Capital Assistance and Rental Subsidy schemes,
- Delivery of accommodation services for homeless people,
- Inspection and enforcement of private rented accommodation

Housing Waiting list /Assessment:

In 2013, 435 households were approved for social housing support with Sligo County Council.

The number of households on the waiting list has dropped from 2012 figures for the following reasons:

1. Households currently availing of the Rental Accommodation Scheme and tenants with Voluntary Housing Bodies are in receipt of social housing support and therefore do not have a requirement to remain on the housing list.

2. Re-assessment in accordance with the Social Housing Assessment Regulations 2011 (as amended) in order to determine eligibility and need for social housing support.
3. Due to the introduction of the Social Housing Assessment Regulations 2011 (as amended) some households may be deemed ineligible or determined as not to be in need of social housing support.

SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL				
Housing Applications				
	No Received	Valid Applications Received	Applications Awaiting Validation	Invalid Applications Returned to applicants
January	20	18	0	2
February	24	16	0	8
March	7	2	1	4
April	23	14	2	7
May	30	20	0	10
June	30	12	0	18
July	29	22	0	7
August	27	18	0	9
September	33	24	0	9
October	33	18	0	15
November	20	15	0	5
December	26	22	0	4
TOTAL	302	201	3	98

This task which is continually on-going involves writing to existing households and updating files to ensure they are re-assessed in accordance with these regulations. There is a responsibility on Sligo County Council to ensure a household is *qualified* in accordance with these regulations before making an offer of allocation to it.

The Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2009 defines social housing support as accommodation provided under any of the following:

- Rented Local Authority Accommodation.
- Rental Accommodation Scheme. -RAS
- Approved Housing Bodies i.e. Voluntary/Co-Operative Housing Bodies
- Long Term Leasing Initiative

The housing list is constantly monitored and reviewed by the housing section and it will continue to prioritize those households most in need of social housing support.

SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL 2013									
Offers of Tenancy	Allocations	Transfers	House Swaps	LA House	Leased Houses	Accepted	%	Refused	%
114	97	16	0	109	5	83	73	31	27

Rental Accommodation Scheme:

During 2013 a total of 20 RAS contracts were secured for Sligo County Council

Statistically, the breakdown of the new clients in RAS for 2013 was as follows:

- Couples with children 3
- Separated with children 10
- Single 7

There were at end of 2013, 325 applicants advised to the Local Authority who qualify for RAS to be dealt with.

As RAS is in place now for a number of years, contracts continually come up for renewal with 17 no in 2013.

Housing Stock & Maintenance

The maintenance budgets due to their reductions in recent years have allowed little in the way of planned maintenance or upgrade works to stock concentrating mainly on emergency repair requests and health and safety issues arising.

Tenants are encouraged to take responsibility for the repair requests which fall within their own responsibility under the Tenant Handbook.

The Internal Capital Receipts funds and the Energy efficiency /Fabric Upgrade grant aid received for the Dept in recent years has contributed greatly to the upkeep of stock particularly in times when the standard maintenance budget has been in decline.

Repair requests for the year 2013:

Total Valid Received	614
Total Valid Completed	610

Housing Stock Figures

Sligo County Council has a Housing Stock of 1080 units.

Capital Programme

2013 saw the purchase of 3 houses and the demolition, tidying, fencing and greening of unsafe and rubble areas. The main scheme to proceed in the county for 2014 will be a continuation of this type of work to Connolly Park. A submission was sent to the Department seek approval to continue with phase 3 of the works which is the continued

demolition, tidying, fencing and greening of the sites of the houses in Sligo County Councils ownership/being purchased.

Energy Efficiency/Retrofitting of social stock - under this scheme the council has carried out energy efficiency combined with upgrade works for the past number of years to stock and in total to 196 units in 2013. Indications are that the fund will continue in 2014. The works concerned are to cover basic fabric improvement to ensure that the social housing stock will have as a minimum cavity wall and attic insulation. It is to yield positive outcomes in terms of carbon savings, improved comfort levels and also in creating and sustaining jobs. The programme is assisted by the 'participating energy suppliers'. The works include roof and cavity wall insulation, draught proofing and BER certification.

Traveller Accommodation - The Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009 -2013 concluded at end of 2013. The Programme for 2014 - 2018 will be considered at the March meeting of the Council and is to be adopted by 30th April 14.

Homeless services - There has been quite a lot of activity in 2013 in the area of delivery of Homeless Services in the County and North West Region as a whole (Sligo/Leitrim/Donegal) over recent years culminating in a number of changes taking place over 2013. This has come about primarily due to the provisions in the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 in placing the Regional approach to delivery of homeless services on a statutory basis and empowering local authorities to adopt Joint Plans for their regions and also as an administrative and management tool of the Department to have scarce resources administered more efficiently and effectively.

Housing Grants: there are 3 grants available to applicants i.e. Housing Adaption Grant for People with a Disability, Scheme of Housing Aid for Older People (over 65) and Mobility Aids Grant Scheme.

A total of 59 Grants were approved during 2013. The processing of applications took place in accordance with the budget allocated on a county at large approach.

The Department in December 2013 introduced amendments as to how new applications are to be processed from 1 Jan 2014 onwards. This relates to changes in Income thresholds and maximum levels of grants to apply.

Private Rented Tenancies Inspections - The Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations apply to all rented properties with the exception of houses let for the purpose of a holiday, Housing Authority demountable houses and communal type accommodation provided by the Health Services Executive and certain approved non-profit or voluntary bodies. With the exception of Article 8, the Regulations also apply to houses let by Housing Authorities. The Regulations specify requirements in relation to a range of matters such as structural repair, absence of damp and rot, sanitary facilities, heating, fire safety, light and safety of gas and electrical supply.

In 2013 a total of 314 inspections of private rented dwellings were carried out

PRTB Inspections 2013	Sligo County Council
Dual PRTB/RAS	63
General PRTB	61
Dual PRTB/Leasing	0
Dual PRTB/Social housing	190
Inspection Totals	314

Generally, the units inspected were of a good standard however, 154 Improvement Notices were issued in the County Area to cover non-compliance issues. Improvement notices generally were issued to remedy items such as lack of fire blankets and ventilation. The penalties for non-compliance with the Regulations is a fine of €5,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or both, and the fine for each day of a continuing offence is €400.

Radon

The Local Authority as part of the annual review of Radon standards in stock carried out 138 inspections in 2014. They were checked against acceptable background Radon level in accordance with the Building Regulations - (Max. acceptable level of Radon in domestic dwellings: 200 Becquerel/m³). While the testing for carbon-monoxide is not mandatory the council as part of its checklist for re-letting of houses automatically installs a carbon monoxide detector as part of pre-letting works.

Estate Management Programme:

A major focus is put on estate management. The Housing Section has been developing a Data Recording & Management System to capture various activities in the Estate Management remit for Sligo. This means that all information and contact relating to estate management issues is recorded, monitored, reviewed and used to resolve issues identified in the new System. Data being recorded and actioned upon include inter alia complaints, reports of anti-social behavior, nuisance, litter dumping in council estates and support needs of tenants.

Although in its infancy, early indications are that this new system will be an effective resource for the councils in effectively responding to correspondences and in the efficient early resolving of issues arising in council estates.

The programme encompasses the management of our stock, liaison with tenants across a range of issues to promote good estate management practice including delivering pre-tenancy courses, assistance to new tenancies moving in, interface between repairs services and tenants, support to residents' groups within their respective areas, and on-going liaison between tenants and council in so far as resources permit.

As part of the Estate Management Programme the council has in place a **Tenancy Support Unit**.

The Tenancy Support Unit has four aims:

- To identify factors that jeopardize local authority tenancies
- To develop or strengthen support mechanisms to address same
- To ensure tenancy sustainment underpins the work of the local authority as a whole.
- To have an integrated approach to skills exchange and informal training.

Land Aggregation Scheme:

Sligo County Council had lands at Ballintogher, Tubbercurry and Lisnalurg included in the scheme.

Differential Rents Scheme

Local authorities charge rent for their accommodation under section 58 of the Housing Act 1966. Responsibility for setting local authority rents has been devolved to individual city and county managers since 1986, with the result that throughout the country there is now wide variation in rent levels, and the method of their calculation, for dwellings funded wholly by the Exchequer. Section 31 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2009 facilitates significant harmonisation in rents charged nationally while providing the elected members of local councils with some discretion in setting rent parameters in their areas. Harmonisation will be achieved through regulations that will be made in the period following enactment of the amending Act.

The intention of the new framework is to charge a base rent for each household member, plus a differential rent based on a proportion of net household income in excess of a threshold which varies according to household composition. Under section 31 of the 2009 Act, individual housing authorities are also empowered in their rent schemes to include charges in the rent relating to the costs of works and services provided to the dwellings under the Housing Acts. The regulations will provide for a transitional period to allow for a phased introduction of material adjustments to rent levels arising in individual cases under the new system.

Local authorities will be required to adopt new rent schemes during 2014 and review all household incomes in line with revised schemes with the implementation of charging of revised rents to commence nationally on 1st January 2015.

CORPORATE SERVICES

Register of Electors

A high-quality Register of Electors is essential for the successful operation of the electoral system and of the democratic process itself. Sligo County Council prepares the Register of Electors annually and, as always, a major effort was made to achieve the highest possible degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness in compiling the Register. There were 51,534 electors on the 2013/2014 Register of Electors which came into force on 15th February, 2013.

Number of Electors by Local Electoral Area

Ballymote	8,660
Dromore	8,823
Sligo/Drumcliffe	13,025
Sligo/Strandhill	12,897
Tubbercurry	8,129
Total	51,534

In May 2013, the report of the Local Electoral Area Boundary Committee was published. This Committee was established by the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government to review and make recommendations on local electoral areas. The Minister accepted in full the recommendations in the report.

County Sligo will be divided into two electoral areas as follows: Ballymote-Tubbercurry and Sligo. The number of members to be elected for Ballymote-Tubbercurry electoral area will be 8 and the number of members to be elected for Sligo electoral area will be 10. This will apply from the 2014 local elections.

The Draft Register of Electors 2014/2015 was printed on the 1st November 2013. There were 51,188 electors registered on the 2014/2015 Draft Register in the two new electoral areas as follows:

Ballymote-Tubbercurry	21,836
Sligo	29,352
Total	51,188

Higher Education Grants

The student grant application process was centralised in the 2012/2013 academic year and all new applications are now made through the online student grant application facility. Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) will be accepting all new student grant applications including applications from existing students changing their courses or

progressing to new courses (be they add-on courses or otherwise) in the 2014/2015 academic year.

The existing grant awarding authorities continue to process renewal applications for students to whom they are already paying grants until those students have completed their current courses.

Sligo County Council assisted 180 students under the Student Grant Scheme 2013. There were 180 continuing renewal students. In the academic year 2013/2014 Sligo County Council assisted 37 students with the special rate of maintenance grant. 159 renewal students qualified for a higher education grant award of non-adjacent rate and 21 renewal students qualified for an award of adjacent rate.

In excess of €957,000.00 was allocated by Sligo County Council to students in maintenance and fees which is administered by the Council on behalf of the Department of Education and Science.

Freedom of Information

Corporate Services Section also administers the issue of enquiries made under the Freedom of Information Act and Access to Information on the Environment Regulations. People have a legal right to access information held by public bodies, and they also have a right to have information relating to themselves amended where it is incomplete, incorrect or misleading. If a requester is dissatisfied with the response to their request, they have a right to an internal review of the decision and a further right of appeal to the Information Commissioner. The number of requests received by Sligo County Council in 2011 was 31.

INFORMATION SERVICES

Information Services section provides information to the general public, Elected Members, staff and media, as well as providing administrative support to the Cathaoirleach.

Information is compiled and relayed to the general public through a variety of means:

- Weekly roads report
- Media releases
- Advertisements
- Websites
- Text alert facility
- Social media

Weekly Roads Report

Every week details of road works throughout county Sligo are prepared and circulated to local media and posted on the Council's websites. The information is also transmitted to locals groups and individuals who have registered their contact details. Details of major works in the county are also broadcast by AA Roadwatch.

Website - www.sligococo.ie

Many of the main service areas provide facilities enable customers to transact their business online, e.g. Finance Section and Motor Tax. Information Services Section works with the IT Section to monitor, review and update the Sligo Local Authority websites on a regular basis. On-line customers can subscribe to a menu of information services, monthly diary of events or weekly roads report. The home page of the website was re-developed to give greater prominence to current news and information.

The sligo.ie website recently launched aimed at providing targeted on-line information on services and events in Sligo. The new site serves as a 'one-stop-shop' for enquiries in the areas of:

- Business & Enterprise
- Tourism & Lifestyle
- Education & Training
- Public Services & Community

The site is also used to promote major local events and festivals.

Text Alert System

Sligo Local Authorities have introduced 'Text Alert' facility to enable people to report traffic management problems around the streets of Sligo. The text messages are relayed via the Information Services Office to the Authorities' Traffic Wardens who respond immediately to the scene of the alert.

Following a successful 'piloting' of the initiative in conjunction with the Sligo Branch of the People with Disabilities Ireland (PWDI), the system was extended to the wider community, and any member of the public is now be able to report traffic management problems for immediate attention. This facility is a 'First' for Local Authorities in Ireland in terms of traffic management and enables our Traffic Wardens to respond instantly to the public's concerns on traffic issues.

It is intended to further broaden the system to advise people of water outages and road disruptions in their area.

Events at County Hall

Cathaoirleach Councillor Pat McGrath hosted a number of receptions at County Hall to pay tribute to the individuals and groups who make a special contribution in our community. Among those honored were St. Attracta's Senior Football Panel, the All Ireland 'B' Colleges Football Winners, the Fallon Family to honour the great Celtic and Sligo Rovers player Sean Fallon and Sligo Haulage & Distribution Ltd success.

