



**CHAMBERS  
IRELAND**  
IN BUSINESS FOR BUSINESS

# Excellence in Local Government Awards 2012



**Comhshaoil, Pobal agus Rialtas Áitiúil**  
Environment, Community and Local Government



# Welcome

Chambers Ireland is delighted to profile the excellent work undertaken by local authorities on our behalf over the past year in this publication. We produce this document to highlight best practice and innovation, stimulate ideas and offer encouragement to practitioners in the wider Local Government sector in their efforts to achieve more for all of their stakeholders.

In partnership with the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, these awards seek to recognise and encourage those who seek to do better despite tighter budgetary constraints and the wider economic challenges being felt throughout Ireland at this time.

In this context, the Chamber network believes that the recent announcement of the Action Programme for Local Government represents an important step towards increased efficiency and the delivery of much needed savings while not compromising our collective need to maintain frontline services for all users.

Those Local Authorities profiled in this publication provide a benchmark of how working smarter and embracing new ideas can deliver more for all stakeholders in the community in terms of enhanced and more cost effective savings and a better quality of life for all.

In changing times, marked by the need to embrace flexibility and new ways of doing things, we have been particularly impressed by the innovation and originality displayed in so many of the shortlisted projects.

Finally, Chambers Ireland together with our wider network of affiliated Chambers is very proud of its deep relationship with all units of Local Government in Ireland. The Chamber network recognises and appreciates the daily work of Local Authorities on behalf of us all and offers this publication as a means of lauding these efforts in a positive way.



**Ian Talbot,**  
Chief Executive,  
Chambers Ireland




















## Ratepayers and Local Government Council

- Joe Allen
- Orlaith Borthwick, Economist, Limerick Chamber
- Declan Duke, Principal Partner, IPC Consulting
- Hilary Haydon, Partner, Haydon Chartered Accountants
- Roy Hogan, Pharmacist, Parnell Pharmacy
- Tony Lambert, Chief Executive, Fingal Dublin Chamber
- Rita McInerney, Chief Executive, Ennis Chamber
- Alma Murnane, Policy & Research Manager, Cork Chamber
- Tony O'Brien, Consultant, TOB Associates
- Andrew Smyth, Policy & Media Relations, Dublin Chamber

## Excellence in Local Government Awards Judging Panel

- Brian Cawley, Director General, Institute of Public Administration
- Dónall Curtin, Partner, Byrne Curtin Kelly
- Donal Enright, Principal Officer, Department of Environment, Community and Local Government
- Tony O'Brien, Consultant, TOB Associates
- Madeleine Quirke, Chief Executive, Wexford Chamber

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Chambers Ireland would like to thank all of the kind sponsors  
for their involvement in the 2012 Excellence in Local Government Awards.