Contact us

You can contact the Communications Office by e-mail: communications@sligococo.ie

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Human Resources Department looks after all staffing related matters in the Sligo local authorities, e.g. recruitment, training, maintenance of personnel records, industrial relations, superannuation, etc. It is also responsible for implementing statutory and non-statutory staff welfare policies and procedures and maintains stable industrial relations.

The HR Department works to create an equitable, consultative and supportive working environment within both Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council.

Staff Recruitment

The Council has only been in a position to undertake limited recruitment of staff in recent years due to the moratorium on recruitment in the public service. However, the HR Department did process applications for various positions during 2013. Vacancies for open posts were advertised in the local and/or national press and also on the Councils' and Local Government Jobs websites. In total, 7 recruitment competitions were held during the year and 18 persons were appointed, 12 of which were filled by open competition.

Internship Scheme

On 1 July 2011, the Government launched a new National Internship Scheme as part of its jobs initiative programme. Sligo County Council continues to facilitate Internship placements under the National Scheme as a Host Organisation and facilitated a total of 23 interns in 2013.

Retirements

During 2013, a total of 16 staff retired from the service of Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council.

Voluntary Redundancy Scheme

The Government introduced a Voluntary Redundancy Scheme for Local Authorities in July 2013. The purpose of the Scheme was to achieve a permanent reduction in the workforce of local authorities from 2013 onwards in line with the recommendations of the workforce study and the Action Programme for Effective Local Government: Putting People First. A total of 14 persons availed of the VRS in the Sligo local authorities with 4 employees having left by the end of 2013. A further 10 will leave by the end of March 2014.

Training and Development

Sligo County Council is dedicated to providing relevant Training to all staff within its resources. Training activity in 2013 particularly focused on Health & Safety. Funding for training was also made available to the Council under the headings of Non-National Roads Grant, Water Services Grant and Environmental Grant and these were expended on relevant courses for staff working in those areas.

Industrial Relations

It is the policy of the Human Resources Department to foster a good industrial relations climate and, in this regard, regular meetings take place between the HR Department and Union representatives/officials. The Council is committed to resolving IR issues as soon as possible once an issue arises in an open and co-operative manner.

Haddington Road Agreement

The Public Service Stability Agreement (2013 – 2016), better known as the Haddington Road Agreement, was introduced in local authorities with effect from 1 July 2013. The Agreement sets out measures on productivity, cost reduction and reform which together are aimed at achieving the targeted pay bill reduction. The Agreement builds on the measures set out in the Public Service Agreement 2010 – 2014 (Croke Park Agreement) which began the process of delivering an increasingly integrated and more productive Public Service with greater standardisation of employment conditions within and across sectors of the Public Sector.

In the Sligo local authorities, a total reduction in pay, pension and allowances of €183,621 was achieved in 2013 under the HRA and an increase of 22,646 working hours resulted from the introduction of a 37 hour week.

Workforce Planning

Arising from a Sectoral Workforce Study carried out by a Transition Working Group on behalf of the Government and the County & City Managers Association, all local authorities have been requested to carry out a detailed Workforce Planning exercise bearing in mind the continual need to provide essential frontline services and to fulfil legislative requirements. Workforce Planning is a process to measure and compare current workforce with future workforce relative to an organisation's strategy and business planning process.

Sligo County Council commenced the Workforce Planning process in 2013 and initiated consultation with Trade Unions acting on behalf of employees of both authorities. The Workforce Plan will be finalised in 2014 in consultation with staff and unions.

Staff Welfare

The Human Resources Department is responsible for formulating and implementing a range of policies and support mechanisms to help staff manage their work-life balance. The HR Department manages the Sick Leave Scheme and provides employee assistance when required, with the services of a full-time Staff Welfare Officer available to all staff.

Details of all family friendly policies are available on the Council's intranet and many staff avail of these policies, to include Shorter Working Year Scheme, Parental Leave Scheme, Work Sharing Scheme, Career Breaks, Force Majeure Scheme, Compassionate Leave and Maternity & Paternity Leave.

The Sligo local authorities also promote the Cycle to Work Scheme and, in 2013, the Council assisted 23 employees to purchase bicycles under this Scheme.

SLIGO LIBRARY SERVICE & MUSEUM, ARCHIVES & CULTURAL SERVICES

The Library and Museum services continued to expand the service provision throughout the County and the continuous extension of the Mobile Library pilot service throughout the County.

The Book Fund is used for the purchase of books, periodicals, eBooks, large print and local history material.

The allocation in the Book of Estimates 2013 was €10,000 and this resulted in the cancellation of standing orders for periodicals and newspapers, as the total book fund would not have been sufficient to maintain the current level of orders which in 2012 was costing €14,000 per annum.

At the outset of 2013, a priority list of book purchases was established in order to maintain the library's collection policy, so as to minimise the potential for gaps to develop in the collection.

By the end of 2013 the Library service had made considerable savings in the estimated budget for salaries and some of this was directed at bolstering the book fund. By the close of 2013 the library had spent €35,189 on book stock.

Bookfund 2013	€	Volume
E-Books	€347.00	70
Juvenile Fiction / Non-fiction	€15,215.00	2,359
Adult Fiction/ Non Fiction	€13,637.00	1,079
DVD	€1,338.00	147
Local History	€622.00	25
Periodicals	€2,786.00	
Large Print	€250.00	16
Teenage	€205.00	25
Service of Books	€789.00	
Total Bookfund	€35,189.00	

Educational & Cultural Activities:

The Educational & Cultural Activities budget has been reduced considerably in recent years from €22,000 to €1,685.00. With this reduced budget, library staff put in place 22 programmes/events during 2013 which were attended by approximately 1,850 users.

Sligo Mobile Library Services:

Schools:

The Library service were able to resume the school's library service at the request of elected members in September 2013 in order to address the large demand from primary schools for book exchanges and updates of library stock.

In 2013 there have been 25 primary schools visited throughout County Sligo and Sligo City.

Mobile Library:

The mobile library service was established in 2012 to reach those areas within the County which are not currently served by a dedicated branch library. The mobile service is delivered on a three weekly cycle and has been expanded in 2013 to include two additional routes.

Library Statistics:

	2012	2013	<i>Decrease/Increase</i>
Visitors to Libraries	163,826	* 144,505	11.8%
Total Issues	258,664	** 222,595	13.95%
Internet Users:	15,604	15,127	3.06%
Internet use	16,283	15,609	4.00%
Local History Issues	2,409	*** 2,746	13.9%
Membership	13,138	**** 12,662	3.6%

* Reduced opening hours and closures have affected this figure.

** Reduced opening hours and book fund have affected this figure.

*** Increased despite major closures throughout 2013 as LH staff were used to augment Central Library

**** Annually renewed membership.

Europe Direct Information Centre, Tubbercurry:

The new Europe Direct Information Centre at Tubbercurry Community Library was officially launched on Friday April 12th 2013 by Ms. Marian Harkin, MEP. The new centre, which is one of 10 centres in Ireland and one of almost 500 across the 28 EU member states, is devoted to Counties Sligo, Leitrim and Mayo. Its role is to provide a link between the European Commission and Irish Citizens as part of its role at the heart of the community.

2013 was designated as the European Year of Citizens and a number of events and activities were organised to mark this:

- Europe Day was celebrated on May 9th with a number of Euro Child Poetry Workshops aimed at primary school children.
- EDIC Tubbercurry was involved in the celebration of European Family Fun Day on May 19th at Sligo Family Resource Centre.
- In June, to mark Ireland's 40th anniversary of accession to the EU, the centre hosted an exhibition entitled 'EU-Ireland@40: Looking back over 40 years' and a number of short films from the Irish Film Institute were shown to complement the exhibition.
- In July a number of European themed activities were held to celebrate National Play Day such as European Folk tales and a colouring competition.

- The European Consumer Centre launched their 2012 Annual Report in the centre in August.
- In October a number of German Storytelling events were held in all four branch libraries in the county.
- The Regional Soapbox Public Speaking competition was held on November 1st.

Peace III:

Sligo Library and Museum service received grant assistance from Peace III to undertake a project entitled "*Commemoration Project*".

The project was to bring together 20 civic leaders from throughout County Sligo for the duration of the project which started in January 2013 and finished in November 2013. The project group established was to create a space for dialogue that would help to generate understandings of and attitudes towards events of National and Local significance.

Eight guest speaker sessions took place on the topics of:

- "*That would be an ecumenical matter*": *The Protestant Tradition of Parading on St Patrick's Day in Ireland*
- '*Was it for this?*'. *How and why do we commemorate the Easter Rising?*
- *So, Who are the Apprentice Boys of Derry?*
- *Commemoration & the 1981 Hunger Strike*
- *The Orange Order & Twelfth of the July Reflections*
- *Arts & Commemoration*
- *Flanders & the Irish connection*
- *Commemoration & World War II*

The series of lectures was very popular with members of the public as well as the participants. Second level schools history sections were very supportive of the project.

Sligo County Museum:

The principal attraction in 2013 was the collaborative exhibition curated jointly by members of the Sligo Rovers Heritage Committee and staff from the County Museum.

An exhibition entitled "*Sligo Rovers Legends and Champions 1928 – 2013*" which ran from May to August, was very well received by Rovers fans and visitors alike.

Over 4,000 visitors came specifically to see the Rovers exhibition.

The visitor figure for Sligo Museum in 2013 is 10,530. The closure in December 2013 for repairs impacted on what would have been otherwise a record year.

Archives:

Mr. Martin Morris, Archivist, commenced work in July 2013 on a shared basis with Longford County Council.

Mr. Morris worked with the head of sections in Finance, Environment and Housing with a view to addressing the paper management procedures for archiving material which is held in each section.

An Archival sorting area was established in the Borough City Hall and Central Library along with a work plan for the Archives held by Sligo Local Authorities.

CIVIL DEFENCE

Civil Defence as a second line voluntary emergency service continues to ensure its volunteers are ready to assist both the Local Authority and the community where they can. This is evident in the time spent both training and assisting throughout 2013.

In 2013 volunteers provided assistance at 142 events which equated to 1,128 volunteers and 5,640 hours from January through to October. Volunteer instructors gave their time to train 15 volunteers to Cardiac First responder level, 33 volunteers to Occupational FETAC First aid level 5, 10 to Emergency First Responder level and 2 to Emergency Technician level.

14 New volunteers joined the organisation in October at the start of our new training year.

Training in Radio operations, Safe food handling and Manual Handling / Patient handling also took place.

At the Civil Defence College, 2 volunteers attended Search Manager training and took part in the National Search exercise together with the Gardaí Search Managers in Templemore in December.

Volunteer instructors also assisted with CFR and OFA training and recertification training where applicable of Council staff. Manual Handling training and refresher training was also given to Council staff throughout the year.

Thankfully the emergency situations caused by the severe weather in other parts of the country did not affect Sligo but volunteers are through their training in a state of readiness to respond if and when required.

COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE:

1. Sligo County Development Board:
2. County Development Board Sub-Committees:
 - a. Social Inclusion Measure Group
 - I. Comhairle na nÓg
 - II. Sligo Education Working Group
 - III. Interagency Traveller Strategy Group
 - IV. Racist Incident Reporting & Referral Service
 - V. County Sligo Integration Strategy 2013-16
 - b. Economic Development Sub Committee
 - I. Inter Agency Tourism
 - c. PEACE III Programme
3. SCC Joint Policing Committee
4. Play & Recreation
5. Pride of Place Competition 2013
6. Grant Schemes 2013
7. The Gathering Ireland 2013

1. Sligo County Development Board:

Sligo County Development Board (CDB) brings together representatives from Local Government, Local Development sectors, State Agencies operating at local level, and Social Partners, including the Community and Voluntary Sector for the purpose of improving co-ordination amongst local service providers and promoting economic social and cultural development in County Sligo.

For 2013, the priorities of the CDB included:

1. Social inclusion and equality.
2. Economic Development.
3. Cultural Development.
4. Sligo Peace and Reconciliation Partnership Committee - PEACE III Action Plan 2011-2013.

2a. Social Inclusion Measure Group:

The Social Inclusion Measures Group (SIM) is a statutory sub-committee of the County Development Board whose purpose it is to provide a forum for the coordination and delivery of social inclusion activities in the county while also identifying and addressing any gaps and overlaps between agencies in the delivery of social inclusion actions within the county.

2.a

(i): COMHAIRLE NA nÓG

Comhairle na nÓg Shligigh is a Sligo County Development Board Project set up as part of the National Children's Strategy (2000). Comhairle na nÓg provides a forum for young people to discuss local and national issues of relevance to them. Comhairle na nÓg involves a working partnership between Sligo County Council, Mayo Sligo Leitrim Education & Training Board and Foróige with funding received from the Department of Children & Youth Affairs. Along with a programme of activities the grant has enabled Foróige to employ a dedicated Youth Worker to work on the ground with young people to increase participation in the Comhairle na nÓg. Aims of the initiative include, creating a model of best practice, with emphasis placed on increasing the participation of young people through its AGM and in particular the participation of harder to reach young people. The initiative also aims to link Comhairle na nÓg into the policy making role of local agencies and in particular Local Government through structures such as Strategic Policy Committees (SPC's) and Joint Policing Committees (JPC's).

The 11th Sligo Comhairle na nÓg AGM hosted by the Sligo County Development Board took place in October 2013. 90 enthusiastic young people from schools and youth clubs/organisations from all over the county were present making it the highest attendance to date. Topics discussed in facilitated workshops included Alcohol & Drug Use, Youth Facilities, Bullying, Education & Jobs. The topics raised will form part of the Comhairle na nÓg's work plan for the coming year.

2.a

(ii): Sligo Education Working Group

The County Development Board's Sligo Education Working Group, chaired by Sligo Education Centre continued to meet throughout 2013. The Group is a sub-committee of the SIM Group. Its focus is to:

- Identify gaps in education service provision,
- Promote collaboration among agencies dealing with early school leavers
- Identify areas of concern outside the influence of the relevant agencies where the CDB might be able to lend its support.
- Develop community education and support
- Target support locally within schools
- Promote broader policy level responses to educational disadvantage.

2.a

(iii): Interagency Traveller Strategy Group (IATSG):

The Interagency Traveller Strategy Group is responsible for monitoring progress on the implementation of the County Development Board's Interagency Traveller Strategy for Co Sligo. The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to enhance interagency co-operation in the delivery of services and supports to the Traveller Community. The Strategy focuses on a series of integrated actions under the following thematic areas: Accommodation, Health, Education Training & Employment, Childcare and Youth.

The Actions outlined in the Strategy are funded mainly through the resources of the participating Agencies and some actions involve the pooling together of resources from a number of agencies.

During 2012 and 2013 the Interagency Traveller Strategy Group was successful in securing funding to undertake 2 Training projects as follows:

Good Practice for Equality & Traveller Inclusion – Policy & Practice.

This initiative was funded by Peace III and delivered by Pavee Point over a five-week period.

The overall aim of the training was to ensure that the members of the group were fully informed and committed to reducing racism and discrimination against Travellers.

Equality Screening & Impact Assessment of Traveller Interagency Plans.

This initiative was funded by the Equality Authority under the EU's PROGRESS Programme to support two Traveller Interagency Groups to carry out an equality screening and impact assessment on their strategic plan.

This project provided an opportunity for the IATSG to avail of expert support. It enabled them to build their equality competence and to strengthen the effectiveness of the Interagency Traveller strategy to enhance coordination of services and support for Travellers.

iv. Racist Incident Reporting & Referral Service.

Sligo Family Resource Centre was awarded funding to establish a Racist Incident Reporting & Referral Service in Sligo, under the PEACE 111 Programme. An Interagency Group was established to support the work of the Racist Incident Reporting & Referral Service and to provide advice on developing a referral mechanism and follow-up protocols for reported racist / sectarian incidents throughout Co. Sligo. The Social Inclusion Measures Group is represented on this group.

v. County Sligo Integration Strategy (2013 - 2016)

The County Sligo Integration Strategy is part of a wider project to mainstream the learning from the PEACE Programme. The development and implementation of a Local Integration Plan for Co. Sligo to improve the response to, and, understanding of the diverse needs of the population has also been identified as an Action in the SIM Action Plan. SIM, agreed to establish a Working Group for this project and, adopt and monitor the plan on completion.

The Co. Sligo Integration Strategy is a 3-year strategy which outlines key actions to plan for equality in our communities, workplaces, services, civic life and social life. It also examines way in which peace building will continue after the PEACE Programme. The strategy focuses on the following groups:

- Minority Religious groupings
- Minority Ethnic Groups i.e. Refugees, Migrants, Students and Travellers.
- Ex-prisoner Groups

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUB-COMMITTEE OF SLIGO COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD

The role of the County Development Board in Economic Development is to co-ordinate the work of member organisations' economic development activities and work on agreed 'added value' economic initiatives for the county, to promote innovation and entrepreneurship and to increase job opportunities.

Members of the Economic Development Sub-Committee of the County Development Board (CDB) were involved in identifying actions in the following sectors:

- Precision Engineering/Toolmaking,
- Renewable Energy,
- Food
- eCars.

2.b:

(i): Inter Agency Tourism

There were a number on significant tourism related developments/achievements undertaken within Community & Enterprise during the year, chief among these were

1. Border Uplands Project; commencement of the cross border Border Upland Project, an inter county geotourism initiative which will deliver a series of new and exciting walking route in geologically rich upland area around the county. The Interreg IVa supported project leveraged €663,000 for the county and is due to conclude in 2015.
2. The successful '**Sligo-who knew!**' tourism media awareness campaign delivered during 2013 in collaboration with Team Sligo, Sligo Tourism and Sligo Leader Partnership saw increased visitors to Sligo. The social media element of the campaign resulted in an Irish Internet Award which acknowledged the strength and creativity of this campaign.
3. www.sligowalks.ie Walking is the most popular activity undertaken by visitors while on their holidays and Sligo is rich in landscape from seashore, its lakes to mountain top. New trails are being continuously being considered at various locations throughout the county with ongoing redevelopment on environmentally sensitive trails undertaken at Knocknarea and along the Sligo Way. The dedicated walking website for Sligo- www.sligowalks.ie details many of the trails available throughout the County.
4. **Wild Atlantic Way**: 2013 saw the emergence of Failte Ireland's new marketing strategy to introduce a bespoke guided travel route along the entire West coast of Ireland. Sligo has 7 unique Discovery Points along this 2500km route, from Mullaghmore to Enniscrone. The signage programme will be delivered early in 2014.

5. **Recreational Infrastructure Development:** Other emerging tourism opportunities explored during 2013 included; i) pursuit of a dedicated off road Greenway proposal along the disused railway line running from Sligo- Enniskillen. ii) National Mountain Bike Centre as outlined in Coillte’s Off Road Cycling Strategy situated along the Ox Mountains. A feasibility study will be undertaken in 2014 by Coolaney Development Association to develop the 80km route and trail head facilities. iii) expansion and redevelopment of the Maritime Centre at Strandhill in close cooperation with the existing Board and community interests.
6. **Tread Softly...** a Yeats festival which highlights the ever increasing popularity of our famous poet who drew on Sligo and its environment for much of his world famous writings.
7. Other tourism projects and activities supported included:

An Post cycling challenge with over 2500 participants.

European Towns of Sport Award for Sligo for 2014.

Waterpoint leisure complex.

INTERREG Iva Sailwest project.

2.c: PEACE III Programme

PEACE III Programme

The vision of the Sligo Peace and Reconciliation Partnership Committee is:

“Sligo is a community where ethnic and religious diversity is welcomed and where positive relationships exist within and between communities and across the border”.

The Committee has delivered on actions under the Sligo Peace Action Plan which aim to reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and to promote reconciliation. Over 1,360 participants played an active part in these actions.

Publications include:

Sharing Our Futures

A Celebration of PEACE III, Phase 2 in Sligo

This publication is a record of all the work, achievements and learning created by so many people in working to build a better society in Sligo. Sixteen projects worked with people of all backgrounds, ages and cultures to help build understanding and acceptance and challenge racism, sectarianism and discrimination.

Open Door Project

The Open Door project, delivered by the Heritage Office, focused on socially and politically significant buildings in Sligo and Omagh as a means of exploring a number of key peace-building themes. Historical talks and tours were followed by facilitated group discussions that aimed to increase our understanding of our history and help consider our shared future.

The Open Door exhibition poses the following questions:

Who is my neighbour?

What causes conflict in my community?

Who might experience exclusion or feel unsafe in my community?

What happens to those who get involved in armed conflict?

What do we expect from our leaders?

How can the truth of the conflict be recovered?

How do we acknowledge the past yet envisage the future?

How do I see my neighbour?

Who do we commemorate?

Do we use our voices to build peace?

Hidden Histories - Political / Historical Perspectives of Sligo

The Hidden Histories project examined the historical and political perspectives of Sligo's history, focusing particularly on:

- The history of Sligo as a garrison town and related consequences
- The 'Big Houses' of County Sligo as a means of understanding the social history of the area

These and other PEACE publications are available to download at www.sligocdb.ie

3: SCC Joint Policing Committee

Joint Policing Committees were established under Section 36 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005. They offer local authority elected members, An Garda Síochána, members of the Public & members of the Oireachtas, the opportunity to make a significant impact on the quality of life within communities, by working together as a collective body. A Joint Policing Committee was established in the Sligo County Council Administrative area in December 2008.

Membership of the Sligo County Council Joint Policing Committee

- 13 Local Authority elected members with at least 2 from each local electoral area. Each political grouping on the County Council must be represented on the JPC. The Cathaoirleach is an ex-officio member.
- 5 members of the Oireachtas. Each political grouping represented by Oireachtas members should have representation among the five.
- The County Manager who is an ex-officio member and a person nominated by him.
- 2 Garda officers nominated by the Commissioner and accompanied by other Garda Officers as need arises.
- 3 persons representing the Community and Voluntary sector in the county.

The JPC serves as a forum for consultation, discussion and recommendation on matters affecting the policing of the Sligo County Council administrative area by:

- Keeping under review levels & patterns of crime, disorder & anti-social behaviour in that area and factors underlying & contributing to the levels of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour in the area.
- Advising the Local Authority and the Gardaí on how best they might perform their functions.
- Arranging & hosting public meetings concerning matters affecting the policing of the Local Authority's administrative area.

Cross Border Project.

During 2013 the JPC participated in the Develop Meaningful Cross-border Linkages programme, a PEACE III project, delivered by Holywell Consultancy.

The overall objective of this programme was to develop relationships between the Sligo and CAN (Carrickfergus, Antrim & Newtownabbey) areas.

A key element of the programme was a visit to each area for the members of the JPCs and Policing Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs). The purpose of these visits was the creation of contacts and building of relationships between policing partnerships and projects in each area.

1. Play & Recreation

Local Authority Play & Recreation Network

Sligo County Council is a member of the Local Authority Play & Recreation Network. This network, established in 2012 by the Department of Children & Youth Affairs (DCYA) with representation from Local Authorities aims to create a dedicated mechanism for Central and Local Government to work collectively to bring about the best policy initiatives for children

and young people in terms of the provision and promotion of existing play and recreational facilities.

Sligo Play Day 2013

The aim of **National Play Day** is to help increase public awareness of the importance of play. Promoting play is a key policy response to improving outcomes for children and supporting children's physical and social development. Play is integral to children's lives. National Play Day is an opportunity to link activities already undertaken by Local Authorities and many other locally based providers, youth and sporting organisations. Sligo Libraries ran a number of events throughout its branch network for National Play Day, one of which was a colouring competition of "Nina The Owl".

With support from Sligo County Childcare Committee with regard to the distribution of entry forms entries were received from a number of playgroups, pre-schools and afterschool homework clubs throughout County Sligo.

Simone Schümmelfeder, a German storyteller hosted a storytelling session in Sligo Central Library. Simone told a number of European stories and give a bit of information about the countries the stories were from as well. Simone included stories from Croatia as it joined the EU as the 28th country on July 1st 2013.

Laura Brett conducted a Euro Child workshop in Ballymote Community Library, aimed at children aged 6-8 years. Laura worked with the children to compose funny and outrageous lines which could then be put together to form a poem. Laura helped the children work on both rhyming and non-rhyming poetry and brought along a selection of poetry and art work by children from a number of European countries which demonstrated different cultures and self-expression.

National Recreation Week 2013

Young people throughout the county were given the opportunity to take part in a variety of events during National Recreation Week 2013.

The week of activities, which took place from 24th June is a joint initiative between the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and Local Authorities.

In Sligo activities included a robotics workshop, horse riding, orienteering, cinema outing, dance, rebounding, boxercise and a visit by award-winning author Sheena Wilkinson.

Recreation Week has been celebrated in Sligo since 2010 and each year over 100 young people have joined in the activities provided by Sligo County Library Service, Sligo Sport & Recreation Partnership and Foróige.

5. Sligo Pride of Place Competition 2013:

Pride of Place 2013

The Pride of Place competition which is organised by Co-operation Ireland recognises and celebrates the vital contributions that community partnerships make to society.

Representatives from the Ox Mountain Development Company and members of the local community welcomed judges from Co-operation Ireland to the Ox Mountain area. Nominated by Sligo County Council to represent the county in the 2013 IPB Pride of Place competition the community showcased the many walking and cycling routes in this scenic area, local amenities and future plans for a Heritage/Tourist Information Centre.

The Pride of Place competition is an all-island competition which recognises and celebrates the vital contributions that community partnerships make to society. It encourages people to come together to enjoy all that is good about their area as well as change or improve certain aspects of their community.

Since 2004, Sligo County Council has encouraged community groups to take part in this competition as it fosters community participation and provides the opportunity to showcase community activities in an area.

6. Grant Schemes 2013:

Many community and voluntary groups throughout the county benefited from financial support through the following grant schemes.

GRANT SCHEME	NO. GRANTS AWARDED	AMOUNT
Tidy Towns Committees Grant Scheme	22 no. grants awarded	€4,000
Burial Ground Committees Grant Scheme	59 no. grants awarded	€13,000
LA21 Environmental Partnership Fund Grant Scheme	11 no. grants awarded	€6,000
Anti-Litter & Anti-Graffiti Awareness Grant Scheme	20 no. grants awarded	€20,000

Projects supported included:

- Environmental workshops
- Anti-Litter awareness schemes
- Anti-Graffiti awareness projects
- Local litter clean-ups
- Schools projects
- General maintenance in Burial Grounds
- Town and Village enhancement projects

7. The Gathering Ireland 2013

The Gathering Ireland 2013

This was a Government lead initiative which aimed to deliver an additional 325,000 overseas visitors to Ireland, generate an extra €170million in revenue and create up to 3000 new jobs across every county in Ireland.

The idea for The Gathering Ireland 2013 originated at the first Global Irish Economic Forum which took place in Farmleigh in 2009. The objective of the Global Irish Economic Forum was to develop a link with our 70m Diaspora and provide a platform to contribute towards Ireland's renewal.

The Local Authority

1. Established a County Steering Group to mobilise and drive The Gathering at county level through key stakeholder engagement, planning and coordinating community-based activity and communicating with local people.
2. Appointed of a Local Gathering Coordinator to undertake the following:
 - i. Co-ordinate the activity of the Steering Group
 - ii. Community Meeting – promotion and facilitation
 - iii. Action Plan & Communication Strategy – responsible for leading, planning, co-ordinating and delivering The Gathering Action Plan/Communication Strategy in the County.
 - iv. County Gathering Website and Calendar of Events – ensure all relevant information was uploaded to the County Gathering Website and devise and manage The Gathering Calendar of Events for Sligo.