TIPPERARY CRYSTAL



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Cavan County Council

## Extern Traveller Project – Expressive Art Programme

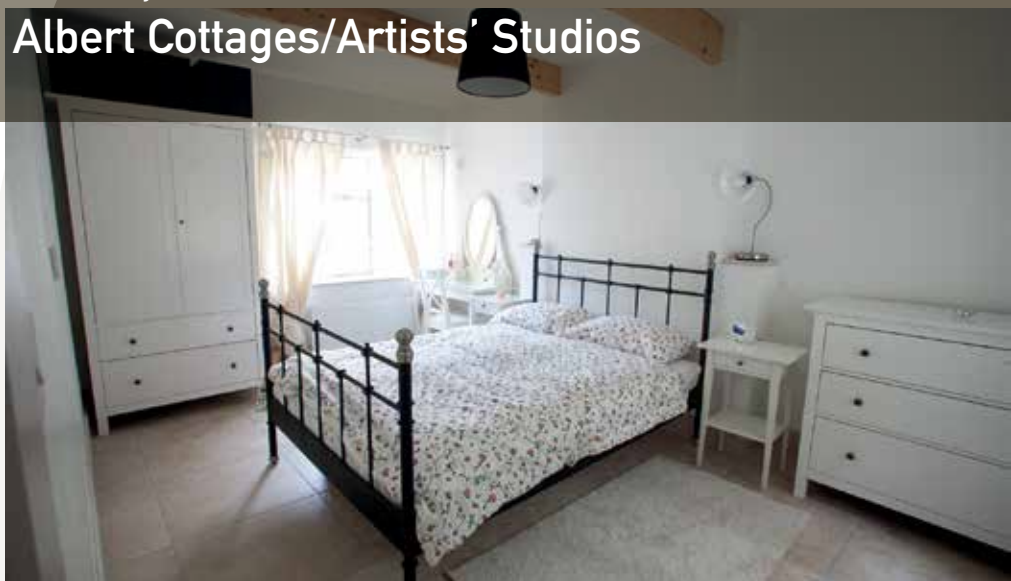


In 2010 Cavan Arts Office was approached by the Extern Traveller Project with the view to the participants engaging in an arts project. Through consultation with arts staff, the travellers and their facilitator it was agreed that a visual arts programme that would allow the women to express their culture, experience, hopes and desires would be most beneficial. Artist Rikki van den Berg was engaged for an eight week programme to deliver the expressive art programme that she has devised. This programme opened the participants to their own self expression through various techniques. In 2011 their paintings and textile work were exhibited as part of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann.



Dublin City Council

## Albert Cottages/Artists' Studios



Dublin City Council's Arts and Cultural Strategy identifies a commitment to provide a range of studios and residences suitable for artists within the city. The project saved two deserted buildings, renovated and completely transformed them to the studios that stand today. Albert Cottages/Artist Studios provide bright contemporary accommodation available to Irish and International artists and arts organisations. They are located adjacent from Albert Park and close to the city centre.

Albert Cottages rental rate is currently at less than 50% of the market rate. It also includes all services; WiFi, and free to air satellite TV. Since its launch in 2011 it has hosted ten artists and four cultural organisations in four months.





Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council

## 'Partnership with Youth – Development of The Grainstore'



The Grainstore is an arts facility for young people aged 25 and managed by the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Arts Office since September 2008. The driving force behind this project is the high percent of youth population in the area. This idea originated to create a model of leadership and participation in the arts.

It is housed in an old two-storey grainstore; on the grounds of Cabinteely Park. It holds a multi-purpose hall for dance, exhibitions, performances, a workshop space, a rehearsal room, a multimedia room, as well as a recording booth and an artist studio. Currently, the Grainstore hosts art and dance classes among a plethora of other activities. It also comes to Canvas, a voluntary youth arts committee who programme and organise events for their peers.



Enniscorthy Town Council

## The Presentation Centre



Enniscorthy Town Council's Presentation Centre, a former chapel of the Presentation Convent, has been restored and transformed into a multi-purpose and cultural centre for the promotion of the arts. The chapel building has been re-developed into the Presentation Centre and now offers a stage area with sound and lighting, 120 ground floor moveable seats, 40 balcony seats, stage, new dressing rooms, toilets, reception and catering area and is fully accessible. It opened on 18th May 2012, and it has been booked ever since. The Presentation Centre is expected to become a platform for the promotion of the arts and attract further visitors and tourism in the town, helping to stimulate the town's economy. The ultimate goal of this project is to provide a vibrant and sustainable community arts and cultural centre for the promotion of the arts in Enniscorthy.



Roscommon County Council

## Roscommon County Youth Orchestra



Roscommon County Youth Orchestra (RCYO) is a music development project designed to promote participation in music, to develop educational opportunities for young players and to provide an orchestral infrastructure where none previously existed. It is a partnership project between Roscommon County Council and Roscommon Vocational Educational Committee. RCYO is dedicated to promoting participation in music by youths from the ages of 10 years and upwards, irrespective of geographic location or socio-economic background. It allows a young person to explore his/her own creativity and is a key part in a young person's personal development. Self-confidence and teamwork are gained through the RCYO. The number of participants has increased from 24 in 2007 to over 60 in 2012 and it is anticipated that this project will continue to grow and develop over the years.