A combined IPB Insurance / Gathering Ireland Fund of €2 million to support flagship county and local / community Gathering events and activities across every city and county in Ireland was announced on 25th October 2012.

The fund, a 50:50 partnership between IPB Insurance and The Gathering Ireland 2013 allocated €30,000 per Local Authority to fund small Gathering Events / Projects at local level, with the range of funding from €500 to €2,500, and with the capacity to attract incremental overseas visitors.

The IPB Gathering Ireland Fund for Flagship Events allocated €25,000 to Sligo County Council to support 3 Flagship Events in the County during 2013.

In total €55,000 in funding for County Sligo was received from the IPB Gathering Ireland Fund 2013. The events supported ranged from historic, culture, community, sport, walking, music, singing, dance, food and theatre events, to school and clan gatherings.

SLIGO ARTS SERVICE

Sligo County Council's Arts Service worked in partnership with Sligo Borough Council, the Arts Council of Ireland and key stakeholders locally, regionally and nationally to deliver a highly regarded annual arts programme that is responsive to local community needs and enhances the quality of life for the people of Sligo.

In 2013 Sligo Arts Service focused on sustaining the core programme as follows:

Music in Drumcliffe plays a key role in cultural tourism in North Sligo as one of Ireland's leading chamber music festivals where capacity audiences of 1,330 experience high standards of programming and performances by resident ensemble, the Vogler Quartet and acclaimed Irish and International guest musicians. In 2013, the festival initiated a new partnership with the Royal Irish Academy of Music to foster the talents of young musicians. Two new quartets, mentored by the Vogler Quartet at the RIAM made their debut performances in Drumcliffe to a delighted audience.

Music Generation Sligo, supported by and in Partnership with Sligo County Council, delivered the *Discovering Music* Programme comprised of a four-week programme for Childcare Centres; a six-week programme for Primary Schools (Jan-June 2013) and a twenty-week Discovering & Performing programme for Primary & Post Primary Schools (September-December 2013).

1,982 children participated in 46 School Classes and Childcare Centres delivered by seven tutors.

Funded by the *Per Cent for Art Scheme* and commissioned by Sligo County Council, the composer Brian Irvine worked with 6 young composers (aged 12-17) to write a new choral and orchestral work for children. *The Big Bang* was performed by 185 young people in December as part of the International Choral Festival. A film was made documenting the composition and rehearsal process.

Sligo Arts Service continued its support for three local and voluntary run music promotion organisations which present professional events: Con Brio to run the high calibre **Sligo Music Series**; **Sligo Jazz Project** to run the annual Jazz summer school and festival; and **Sligo Festival of Baroque Music** in October.

The **Primary Colours** exhibition and workshop programme worked with 11 Primary Schools in the Borough and the County in partnership with Sligo Education Centre and the Model. The workshop theme was the poetry of W.B. Yeats and illustrations to the Tales of Red Hanrahan exhibited at the Model. An on-line project took place to mark Yeats Day on 13th June. 237 children and 6 artists participated in *Primary Colours* 2013. A web-pack for teachers was made available on line on www.primarycolourssligo.ie

County Sligo Youth Theatre delivered its weekly workshop programme to its membership of 75 young people, aged 10-18. They performed in four productions including their main annual show *The Shadow of a Gunman* by Seán Ó'Casey at the Hawk's Well Theatre and a

specially devised performance on the site of Sligo Gaol as part of the Peace III Open Door project. The rehearsal and theatre space, The Fridge was very well attended for its two shows on Culture Night.

Culture Night Sligo saw the region's foremost arts venues collaborate on an evening teeming with rich cultural experiences for all. The Model, Hawk's Well Theatre, The Factory Performance Space and Sligo Youth Theatre transformed Sligo into a thriving cultural hub for the night. Venues opened their doors to offer exciting exhibitions, music, theatre, live art, workshops, talks and circus performances which entertained until late into the night.

Culture Night Sligo 2013 had a special focus on events for families and young children, *Baby Culture Night*.

The total audience figure for Culture Night Sligo was 1634 visiting over 13 events and exhibitions.

HE+ART Participatory Arts & Health Programme & Bealtaine Festival

The ongoing annual programme of arts and health work was delivered in partnership with the HSE West Services for Older People and Health Promotion, schools and community groups. Projects were Intergenerational, in Day Care and Residential settings and with Active Age & Active Retirement networks. 130 workshops were delivered in these settings by a team of 6 artists.

In 2013 a new programme began in St. John's Hospital, resulting in a series of murals on Cairde Ward by artist Heidi Wickham.

Sligo Arts Service continued its collaboration with the Hawk's Well Theatre in commissioning a work for the Bealtaine Festival. Steve Wickham was commissioned to create a new performance based on workshops with older people, *The Poetry of Place* accompanied by a documentary exhibition in the Theatre foyer. The piece was performed in three venues in the County. The festival programme also included three exhibitions, storytelling and open workshops and a further two performances arising from intergenerational music workshops.

EU-Local Partnership Scheme As part of the National Culture Programme to celebrate Ireland's Presidency of the EU two projects were initiated in partnership with Kids Own and the Ireland:Iceland Project and funded by the Arts Council.

The projects featured artists visiting Sligo from 6 EU countries with further exchanges planned.

Sligo County Council provided financial support to Sligo's important network of arts organisations who have national and international reach, namely The Model, Blue Raincoat Theatre Company and The Hawk's Well Theatre. These organisations act as core infrastructural pillars that support artists and arts projects. Furthermore, they provide employment and do important outreach and education work with communities across the

city and county. The 11 grants awarded also included festivals and traditional music schools throughout the County.

Sligo Arts Service continued to provide information, advice and support on a range of enquires and requests from the arts sector and the public.

4CNW – Creative Challenge Celtic Crescent North West

4CNW was the result of a successful collaboration between Sligo County Council, and the WDC (Western Development Commission) with the support of local authority partners from the North West of Ireland (Counties Donegal, Leitrim, Mayo and Roscommon) who entered a successful bid to the European Commission’s Directorate General Industry and Enterprise.

A key aim of 4CNW was to demonstrate how public authorities can engender a high degree of business innovation take-up and increase enterprise through a unique service innovation, linking creative SMEs with the wider economy. 4CNW targeted companies from high growth industry sectors: life sciences, tourism, technology and agri-food. The 4CNW pilot included a substantial transnational strand encompassing North West Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland. This transnational element was rolled out in 2013 and incorporated implementation lessons from Round 1 of the programme which were tested in North West Ireland.

4CNW was developed as a strategic initiative to help overcome the identified barriers of a peripheral location in Europe; add value to the existence of successful technology/industry sectors within the region; and focus on the untapped potential of the ‘disconnected’ creative talent within North West Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland. The programme complimented and added value to the existing cross-sectoral Creative Sligo Initiative Public Private Partnership (€1.3m) as well as leveraging a transnational *Creative Edge* Interreg project (€1.2m) with partners within the same countries namely North West Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES

Sligo Fire Authority provides a multidisciplinary approach to Community Fire Safety and Major Emergency Management through Pre-Incident Planning at major risk sites, Emergency Response to incidents such as fires and road traffic accidents, etc. and ensures the fire safety of the built environment through certification, inspection and enforcement where necessary.

Keeping Community Safe (KCS)

KCS is the response of the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management to its mandate to develop consistent, effective and value for money fire services in Ireland.

KCS sets out:

- A system of national processes and standards
- A framework for moving to a “shared services” structure
- An increased emphasis on fire prevention and safety
- The means by which the goal of delivering quality services can be achieved
- Challenging targets in terms of reducing the incidents of fire and loss of life

Under this arrangement, all current fire authorities remain as designated in the current legislation.

Operations

Regional Control Centre

CAMP West (Computer Aided Mobilisation Project) deals with all emergency calls for Sligo, both Borough and County. Sligo’s annual contribution toward the call out system remains the same. The expenditure will go towards the cost of running the service together with some investment of updating equipment and technology.

It is anticipated that over the next number of years we shall migrate onto the TETRA digital radio system as it becomes available. This shall provide an enhanced communication network for the emergency services and improved on site coordination and cooperation.

Incident Calls

The bulk of expenditure within the Fire service is linked to the number of calls for assistance received. The service is labour intensive, very specialised and resources are directed to provide maximum protection for the community served. The fire appliances and equipment is expensive to purchase and maintain and this is part funded from the fire services capital programme.

2013

Total Number of Calls	726 (increase from 580 in 2012)
Fire Calls	539
Special Service Calls	88
False Alarms	99

Per station

- Sligo Station 357
- Ballymote Station 183
- Tubbercurry Station 105
- Enniscrone Station 81

Fire Service Mobilisation Average Time 4:38 mins

Capital Expenditure

300Bar Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus Cylinders

In 2013, 300Bar Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus Cylinders were purchased for Sligo Fire Service. These new cylinders replace the 200bar cylinder. This increases the margin of safety for our fire fighters providing them with more air content during operational incidents and also brings us into line with neighbouring counties such as Leitrim. The new cylinders were also to replace the cylinder that reached their end of life.

Incident Command/Multi Purpose Appliance

In 2013 a fire appliance was refurbished. Lighting system, electrics and markings were upgraded to standard. A specifically deigned new storage was designed in-house enabling the appliance to be used for various incident types as an incident command Vehicle, Chemical Response unit and RTC response vehicle with signage and guarding for dual carriageways and major road incidents.

Training

Fire fighter training is a considerable portion of our expenditure due to the Health and Safety requirements and to maintain the many skills of fire fighters enabling them to operate in potentially dangerous environments while providing essential assistance to the public. Training provided in 2013 included SOGs Training (Standard Operating Guidelines) Emergency First Responder, Hydraulic Platform, Fall Arrest, BA Initial Wearers, Unit 1 (Sub Officer), Unit 2 (Station Officer) and various Instructor courses.

Sligo Fire service as a training centre provided training for The National Directorate, Leitrim Fire Service and Kerry Fire Service

Licensing

The Fire Authority also advises the Courts in relation to fire safety regarding the suitability or otherwise of Licensed premises in order to ensure public safety at such venues. The inspection of Fire Arm Stores and Explosive Stores is also carried out for the Department of Justice as are the inspection of pyrotechnical displays. More recently the issue of Petroleum Licenses has been added to the Fire Service functions.

Fire Prevention

Fire Certificates

Fire Certificate Applications remained low in 2013 due to the reduction in the number of applications received for developments.

National School Programme

The National Schools Programme is aimed at highlighting fire safety in the home through one of the most influential groups in our lives, children. This has been proven to be one of the most effective means of improving fire safety, an area where there is great room for improvement as most fire deaths occur in the home.

This area of work is critical in reducing fire fatalities and we have rolled out a programme on a two year cycle for 3rd and 4th class pupils.

This was completed in May 2013. The school visits were completed by retained personnel from all stations using a standard presentation covering and providing an information pack to each pupil.

- Fire Prevention - What to do in an Emergency - How to call the Emergency Services

- 69No. Schools approx. 2,500 No pupils

Fire Safety Week

Sligo Fire Service participated in Fire Safety Week 7th -14 October 2013.

As part of this we held two hour opening evenings at each of the four stations with an extra two hour open day at Sligo Station. Total **10 open hours**. Seven companies with fire /emergency detection related products participated in the open days.

The advertising campaign to promote Fire Safety Week and the “STOP” fire safety message and the open days included, Local Radio interview, Advert in local newspapers, targeted information to Schools, Sports Clubs, Religious Dioceses, Family Resource Centers, Sligo Forum & Active Age Groups.

Major Emergency

Sligo Fire Service as part of North West Major Emergency Management Regional Working Group hosted a Simulated “Live” exercise on 9th December 2013. The exercise was a simulated Break-in and malicious damage at Farrancardy Reservoir Sligo resulting in the declaration of a Major Emergency. There was approx 50 Number participants. Fire Crews from Sligo were joined by units of the National Ambulance Service, An Garda Síochána, members of Sligo Civil Defence, staff of Sligo Local Authority and HSE West Sligo Leitrim & West Cavan to develop skills, techniques and procedures in Major Emergency Management.

*Infrastructural Services &
Environment*

ROAD TRANSPORTATION & SAFETY

INTRODUCTION

- Roads & Transportation
- Water & Wastewater Services
- Planning & Enforcement
- Environmental Services

ROADS & TRANSPORTATION

National Primary, Secondary, Regional and Local Road – Maintenance and Improvement

A total of €18,328,208 was allocated to the improvement/maintenance of the public road network in County Sligo in 2013. Work continued on the planning, design & construction of key strategic national and non national road projects serving County Sligo and Sligo City – the gateway city of the north-west. The National Roads Authority and the Department of Transport in addition to Sligo County Council were the key funding agencies for this programme.

National Road Major Schemes:

N4 Realignment Collooney to Castlebaldwin

Funding of €300,000 was allocated by the National Roads Authority in 2013 to continue design Work on this scheme. The Statutory Documentation was forwarded to An Bord Pleanála in December 2013.

N15 Sligo to the County Boundary

The National Roads Authority (NRA) requested Sligo County Council Road Design Office to review the Business case for the N4/N15 Sligo to the County Boundary Road Realignment Scheme. In September 2013 an allocation of €100,000 was received by the NRA to carry out this work. This scheme consists of realigning of 26 km approx. of the existing N4 and N15 National Primary Route extending from Hughes Bridge in Sligo City to Bunduff Bridge on the border between County Sligo and County Leitrim.

N17 Tobercurry Bypass – Collooney

This project consists of realigning the Northern part of the N17 and the preferred route was adopted in 2001. Work has been ongoing on an intermittent basis since 2006. The scheme is currently progressing through Phase 4 of the Project Management Guidelines 2010. Work includes the preparation of the Preliminary Design Report (PDR), the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) and Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) Drawings. During 2013 the National Roads Authority (NRA) requested Sligo County Council Road Design Office to review the

Business case and Traffic Models for both the Tubbercurry Bypass and the Tubbercurry Bypass to Collooney Road Realignment Schemes. An allocation of €200,000 was made by the NRA for this work to be carried out.

National Roads Minor Improvement Schemes

N4/N15 Hughes Bridge widening Scheme - (N4 Traffic Improvement Scheme)

The National Roads Authority allocated funding in 2013 to continue the planning and detailed design work on widening of Hughes Bridge. The scheme has been titled the “N4 Traffic Improvement Scheme”.

The Proposed development includes the following:

- Removal of the existing footpaths on both sides of the existing Hughes Bridge structure.
- Strengthen the bridge as required and construct concrete pedestrian footways/ cycle ways off the edge of the existing structure.
- The whole structure deck will be paved to provide two southbound lanes and a right turn lane for Ballast Quay.
- All ancillary works associated with the above.

Detailed Design Work was completed in 2013 and approval to go to Tender is awaited from the NRA.

N4 Ardloy Bend Realignment

This scheme consisted of the realignment of 1.1km of the N4 North of Castlebaldwin. The scheme removed a series of hazardous bends along the N4. Construction started in August 2012 under the supervision of Sligo County Council and ancillary works such as drainage, accommodation works and landscaping finished in March 2013. Overall scheme cost was €2.4m.

N59 Farranyharpy to Ballygreighan Scheme

The N59 Realignment Farranyharpy to Ballygreighan scheme comprised a 3.5 km realignment of the N59 National Secondary Route midway between Sligo and Ballina. Construction commenced in June 2012 and was completed in August 2013. The scheme will cater for an average of 4,000 vehicles per day. The construction stage involved the improvement of 8 junctions, cut/fill earthworks involving the moving of 130,000 m³ of materials, installation of 7.5km of drainage pipelines, four drainage culverts, installation of four structural retaining walls, widening of an existing arch bridge, laying of 28,500M² of surfacing materials producing an 8m wide carriageway.

National Primary Road Maintenance

The NRA allocated €696,381 for National Primary Maintenance in 2013.

The breakdown was:-

- €341,438 for Ordinary Maintenance
- €125,000 for Winter Maintenance
- €20,000 for Bridge Maintenance
- €87,397 for Route Lighting
- €83,234 for N4 Dual Carriageway Maintenance.
- €39,312 for Local Authority Support Maintenance.

Safety Measures

National Primary Safety Measures

The NRA allocated a grant of €65,000 for the construction of safety measures at 4 no. locations in 2013. They were located at:

- **N17 Carrowntubber** - Improvement of sightlines.
- **N15 Castlegal**

This Scheme was carried out at Castlegal National School, north of Cliffoney. This involved the construction of a safe set down area for the school. This scheme will alleviate the necessity for parents to park and turn on a busy section of the N15.

- **N17 Achonry** - Improvement of sightlines
- **N17/R294 Tubbercurry junction design.**

A grant allocation was received to advance the design of two roundabouts at the N17 and R294 junctions just south of Tubbercurry. The Part 8 planning for this scheme was passed by the Council in January 2013 and the preliminary design was advanced following approval. An appraisal was carried out on the scheme which indicated an excellent Cost/Benefit ratio.

N17 Thornhill Bridge

This scheme is located 1km north of Ballynacarrow village on the N17 at a site of several accidents in recent years. The 2013 works involved the provision of advanced warning signs and flashing light signs.

National Secondary Safety Measures

The NRA allocated €42,000 for N59 Safety Schemes in 2013 at:

- Skreen/Dromard €20,000 – Junction Improvements
- Corballa/Culleens €20,000 – Junction Improvement
- Templeboy €2,000 – Junction Improvements

NON-NATIONAL ROADS

Restoration Improvement Grant:

An allocation of €5,187,115 was provided by the Department of Transport for the improvement of Regional and Local Roads in 2013. Approximately 70km of road at 80 locations throughout the county were improved with this grant. The types of work carried out included:

- Laying bitumen macadam surfacing to shape and strengthen the roads followed by surface dressing.
- Laying crushed stone to shape and strengthen the road and double surface dressing to seal the road surface.
- Recycling – this was done where there were adequate stone already in the road structure but the road had disintegrated (typically used in bog road locations).

Restoration Maintenance Grant:

A grant of €1,432,250 was provided in 2013 for surface dressing Regional and Local roads. This programme included the surface dressing of approximately 80km in total at 57 locations.

Discretionary Grant:

A grant of €1,549,000 was allocated in 2013 for improvement and maintenance works on Regional and Local Roads.

Specific Improvement Grants:

A Grant of €350,000 was provided for R286 (Ballinode-Hazelwood) in 2013. As no specific improvement grants are expected for 2014, it was necessary to identify sections of the route which were in most need of improvement and which fit in with the larger scheme proposed for the route and which received planning approval in 2009. It was also necessary to complete other related issues such as drainage and accommodation works. Works will be completed early 2014.

€194,500 was also provided for improvements to four road bridges. The bridges are located on roads: L-14103 Coolbock, L-1601 Templehouse, L-2605 Rathmurphy, L-4105 Cloonacurry.

The total Specific Improvement grant allocation for 2013 was €744,500.

Low Cost Safety Improvement Schemes:

A grant of €162,000 was provided for 9 schemes throughout the Non-national network in 2013. These schemes included:

- Roundabout improvements at Ransboro and Strandhill.
- Traffic Calming Scheme in Ballygawley Village.
- Junction improvement works at R297 Cloonaderavally, R284 Geevagh, R292 Kellystown, Mullaghmore, Tullymoy and Castlebaldwin. The improvement works varied from location to location and included upgrading signage and lining, improvement of sight distance, improved surfacing etc.

Regional Roads Signposting Programme

Following on from the National Roads Authority's upgrading of directional and advanced direction signage (ADS) on the national primary network throughout the County during 2011/2012, Sligo County Council sought and received a grant from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport for the upgrading / replacement of directional signage on the regional road network. A further allocation of €150,000 was made available by the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport during 2013. This grant provided for the design, manufacture and installation of signage along the regional road network through Sligo enabling the Council to progress the design of directional signage, advanced directional signage and local road number identification plates for the regional road network throughout the county including the R291 Rosses Point road, R286 Dromahair road, R293Ballymote road, etc.

Strategic Road Schemes

Sligo progressed two Strategic Non-National Road Schemes as follows:

Eastern Garvogue Bridge & Approach Roads

During 2013 funding was provided for detailed design and further public consultation took place including public information evenings, and input from the public and the display of a physical scale model, site investigation work, archaeological investigations and the appointment of a Valuer. This project is considered essential for the regeneration of eastern parts of Sligo city and for the ongoing development of the region.

Western Distributor Road Phase II

The detailed design of Phase 2 is well advanced. The detailed design includes the railway overbridge and all associated agreements with C.I.E. Design of accommodation works for landowners is also ongoing.

Sustainable Travel:

Active Travel Towns

Sligo County Council were successful in 2012 in receiving funding under the Smarter Travel programme of the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport, for a 2-year project, 2012-2013, under the Active Travel Towns Scheme, to implement elements of Sligo's 5-year Walking & Cycling Strategy.

The strategy involves a combination of the provision of cycling and walking infrastructure linking the population centres to the main employment centres, third level college, secondary & primary schools, leisure areas and the City Centre, creating a pedestrian & cycling priority core city centre and the introduction of measures to help change people's behaviour in the mode of transport they use in their everyday lives. Cycle Lanes are being provided on the main commuter routes into Sligo including the Rosses Point Road, Pearse Road, Ballytivnan and the Hazelwood Road.

This cycling infrastructure continued to be delivered in 2013 and work continued on Workplace Travel Planning Cycle Training, mapping and Promotional activities. The ultimate aim is to increase the numbers of people cycling to work or school on a daily basis and reduce the number of daily trips taken by car. The Circulatory Route around Sligo Core Town Centre, which encourages vehicular traffic not to enter the Core Town Centre, was signposted in 2013 with the aim of creating a pedestrian & cycling priority core town centre.

Bike Week

National Bike Week 2013 was a great success with a great variety of activities taking place throughout the week including a launch in O'Connell Street with a bicycle themed street party. O'Connell Street was closed to traffic for the day and open for a range of cycle themed fun.

There was a great range of family entertainment available free of charge to celebrate the week of cycling events to come. Other events during the week included Children's grass track cycling and skills day, 40km & 60km Leisure Cycle around Lough Gill, Taste of Mountain Biking for Teenagers, Lunchtime Cycle for Cycle to Work Day, 'Fun' Cycle from Sligo City to Strandhill Village and back, Women Pedal to Pedal to Paddle evening, Multi-distance Leisure Event and Mid Summer Night Cycle.

Proposed Sligo Leitrim & Northern Counties Greenway

In 2013, with the help of Seed Funding from the Department of Transport Tourism and Sport, Sligo County Council applied for funding for the development of the Sligo Section of the proposed world class cross-border Sligo Leitrim and Northern Counties Cycle and Walking Greenway. This Greenway will connect Sligo City to Enniskillen, via the many

rural towns and villages of counties Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan and Fermanagh. The proposed Greenway follows the route of the former Sligo, Leitrim and Northern Counties Railway line (SLNCR), which for almost 80 years up until its closure in 1957 was an important regional transport and economic link between Sligo and Enniskillen, and all areas in between. 2013 work included survey & design work and liaison with the landowners along the route. The Sligo Section links Sligo to Ballintogher via Cararroe, Ballisodare, Collooney and Ballygawley

Bridges

Non-National Road Specific Improvement Projects

This scheme also provided grants for improvement/strengthening works on bridges. Four road bridges benefitted from this grant in 2013. The allocations are summarized as follows:

	€
Templehouse Bridge Repair Works	89,000
Rathmurphy Bridge Restoration Works	26,000
Clooncunny Bridge Repairs	38,000
Coolbock Bridge Restoration	41,500

National Road Bridge Maintenance

Funding was provided by the NRA for the maintenance of the bridges on the National Roads around the county. Work was carried out on nine bridges under the bridge routine maintenance works in 2013. Some of the works include the construction of concrete rubbing strips, installing road gulleys to remove surface water from the bridges, natural hydraulic lime pointing, rebuilding/repairing masonry parapet walls and abutments and also the erection of a safety barrier over one of the bridges along the N17.

Operation and Maintenance of Piers and Harbours

In early 2013 a major Environmental Report was finalised regarding a major dredging program for Sligo Port and Harbour. This report and all the associated studies was prepared at a cost of €200,000 which was provided by the Department. The report formed the basis for a Foreshores Licence Dredging Application which was lodged with the Department in mid 2013. The report also covers all the requirements for applying to the EPA for an offshore disposal site which has been identified and an application to the EPA for same is now ready to be lodged.

Fifteen CCTV cameras are now operating in the harbour area, with 11 cameras operating within the Port and Deepwater Road and a further 4 operating at the Pontoon.

The floating pontoon is proving very successful and is operating at capacity during the year. Additional similar pontoons would be a welcome addition to the existing facility and a submission for funding may be lodged in the future.

Strandhill Coastal Revetment Termination and Access way Project, 2013.

Sligo County Council received a grant from the OPW of €290,000 for a new terminal and access works at the end of the southern coastal path in Strandhill. Construction work was carried out from September to December 2013. The project strengthens the southern end of the southern revetment and provides a sloping access way from the path level down to the southern beach for the public.

WATER & WASTEWATER SERVICES

Irish Water

The Water Services Act was enacted on 25th December 2013. The key elements in the Act are:

- Provided for the transfer of water services functions from the 34 local authorities to Irish Water. It also provides for the transfer of the property and water services infrastructure to Irish Water.
- Irish Water and each Local Authority will enter into Service Level Agreements (SLA's) for the delivery of water services. The first such SLA's shall run for a period of 12 years.
- Irish Water was given the power to charge all customers who are in receipt of water services. Irish Water shall submit a plan to the Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) for the charging of customers for the provision of water services which shall be subject to the CER's approval.
- The Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) was given the responsibility for the approval of a code or codes of practice. The codes of practice will deal with the standards of performance to be achieved by Irish Water in the delivery of its functions, billing and methods.

Operation and Maintenance of Public Water Supplies

Health and Safety improvements were implemented at a number of sites in 2013 as we continue to roll out our risk-based approach to achieving full compliance in this area. Investment in energy efficiency measures in recent years e.g. pump upgrades, have also provided payback this year in terms of reductions in energy consumption and real savings which will be used to continue improvement works in this area.

Water Services Investment Capital Programme

- A second Procurement process for Phase 1 of the Water Conservation Mains Rehabilitation Works on the Sligo & Environs Water Supply scheme was completed during 2013. This was required following the withdrawal of two tenders during the first procurement process. It is proposed that this contract and associated financial liabilities will be novated to Irish Water in January 2014.
- Work was ongoing in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department in order to progress the Water Abstraction Order for the Lough Talt water supply scheme. Detailed ecological and hydrological studies are being carried out in order to complete the Appropriate Assessment for the project. An interim treatment solution was submitted to the Department for approval in 2013.
- The Department approved funding for a design review of the Sligo & Environs water supply scheme. This review will consider all options in relation to the future operation of water treatment plants and supply areas within the scheme and opportunities to expand distribution.

Operation and Maintenance of Wastewater Infrastructure

Wastewater treatment plants in Sligo are now the subject of increased monitoring, reporting and sampling requirements as a result of the Wastewater Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations 2007. The EPA audited all licensed plants again in 2013 to ensure that license requirements have been fulfilled. Costs were incurred in relation to upgrading our existing wastewater facilities to meet current Health & Safety standards and associated training for relevant staff. A phased risk-based programme of works was implemented to address any hazards identified as part of the Council's own Safety Management System.

A planned maintenance/servicing contract by Bowen Water Technology (Veolia) is continuing for our wastewater treatment plants. A contract for the collection and transportation of sewage sludge was implemented in 2013 and will deliver improvements in treatment efficiency as well as savings in de-sludging costs.

Water Services Investment Capital Programme

- The Design Review Report for the Tubbercurry, Grange & Strandhill DBO scheme was approved by the Department based on a revised scope for the project. Statutory planning requirements were advanced in 2013 to facilitate procurement in 2014 subject to approval from Irish Water.
- The Design Review Report for the Ballymote & Collooney Wastewater Treatment plant was submitted to the Department. It is anticipated that these work will be advanced in 2014 subject to approval from Irish Water.
- Sligo & Environs Sewerage Scheme – a new stormwater sewer is proposed along Pearse road as part of the Water Conservation Mains Rehabilitation contract. It is anticipated that these works will proceed in 2014.
- Tender documents for the Ballincar, Cregg and Rosses Point sewerage scheme have been prepared. Advancement of the project through procurement is dependent on approval from Irish Water.

Small Water and Sewerage Schemes

- The upgrade of Cliffoney wastewater treatment plant was advanced under the small schemes programme and is anticipated to be commissioned in Q2 2014.
- An interim wastewater treatment plant has also being installed at Ballintogher pending the upgrade of the plant. A new outfall pipeline and headwall was constructed in 2013.
- The newly constructed Bunnanadden Wastewater treatment plant was fully commissioned in Q1 2013.
- Part 8 planning for a new Wastewater treatment in Ballinafad was progressed in 2013.
- A new wastewater pumping station was completed in 2013 in Carton Point, Sligo to serve the needs of this area.
- UV treatment systems together with the necessary works were installed at North Sligo and Riverstown water treatment plants to further enhance treatment standards at these facilities.

Takeover and Upgrading of Group Schemes

The Council passed a resolution at the December meeting to take over the following group water schemes Glackbaun Group Water Scheme, Ballure Group Water Scheme, Rathgoonane Road Group Water Scheme, Cletta/Graniamore Group Water Scheme, Derroon Group Water Scheme, Ballinamona Group Water Scheme, Seafield Group Water Scheme, Kilcat Group Water Scheme, Doo Group Water Scheme & Carrowreagh Cooper Group Water Scheme subject to submission of all of the necessary documentation and payment of all outstanding water charges. Formal takeover dates will be subject to agreement, completion of administration issues and caretaking resources.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

The Environmental Services Section is responsible for a wide range of services spanning three programme groups. The objectives outlined in the councils Corporate Plan (2010-2014) are to;

- Provide a clean living environment for the citizens of Sligo
- Promote the conservation of areas of natural environmental value
- Protect and improve water and air quality in Sligo
- Reduce the amount of waste going to landfill

During 2013, the focus was to continue to introduce and implement measures to achieve these corporate objectives.

Operation and Maintenance of Recovery and Recycling Facilities

The maintenance and upkeep of the Bring Bank Network throughout Sligo Town and County remains the responsibility of the Environmental Services Section.

Sligo County Council has full ownership of the Bring Bank network since August 2013 and employs a dedicated General Operative to maintain it thus reducing the disposal costs of illegal dumping.

Textile Recycling Ltd has clothes banks placed on 12 of our public Bring Bank sites and on 19 private Bring Bank sites throughout Sligo Town and County. TRL make monthly payments to Sligo County Council and to Landowners/Communities for clothes recycled at these banks. TRL also make a donation to Breast Cancer Ireland

Litter Management

The issue of litter continues to be a major challenge. In 2013 the absence of a Litter Warden for the last four months of the year 2013 due to staff reassignment had an adverse impact on service delivery.

Waste Regulations, Monitoring and Enforcement

Waste Management continues to be to the fore of European and Governmental priorities. It receives recognition through increased amounts of legislation and funding. Waste enforcement activities continue to be fully recoupable from Governmental funding. Some other waste management activities are partially recoupable from Governmental funding. This funding originates from initiatives such as the plastic bag levy and landfill levy. The legislation introduced by Government has encompassed producer responsibility which also generates additional monies.

There are ever increasing demands placed on organisations and families but the need for proper waste management continues to be of paramount importance for economic, legislative and environmental reasons.

There is a continuing need to avoid the production of waste at source and to try and divert as much as possible from landfill. This diversion of waste is achieved through the provision of facilities and services followed by education and enforcement. The Bring Bank Network, Civic Amenity Sites, Composting Site, Kerbside Recycling, Home Composting and the introduction of a separate organic collection all help divert waste from landfill. Following the adoption of the new Waste Bye-Laws in December 2013 , it is expected to have full implementation of all changes in 2014.

The Waste Enforcement Office also continues to deal with historic situations and the environmental problems caused by them. Risk assessments were carried out on one of the closed landfills and proposals for remediation of same have been put forward to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA in considering the proposals can specify actions to be taken that will have to be adhered to, at a financial cost. It is anticipated that the necessary measures will be implemented to reduce any of the environmental impacts which may be associated with the landfill. The cost of monitoring this landfill and others will have to be budgeted for.

Climate Change & Energy Management

In preparation for imminent and ongoing energy reporting cycles, Sligo County Council has taken steps to improve its data capture, including the creation of new databases, production of an Agresso Energy Product Code Guide and enhanced sharing of key information. In addition, several staff availed of SEAI training courses/workshops during 2013. As a member of SEAI's Public Sector Partnership Programme, the Council also has access to advice from a dedicated Partnership Support Manager.

Notable energy savings have been achieved as a result of improved energy management and awareness and the implementation of specific actions in several service areas. This in turn has helped to reduce the Council's annual outlay on electricity and fuel. As energy costs rise, it is imperative that the commitment to energy efficiency is maintained and accelerated. Considerable scope exists for further energy and energy-cost savings across the organization. These include many no/low cost measures with potential to yield significant benefits if existing resources are harnessed and the necessary systems and procedures are put in place.

The Council's cross-departmental Energy Efficiency Working Group produced an Energy Action Plan 2013-2014, which was formally submitted to SEAI in Aug 2013. The Plan comprises over 60 individual Actions involving several service areas, incl. Buildings, Water Services, Public Lighting, the Fire Service, the Fleet and Sligo Sports Centre. Due to staff losses and the challenges of the current working environment, implementation has been slower than expected and some setbacks have been experienced. However, there is a core commitment to the Plan, which will continue to be rolled out during 2014, with periodic reviews and adjustments, as necessary. To guide and support Plan implementation, there will be ongoing engagement with SEAI's tailored Public Sector services and supports.

Water Quality Management

Drinking Water

The quality of drinking water in Ireland is governed by the EC (Drinking Water) (No.2) Regulations, 2007. New legislation provides for the transition of responsibility for water services away from local authorities to Irish Water over a number of years beginning in 2014.

Bathing Water

In 2013, Sligo County Council formally identified five beaches under the 2008 Bathing Water Regulations; these were Rosses Point, Enniscrone, Mullaghmore, Streedagh and Mullaghmore. During the 2013 bathing season (mid May – mid September) weekly monitoring was carried out at Enniscrone and Rosses Point beach, and fortnightly monitoring was carried out at Dunmorán, Streedagh and Mullaghmore. Overall, results showed full compliance with mandatory bathing water standards.

Lifeguard cover was provided at Rosses Point, Enniscrone, Streedagh and Dunmorán beaches for the 2013 bathing season along with Beach Warden cover for Strandhill.

Rivers and lakes

Sligo County Council is committed to the monitoring of rivers and lakes listed in the National Monitoring Programme. Sligo County Council monitored 5 lakes and 58 rivers in 2013.

Water Pollution Complaints

Enforcement of water pollution legislation is an important element in ensuring good water quality. In 2013, the Environment Section investigated water pollution complaints on a priority basis and took enforcement action where necessary under relevant water pollution legislation. Advice and guidance letters are also issued as appropriate.

Planning Applications

The Environmental Protection Agency published a new code of practice in 2009. This Code of Practice; Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (p.e.≤10)(EPA 2009), is used by the Environment Section in the assessment of planning applications involving the provision of onsite wastewater treatment systems. During 2013, the Environment Section continued to assess and make recommendations on all commercial, agricultural, and domestic planning applications throughout the County, in addition to forestry applications. Queries and meetings regarding planning proposals for onsite wastewater treatment form a significant part of the ongoing work programme relating to planning issues.

Casual Trading

The Casual Trading Act 1955 covers open air trading of goods at designated bays throughout the County. The Environment Section also enforces the Casual Trading Bye Laws 2003.

Regular inspections are carried out by the Casual Trading Officer to ensure that the trading bays are being operated in accordance with the Bye Laws.

Veterinary Service

Sligo County Council continues to implement all relevant food safety legislation under the Service Contract between Sligo County Council and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland. This includes the supervision of two abattoirs slaughtering cattle, sheep, pigs and deer. Two meat plants are also under supervision. Funding for the contract comes from the Food Safety Authority.

Animal Welfare

Issues with stray horses increased again in 2013. There were a number of incidents of multiple dumping of the amount which can be recouped for each seizure has been capped by the Department of Agriculture and this will result in the Council having to make up any shortfall. Dog control issues continue to be challenging.

The Dog wardens worked with the Gardai in dealing with at least one serious incident involving an attack by a stray dog on a child in 2013. The increase in the Dog Licence fee has increased the income from this source but has also affected uptake of licences. The Wardens continue to do door to door checks across the county to ensure dogs are licensed.

Planning

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

The Development Management team are responsible for ensuring that all planning applications are processed in accordance with current legislation and that all decisions are made in accordance with local, regional and national policies. A summary of the actions undertaken in carrying out these development management responsibilities include:

- Providing a high standard of customer service to all the various stakeholders in the planning process.
- Facilitate the pre-application consultation in a timely and informative manner.
- Validation of all new planning applications.
- Processing and management of planning files in an efficient manner.
- Referral of planning applications to internal departments and external agencies bodies.
- Undertaking site inspections in respect of all planning applications.
- Preparation of planning reports outlining a proposed development's consistency with current planning policy and the proper planning and sustainable development of an area.
- Provision of up-to-date information to the public on the planning process.

Residential vacancy monitoring in County Sligo

As required by the strategic settlements objectives of Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017 (CDP), the DPU undertook an update of the 2010 residential vacancy survey in the first part of 2013. A total of 12 settlements of diverse sizes were selected in all areas of County Sligo in order to obtain a representative sample. The survey revealed very little change in vacancy rates and provided the basis for the decision to continue to apply a moratorium on multiple-unit residential development in the settlements identified in the CDP.

Manager's Progress Report on the implementation of CDP objectives

In accordance with Section 15 of the Planning and Development Act (as amended), the Planning Authority has a duty to take such steps within its powers as may be necessary for securing the objectives of the development plan. Section 15(2) of the Act states that the manager of a planning authority shall give a report to the members of the authority on the progress achieved in securing the objectives of the development plan.

The DPU prepared the Manager's Progress Report in collaboration with the Area Planners, the Heritage Office, Water Services, Environment, Roads, Housing and Community & Enterprise Sections of the County Council. The Report was submitted to the Members on 30 August 2013.

Strandhill Mini-Plan - CDP Variation No. 1

Having decided to replace the expiring Strandhill LAP with a Mini-Plan incorporated into the SCDP as a variation, a Draft Strandhill Mini-Plan was put on public display from 22 January to 5 March 2013, accompanied by a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report, an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Report and a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Report.

Following public consultation, the Members decided to propose amendments to the Draft Mini-Plan on 13 May 2013. The proposed amendments, which required further environmental and appropriate assessment, were the subject of a second stage of public consultation from the 1st to the 28th August 2013.

On 7 October 2013, the Members adopted the Strandhill Mini-Plan / Variation No. 1 of the CDP with several amendments which had been assessed as having no potential for significant environmental effects or for affecting the integrity of Natura 2000 designated sites.

Monitoring of development in the Sligo and Environs Area

In September 2013, work on a number of surveys within the Sligo and Environs area, including a commercial property / retail survey, a residential vacancy survey and a general land-use survey commenced. These surveys will contribute to the monitoring of the implementation of objectives contained in the Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016 (SEDP), which is to be incorporated into the CDP following the abolition of Sligo Borough Council in 2014.

Development Management

The Planning Section is continuously monitoring its operations with a view to implementing improvements and efficiencies to deliver the optimum service to the public. In 2013, Sligo County Council was one of the pilot Local Authorities to introduce an e-referral system for the transmission of documentation to the Development Applications Unit (DAU). It is intended that the system will be extended in due course to An Bord Pleanála and other statutory bodies, which will further streamline this element of our work programme and will result in additional savings.

ENFORCEMENT OF PLANNING CONTROL

The section's role in this area involves investigating complaints from the public with regard to unauthorised development, random inspections of developments in progress, and dealing with prior to commencement conditions or conditions which have not been complied with.

Hereunder are some relevant details for 2013 –

▪ New Complaints Lodged	133
▪ New Complaints investigated	140
▪ Warning Letters	103
▪ Enforcement Notices	54
▪ No. of Inspections	451

Taking Estates in Charge

A legal obligation has been placed on Local Authorities, under Section 180 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 As Amended, to institute the process of taking in charge a housing estate when it has been completed to its satisfaction.

Any request to have a housing estate taken in charge by the Council must be accompanied by a completed Application Form, fee, appropriate certification and written confirmation in relation to the maintenance of open spaces. It is the policy of the Council prior to taking any estate in charge to have a Closed 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.

The following 17 estates were taken in charge by the Council in 2013. Roads serving these estates were also declared public;

- Radharc Na Mara, Burmah Road, Strandhill, Co Sligo
- The Plains, Strandhill, Co Sligo
- Church View, Collooney, Co Sligo
- Radharc Na Gcaisleán, Collooney, Co Sligo
- Abhainn Mor, Collooney, Co Sligo
- Brookfort Housing Estate, Riverstown, Co Sligo
- Seaview, Carney, Co Sligo
- Keenaghan Crescent, Ballymote, Co Sligo
- Bothar an Corran, Ballymote, Co Sligo
- Bramble Hollow, Collooney, Co Sligo
- Newtown, Grange, Co Sligo

- Oakbridge, Ballisodare, Co Sligo
- Cluainin Na Mbo, Carrowhubbock South, Enniscrone, Co Sligo
- Whitethorn Place, Ballina Road, Tubbercurry, Co Sligo
- Lisrua, Ballinafad, Co Sligo
- Fairgreen, Easkey, Co Sligo
- Ocean Links, Strandhill, Co Sligo

Building Control

The objective of the Building Control Section 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. Under inspection targets set nationally, the Council is required to inspect between 12% and 15% of new construction works notified to it by way of the submission of a Commencement Notice. In 2013 the Council inspected seventeen (17) buildings or 12% of new construction works notified.

During 2013, the Council continued to pay particular attention to compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations (which deals with access for people with disabilities).

Commencement Notice

This is a notice submitted by a developer to inform the Council of intent to carry out building works. It must be submitted to the Building Control Section of the Council at least 14 days and not more than 28 days before the commencement of any works which require compliance with the Building Regulations.

A commencement Notice is required for:

- The erection of a building
- The material alteration or extension of a building (including a shop, office or industrial building)
- A material change of use of a Building

A commencement Notice Form is available online or it can be obtained directly from the Building Control Section of Sligo County Council.

Disability Access Certificates (D.A.C.)

A D.A.C. is required for all new non-domestic buildings (including apartments and flats), material alterations and extensions to buildings and certain changes of uses. This requirement was introduced with effect from 1st January 2010. A fee of €800 per Certificate is payable, with certain exemptions for small schools. Twenty five (25) no. applications have been submitted in 2013.

Building Energy Rating Certificates (B.E.R.)

Under new Building Control Regulations, any building offered for sale or rent requires a B.E.R. Certificate. The Council is responsible for securing compliance although no income accrues to it in respect of same. 118 certificates were sought in 2013.

Part L Compliance (Energy)

The Council, in order to achieve compliance with Part L of the Building Regulations, seek calculations at planning stage relating to the Energy Performance of buildings with significant energy consumption or with significant carbon dioxide emissions. Similar calculations are requested when the development is completed.

Dangerous Structures or Places

This Section deals with structures or places which come to our notice and which are a danger or likely to be a danger to the public. A notice may be served on the owner requiring works to be carried out to prevent the structure or place from being dangerous. The Council may also carry out such works itself and recover the costs from the owner.

Derelict Sites

The Council is required by law to establish and maintain a Register of Derelict Sites. All reports of dereliction are investigated. During 2013 two (2) Notices of Intention to enter sites on the Register were served. The Council also served four (4) notices on owners and occupiers of derelict sites specifying the measures to be taken to prevent land from becoming or continuing to be derelict.

HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION SERVICES

During 2013, the Heritage Office, Sligo County Council continued to focus on the areas of heritage information, best practice in heritage conservation and management, awareness and education and promoting partnership and participation. The Heritage Office, with the support of the Heritage Council, works to support the County Sligo Heritage Forum in delivering the County Sligo Heritage Plan, an agreed 5-year strategy which sets out policies and priorities for the identification, protection, preservation and enhancement of Sligo's heritage.

Implementation of the County Sligo Heritage Plan

During 2013, key achievements included the continued delivery of the Sligo Conservation Plan Programme, particularly in relation to window conservation works at Sligo Gaol in partnership with the Architects Department, Sligo County Council.

Implementation of the County Biodiversity Action Plan

In 2010, a County Sligo Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was prepared and adopted by Sligo Heritage Forum with the support of the Natural Heritage Working Group. The Heritage Office will continue to implement the biodiversity plan as resources allow.

Delivery of the Biodiversity Action Plan is overseen by the Natural Heritage Working Group on behalf of Sligo Heritage Forum. The working group is supported in its day to day work by the Heritage Office. During 2013 the Heritage Office secured the appointment of a Biodiversity Intern through the FAS Job-Bridge Programme. Key actions that were undertaken during 2013 included direct liaison with communities, particularly tidy towns groups in developing actions for biodiversity at local level. Invasive species surveys were also undertaken for Japanese Knotweed (in the Sligo and Environs Area).

A biodiversity seminar was held for Tidy Towns groups in February. 'Wild Sligo' was a well attended programme of events throughout the year which saw local wildlife experts leading guided walks of some of the special biodiversity sites in the county.

PEACE III: OPEN DOOR - Connecting people, place and heritage in Sligo

The OPEN DOOR PROJECT drew to a close in November 2013 with the launch of the Open Door book and exhibition. The project was an initiative of the Heritage Office, Sligo County Council and was funded under PEACE III. The project sought to raise awareness of key buildings and their historical, political and social significance and influence on Sligo and Omagh. Activity included heritage tours, talks and workshops at heritage sites, a drama programme delivered by the County Sligo Youth Theatre and, cross border exchanges between heritage groups in Sligo and Omagh. The Open Door project had a strong engagement with a wide audience and generated new audiences for heritage and peace.

Heritage Grants Bursaries and Awards

Sligo County Council secured monies under the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Governments Structures at Risk Fund 2013 for essential works to Temple House, Ballymote and Sligo County Library, Stephen Street, Sligo.

Finance

MOTOR TAXATION

The Motor Taxation Offices in County Sligo are located in Cleveragh Retail Park, Sligo Tel: 071 9111830 and in Teach Laighne, Humbert Street, Tubbercurry, Co Sligo Tel: 071 9111719, where applications for Motor Tax are processed for owners of vehicles whose vehicles are ordinarily kept in Co Sligo.

During the year 2013, €16,116,052 was paid by the registered owners of vehicles in Co Sligo for Motor Tax transactions. The Sligo and the Tubbercurry Motor Tax Offices accounted for €9,727,775 (61%) whereas the Department of Transport Tourism and Sports' (DTTAS) online service brought in a further €6,388,277 (39%).

92.83% of the Motor Tax postal and counter transactions in the Sligo and Tubbercurry offices were issued on the same day. The total number of transactions over the counter was 46,119 whereas posted transactions amounted to 5,916.

Declaring A Vehicle Temporarily Off The Road

New procedures have been introduced for declaring a vehicle is temporarily off the road so that customers do not have to pay motor tax for that period. Since 1 October 2013 it is necessary to declare in advance that a vehicle will be off the road and not in use for a period of between 3 and 12 months using [Declaration of Non-Use of a Motor Vehicle Form RF150 \(pdf\)](#). The declaration of non-use must be made in the same month that the current motor tax disc expires. If arrears in motor tax are due these must be paid in full plus a minimum of 3 months motor tax, before a declaration of non-use can be made.

Motor Tax Online

Motor Tax Online www.motortax.ie is an online service provided by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and motor tax customers are encouraged to tax their cars online to avoid queuing delays.

The Department of Transport Tourism and Sport statistics show Motor Tax transactions online for Co. Sligo as follows:

- 30% transactions were carried out online in the Year 2011
- 35% in 2012
- 39% in 2013

Driving Licences

Under the terms of the Road Safety Authority (Commercial Vehicle Roadworthiness) Act 2012, the Road Safety Authority (RSA) became the national driver licensing authority as of January 2013. With effect from 19 January, a new credit card-style plastic card driving licence was introduced in all EU member states, replacing existing paper licences.

Between 19 January and 25 October, Sligo County Council continued to provide customer services relating to driving licences on behalf of the RSA and processed 7,121 driving licences.

On 29 October 2013, the RSA assumed full responsibility for the driving licence service. The RSA designed the new centralised driving licensing system around a central unit within the authority in Ballina and three outsourced contracts. The contracts include one for a front-office service which engages with the public, a second for a back-office service to process applications, and a third for the production of the plastic card licence. These contracts were awarded by the RSA following competitive procurement processes.

Under the front-office contract, provided by SGS Ireland Ltd on behalf of the National Driver Licence Service, customer services are offered at 34 full-time centres and two part-time centres around the country.

The National Driver Licence Service office in Sligo is located at Ground Floor, Millenium House, Stephen Street, Sligo, opposite the Ulster Bank – Tel: 076 1087880 and is open from 9am to 5pm from Monday to Friday and from 9am to 2pm on Saturdays. See also www.ndls.ie

Appendices

LIST OF STAFF RETIREMENTS 2012/2013:

Fabian Healy	Handyman	17/01/2012
Catherine O'Donovan	Clerical Officer	01/02/2012
Caroline Devins	Assistant Staff Officer	01/02/2012
Bernard Gallagher	Assistant Foreman	04/02/2012
Joe Currid	City Hall Superintendent	10/02/2012
Henry Rowan	Executive Engineer	21/02/2012
Edward Rafter	Retained Firefighter	24/02/2012
Andrew Foley	Retained Firefighter	27/02/2012
James Walsh	Administrative Officer	28/02/2012
Anna Jones	Administrative Officer	28/02/2012
Ian Duggan	Administrative Officer	28/02/2012
James Devaney	General Operative	28/02/2012
Kevin Collery	Staff Officer	29/02/2012
Michael Carden	General Operative	29/02/2012
Breda Ronayne	Administrative Officer	23/05/2012
Bernard Healy	General operative	22/07/2012
Michael Carty	Chargehand	04/09/2012
Sinead McGrath	Clerical Officer	10/10/2012
Seamus Duffy	Retained Firefighter	02/11/2012
Frankie Brannigan	Courthouse Caretaker	02/04/2013
Kevin McLoughlin	Retained Firefighter	02/04/2013
Kathleen McTiernan	Administrative Officer	11/04/2013
Thomas Kennedy	Driver/Plant Operator B	15/04/2013
Joe Scanlon	Foreman	22/04/2013
Ted Maloney	Traffic Warden	26/05/2013
Eamon Fox	Waterworks Caretaker	17/07/2013
Michael Meldrum	Plasterer	22/07/2013
Angela Savage	Staff officer	30/09/2013
Des McGarry	Estate Officer	11/10/2013
Jack Regan	Painter SBC	04/11/2013
Frances Walsh	Staff Officer Library	07/11/2013
Francis O'Brien	Driver/Plant Operator	15/11/2013
Hubert Kearns	County Manager	04/11/2013
Paul Coyle	Chief Fire Officer	20/11/2013
Michael Downey	Driver/Plant Operator B	10/12/2013
John Joe Tighe	Driver/Plant Operator B	14/12/2013
Brendan Henry Snr	Retained Station Officer	31/12/2013

CONFERENCES & SEMINARS ATTENDED BY COUNCILLORS - 2013

Conference/Seminar Name	Venue	Date
Civil Liability Legislation and how it affects Local Authorities	Westport	11 th - 13 th January
Budget Seminar 2013	Louth	11 th - 13 th January
Active Citizenship European Year of the Citizen 2013	Dublin	16 th January
The Tenth Irish National Radon Forum	Dublin	17 th January
Tourism in recessionary Times	Clare	17 th - 18 th January
The Criminal consequences of breaching Local Authority Regulations	Tralee	18 th - 19 th January
Local Electoral Area Boundaries	Letterkenny	18 th - 20 th January
New Regional Governance in Ireland: Perspectives and Challenges	Maynooth	21 st January
Enterprise Mobility Summit	Dublin	23 rd January
Policy and Legal Issues relating to Developing Wind Energy	Westport	25 th -26 th January
Disputes between Neighbours and the Law	Limerick	25 th - 27 th January
The New Personal Insolvency Legislation	Cork	25 th - 27 th January
Mental Health Ireland Workshop	Dublin	
The Finance (Local Property Tax) Bill 2012	Galway	1 st - 2 nd February
Cumann Merriman Winter School 2013	Westport	1 st - 3 rd February
Domestic Water Meters for Ireland	Clare	1 st - 3 rd February
Local Govt. impacts of major flooding and freezing spells	Waterford	1 st - 3 rd February
Wildlife in Tidy Towns	Sligo	2 nd February
Equal Status (Amendment) Bill 2012	Tralee	8 th - 9 th Feb
Irish Renewable Energy Summit 2013	Dublin	13 th February
Tolerance and Diversity in Ireland - North and South	Dublin	14 th February
AMAI Spring Seminar 2013	Wexford	15 th - 16 th February
Consultation on Implementation on the Charities Act 2009	Dublin	19 th February
Women in Political Decision Making	Dublin	21 st February
ICBAN Seminar	Dungannon	22 nd February
24 th Colmcille Winter School Conference	Donegal	22 nd - 24 th February
Public Health Seminar on HSE Tobacco Control Policy	Cork	22 nd - 24 th February
Cash for Gold - Burglaries - Drugs	Tipperary	22 nd - 24 th February
Monsignor de Brun Lecture	Galway	25 th February
Mid-Western Regional Authority 18 th Annual Conference	Thurles	28 th Feb - 1 st March

Conference/Seminar Name	Venue	Date
Action Plan for Jobs	Galway	1 st - 2 nd March
Water Quality and how County Councils can improve it	Letterkenny	1 st - 3 rd March
Facilities Management Ireland	Dublin	6 th - 7 th March
Bioregions Seminar and Workshop	Mullingar	7 th March
ACCC Annual Conference	Waterford	7 th - 8 th March
Public Policy Making and the Councillor	Bundoran	8 th - 9 th March
Local Government supporting Volunteerism	Tralee	8 th - 9 th March
Local Authority as drivers of Local Development	Louth	8 th - 10 th March
Time and Priority Management for Councillors	Clare	8 th - 10 th March
Energy Action European Conference	Dublin	11 th - 12 th March
Fundamentals of Social Media Workshop	Dublin	12 th March
A New Future for Local Government in Ireland	Dublin	13 th March
Public Relations and the Media	Monaghan	15 th - 16 th March
The Right to Privacy Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003	Westport	15 th - 16 th March
Community & Local Development LEADER Funding and the Councillor	Louth	15 th - 17 th March
The 9 th National Healthcare Conference	Dublin	19 th - 20 th March
National Alcohol Conference	Dublin	20 th March
Employment Initiatives and Supports for the Unemployed	Galway	22 nd - 23 rd March
Local Government & Job Creation	Wexford	22 nd - 23 rd March
Freedom of Information Seminar	Limerick	22 nd - 23 rd March
Drug & Alcohol Abuse Seminar	Cork	22 nd -24 th March
20 th Amendment Are Plans to abolish and amalgamate Local Authorities Unconstitutional	Letterkenny	22 nd - 24 th March
63 rd Political Studies Association Conference	Cardiff	25 th - 27 th March
Tax Entitlements Seminar	Louth	29 th - 31 st March
Clare Roots Society Genealogical Conference	Clare	2 nd - 6 th April
LAMA Spring Conference	Wexford	5 th - 6 th April
The Roscrea Spring Conference	Tipperary	5 th - 7 th April
Integrated Constructed Wetlands	Waterford	5 th - 7 th April
Cantillon 2013 The Economy & Entrepreneurship	Tralee	11 th - 12 th April
Procurement Expenditure and Revenues in Local Government	Galway	12 th - 14 th April
Starting and Growing a Chamber of Commerce in your community	Louth	12 th - 14 th April
A Decade of Commemoration	Wexford	13 th April
Developing a Social Media Strategy workshop	Dublin	16 th April
Travel and Tourism at the Crossroads	Dublin	17 th -19 th April
Opening Doors: My Life, My Home	Cork	18 th - 19 th April
11 th National Tourism Conference	Carlow	18 th - 20 th April
Local Government & the Consumer	Bundoran	19 th - 20 th April

Conference/Seminar Name	Venue	Date
Media and the Councillor: Social Media and Traditional Media	Westport	19 th - 21 st April
Local Property Tax	Mullingar	19 th - 21 st April
Eures Cross Border Partnership Tourism Conference	Dundalk	24 th April
Transport Ireland 2013	Dublin	25 th April
Digital Education Summit	Dublin	25 th April
EU Presidency Tourism Conference	Dublin	25 th April
Planning Conference	Belfast	25 th - 26 th April
Local Government Reform	Wicklow	25 th - 26 th April
Strengthening the Building Control System	Westport	26 th - 27 th April
Meeting Management Principles & Best Practice	Cork	26 th - 28 th April
Renewable energy & Energy Management for Local Authorities	Galway	26 th - 28 th April
Energy Bridge Conference	Tullamore	30 th April
Nevin Economic Research Institute	Dublin	1 st May
Planning Reform on the island of Ireland	Newry	2 nd May
Public Service Agreement 2010-2014	Galway	3 rd - 4 th May
Local Elections 2014	Letterkenny	3 rd - 5 th May
The New Companies Bill	Dublin	7 th May
Flood Risk Assessment	Westport	10 th - 11 th May
Local Tourism & the Councillor	Wexford	10 th - 11 th May
Public Health Conference on HSE Tobacco Control Policy	Louth	10 th - 12 th May
Global Diaspora Forum	Dublin	14 th - 15 th May
Fiscal Stimulus, House Prices and the Banking Sector	Dublin	15 th May
Dealing with Unfinished Housing Estates	Tralee	17 th - 18 th May
How to Access Funding for Community Programmes relevant to Councillors	Portlaoise	17 th - 19 th May
Substance Awareness Seminar	Leitrim	17 th - 19 th May
Criminalising Addiction: Is there another way?	Dublin	21 st May
Inspire the City Conference	Dublin	24 th May
Strategies for Maximising the Positive Impacts of Tourism	Cork	24 th - 25 th May
West Cork Tourism Seminar	Cork	24 th - 26 th May
Creative Multimedia	Tipperary	24 th - 26 th May
Local Authority Compliance with European Law and Directives	Letterkenny	24 th - 26 th May
Rattoo Heritage Society	Kerry	29 th May - 1 st June
Sport Aiding Mental Health	Donegal	30 th - 31 st May
The Nursing Home Support Scheme	Galway	31 st May - 1 st June
Sustaining a Living Countryside Resilient Communities at the Edge	Cork	6 th June
Nuclear Free LA Ireland Spring Seminar	Dublin	7 th June

Conference/Seminar Name	Venue	Date
How Councillors can successfully access funding to help community programmes	Clare	7 th – 8 th June
Standards for Rented Houses	Westport	7 th – 8 th June
The Effect of Building Information Modelling (BIM) on Local Authorities	Leitrim	7 th – 9 th June
European Legislation and Local Authorities	Louth	7 th – 9 th June
The Development Plan and the Elected Member	Letterkenny	7 th – 9 th June
Electoral Boundary Shake Up & Local Govt Reform	Clare	14 th – 15 th June
Local Government: Learning from the Environment	Clare	14 th – 15 th June
Supporting Enterprise, Local Development and Economic Growth	Galway	14 th – 15 th June
Preparing for new National and Regional Strategies	Letterkenny	14 th – 16 th June
Reflecting on a decade of War and Revolution in Ireland 1912 - 1923	Dublin	15 th June
Bio energy Conference	Dublin	18 th June
BMW & Western Southern & East Regional Assembly Joint Annual Conference	Dublin	19 th June
Local Property Tax	Westport	21 st – 22 nd June
Sustainable Energy Sustainable Tourism	Kerry	21 st – 23 rd June
Aiding Local Communities in Job Creation	Dublin	26 th – 27 th June
Synge Summer School	Wicklow	27 th – 30 th June
Planning for Recovery and Investment	Dublin	28 th June
Mortgage Resolution Bill 2013	Tralee	28 th – 29 th June
Byrne Perry Summer school	Gorey	28 th – 30 th June
European Movement Ireland	Cork	28 th – 30 th June
Financing Current Local Government Expenditure Programmes	Westport	5 th – 6 th July
Mental Health Well Being Coping Skills for Elected Members	Kerry	5 th – 7 th July
Coping with Mental Illness in the Family	Dublin	9 th July
Climate Change Policy towards 2050	Westport	12 th – 13 th July
Local Elections 2014	Cork	12 th – 13 th July
Drug & Alcohol Abuse for Local Authorities	Louth	12 th – 14 th July
The Environment Impact Assessment Directive	Letterkenny	12 th – 14 th July
Substance Misuse and Mental Health	Dublin	23 rd July
Employment Opportunities in Artisan Foods	Cork	26 th – 28 th July
Community Development Arts & Sports	Kerry	26 th – 28 th July
The Westport Conference	Westport	26 th – 28 th July
MacGill Summer School	Donegal	28 th July – 2 nd Aug
Homelessness in Ireland	Galway	30 th July – 1 st Aug
Sliabh Luachra Summer School	Cork	30 th July – 6 th Aug
Tax for the Business Sector	Galway	2 nd – 3 rd August
Rural Crime Prevention and Detection	Letterkenny	2 nd – 4 th August
Effective Use of Oireachtas Committees	Westport	9 th – 10 th August

Conference/Seminar Name	Venue	Date
Parnell Summer School	Wicklow	11 th – 16 th August
Merriman Summer School	Clare	14 th – 18 th August
Building Safer Communities	Galway	16 th – 17 th August
European Convention on Human Rights Act	Kerry	16 th – 18 th August
Investment in Cultural Services	Letterkenny	17 th – 18 th August
Public Presentation and PR Management	Cork	23 rd – 25 th August
Development Plans Training the Elected Member on your issues of Concern	Letterkenny	23 rd – 25 th August
Westport's Greenway, Sustainable Transport Experience	Westport	30 th Aug – 1 st Sept
The Effect of Building Information on Local Authorities	Leitrim	30 th Aug – 1 st Sept
Introduction to Suicide and Self Harm Awareness Workshop	Dublin	3 rd September
Motor Vehicle Tax, Duties and Licences	Westport	6 th – 7 th September
Accessing Funding for Community Programmes relevant to Councillors	Clare	6 th – 7 th September
Dignity at Work	Louth	6 th – 8 th September
VEC's Town Councils FETAC FAS the New Agenda	Kerry	6 th – 8 th September
Making Small Business Work	Dublin	6 th – 8 th September
Anthony Trollope Summer School	Leitrim	6 th – 8 th September
AMAI Annual Conference	Cork	12 th - 14 th Sept
Kennedy Summer School	Wexford	12 th - 14 th Sept
The Defining Document on the New Local Govt Structures	Letterkenny	13 th – 15 th Sept
Desmond Greaves Annual School	Dublin	13 th – 15 th Sept
Introduction to Mood Disorders e.g. Depression	Dublin	17 th September
2 nd Public Sector Finance & Efficiency Summit	Dublin	18 th September
Marine & Coastal Tourism in the Malin Waters Region	Donegal	18 th September
Growth Renewal & Innovation	Wexford	18 th – 19 th Sept
Rattoo Heritage Society	Kerry	18 th – 21 st Sept
2030 Vision the Future of Energy in Ireland	Leitrim	19 th September
The Value of Wetlands	Waterford	20 th September
Planning for Survival	Sligo	20 th September
Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act	Tralee	20 th – 21 Sept
Industrial & Reformatory Schools Ireland	Tipperary	20 th – 22 nd Sept
Community Mental Health & the Elected Member	Letterkenny	20 th – 22 nd Sept
Exploring Epilepsy	Offaly	21 st September
Technology for Well Being	Dublin	25 th – 26 th Sept
A Decade of Commemoration 1913-1923 The Role of Local Authorities	Kerry	26 th – 27 th Sept
Care and Repair Showcase Conference	Dublin	27 th September

Conference/Seminar Name	Venue	Date
Community Leisure and Recreation: The Council's Rose	Wexford	27 th – 28 th Sept
Poverty in Ireland Today	Clare	27 th – 28 th Sept
Pathways to Work 2013	Galway	27 th – 29 th Sept
2013 La Touche Legacy Seminar	Wicklow	27 th – 29 th Sept
How the Elected Member can help combat crime	Kerry	27 th – 29 th Sept
Local Government – A New Dawn	Wicklow	27 th – 29 th Sept
Community Living for Older People	Galway	4 th – 5 th October
New Tendering Requirements for Local Authorities	Louth	4 th – 6 th October
Internet Elections	Dublin	4 th – 6 th October
Developing the Socio Economic Potential of Waterway Corridors	Tipperary	9 th – 10 th October
Planning to Harness Ireland's Energy Opportunity	Dublin	11 th October
Ireland's Future Energy Needs and Risks from Radioactive Discharges	Galway	11 th October
LAMA Autumn Conference	Clare	11 th – 12 th October
50 Ways to Access Funding for Community Programmes relevant to Councillors	Clare	11 th – 12 th October
Sport & Community Planning	Tipperary	11 th – 13 th October
Council Budgets Preparation Adoption & Amendments	Kerry	11 th – 13 th October
Insolvency Service of Ireland	Galway	11 th – 13 th October
Preventing and Reducing Alcohol Related Harm	Westport	18 th – 19 th October
The Forgotten State of Industry	Wicklow	18 th – 19 th October
Mental Health Ireland Workshop	Dublin	22 nd October
The Tellus Border Conference	Monaghan	24 th October
Douglas Hyde Conference	Roscommon	25 th October
Future Energy Needs Wind Turbines to Nuclear	Letterkenny	25 th – 26 th October
Putting People First Update on its Implementation to Date	Clare	25 th – 26 th October
Design Guidelines for the Planning & Development of Rural Housing	Cork	25 th – 27 th October
Seanad – the Results + CDB's out – SEC's in	Letterkenny	25 th – 27 th October
Poverty & Migration in Ireland Today	Clare	1 st – 2 nd November
The Local Government Budget 2014	Donegal	1 st – 2 nd November
Understanding Stigma, Discrimination and Mental Illness	Dublin	5 th November
Association of Irish Festival Events Annual Conference	Galway	7 th – 8 th November
Local Authority Rates and Diminishing Returns	Galway	8 th – 9 th November
A Practical Guide to Budget 2014	Louth	8 th – 10 th November
How Local Authorities are Affected by EU Law & ECHR	Galway	8 th – 10 th November
Preventing Disastrous Building Failures	Galway	12 th – 13 th November
KT Force University and Industry Forum	Waterford	14 th November

Conference/Seminar Name	Venue	Date
Fostering Stronger Communities	Galway	15 th - 16 th November
Local Authority Budgets 2014	Letterkenny	15 th -17 th November
Mental Health Ireland Workshop	Dublin	19 th November
Regional Strategic Framework Launch	Cavan	22 nd November
Budget 2014 for Canvassing	Dublin	22 nd - 24 th November
The TASC Annual Lecture	Dublin	27 th November
Early Education and Childcare in your Community	Kerry	29 th - 30 th November
Local Government Bill 2013	Wexford	29 th - 30 th November
SIPO & Councillors' Obligations	Dublin	29 th November - 1 st December
Mental Health Ireland Workshop	Dublin	3 rd December
National Emergency Planning Summit	Dublin	5 th December
Preparing a Development Contribution Scheme	Galway	6 th - 7 th December
Contemporary Overview of Immigration into Ireland	Clare	6 th - 7 th December
Local Authority Employment Law Practice & Procedure	Tipperary	6 th - 8 th December
Changing Trends and Approaches to Drug & Alcohol Abuse	Tipperary	6 th - 8 th December
Investing in our Public Parks	Dublin	10 th December
Housing Grants and Schemes	Galway	13 th - 14 th December
Tourism Technology & Competitive Strategies for 2014	Cork	13 th - 15 th December
Improving Road Safety Traffic Management	Westport	20 th - 21 st December
Microsoft Excel Training Workshop for Councillors	Cork	20 th - 22 nd December