Dublin City Council

## McKee Court Senior Citizens Housing and Community Facility



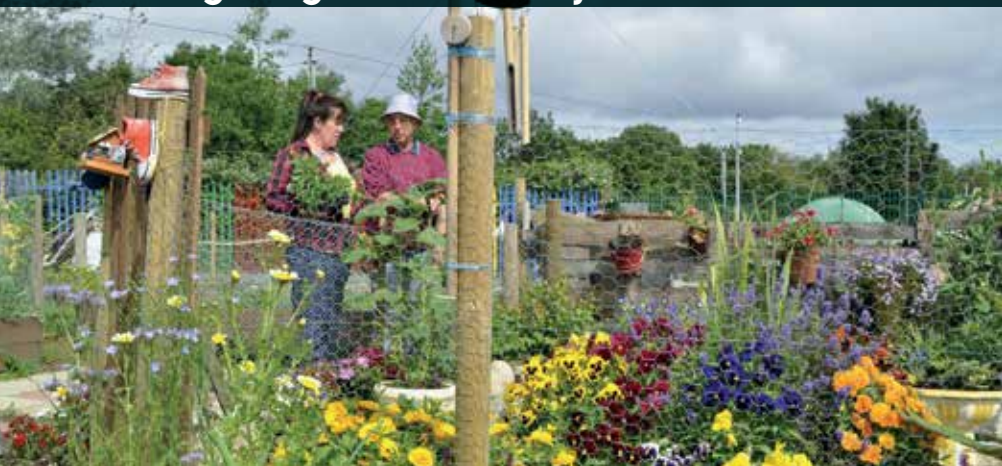
Dublin City Council's McKee Court Senior Citizen Housing and Community Facility project comprises thirty seven units and a community facility. The apartments are designed to facilitate independent living and accommodate people with disabilities. The community facility is designed for shared use between residents of the complex and residents of the local community. Within the key objectives of the project is to facilitate and encourage greater resident responsibility; to look after dwellings and ancillary private and semi-private spaces by designing the scheme with 'own door access' with no shared corridors or deck access. Greater care and responsibility is encouraged for residents to maintain the upkeep of these external private and semi-private areas.

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Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council

## Growing and Building Communities – Shanganagh Community Garden



Shanganagh Community Garden is a sustainable community development project, which saw over 300 people living in Shanganagh area of South County Dublin participating in the programme. Over an 18 month period the Garden has evolved into 70 individual/family/group owned plots, in which planting has yielded an amazing range of fresh produce such as vegetables, fruits, herbs and flowers. The project's objective include promoting active citizenship in the community by developing high levels of resident participation as well as promoting healthy lifestyles activities. Due to the successful implementation of this project, the Council is now exploring the possibility of expanding this initiative into three other areas of the County – Loughlinstown, Ballyogan and Cois Cairn.





Dundalk Town Council

## The Open 24 Hours Art Gallery



The 24-Hour Art Gallery creates a partnership between Dundalk Town Council, individuals, communities, Dundalk Tidy Towns and local printers. The objective was to proudly show artworks created or owned locally making use of under-utilized banner sites in Dundalk, while also providing a new and interesting aspect of the Arts in the town streets. In addition to the pilot project, Dundalk Photographic Club have provided over forty award winning photographs, taken by their members and given free of charge to display in the Dundalk Streets. The impact has been positive and well received in the local press with other artists and photographers expressing an interest in taking part in future displays.



Navan Town Council

## Navan Town Pride of Place



Navan Town Pride of Place is an initiative that has brought people together with a common interest within their communities. The project encourages and rewards local groups, businesses and individuals in enhancing the natural beauty of their environment through the use of flowers, colour, shrubs, sunny window boxes, and hanging baskets, freshly painted buildings, clean streets, sustainable planning and sound environmental management. The purpose of this initiative is to create communities for tomorrow while respecting the heritage and culture of the past as well as to encourage participation from the town's citizens to take pride in their town.



Westmeath County Council

## Cathaoirleach Awards – Communities in Action Scheme



The Cathaoirleach Awards is an annual event established in 2007. They celebrate the community and voluntary groups in the area for the work being delivered as well as supporting the work in progress. It is an initiative developed by Westmeath County Council to give an opportunity to express the Council's gratitude to the groups in the community who carry out works on a continual voluntary basis. There are eight individual categories for the awards which include; Pride of Place in the Community, eco-primary schools competition, eco pre-school competition, Community Action Scheme, residents Association grants, Tidy Towns grants, significant achievement grant, Cathaoirleach Awards and a themed grant. This past year the theme was the Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations.





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Dublin City Council

## Graffiti: Art or Vandalism?



Dublin City Council's project Graffiti: Art or Vandalism?, delivered through its Library Service and its arts office, was developed to educate children about the detrimental effects of anti-social behaviour on their neighbourhoods and the environment. Between October 2011 and February 2012, five programmes across a range of art forms were commissioned. Programmes included creating creative communities, the mural project, the rudy project, graffiti wipeout and meeting point. Seventeen libraries participated in the programme which catered for 1,078 children from forty three schools and two youth groups.



Galway County Council

## From Libraries to Community & Cultural Hubs: the local library as a community, creative and learning spaces



Galway County Council seeks to make the library the cultural hub of each town or village. This project works to develop community partnerships between the library and local cultural and social groups. In 2011, 590 events took place across 29 libraries in Galway. Initiatives included readings, allowing artists to use the library space, 'kitchen readings' in people's own homes and free concerts in the libraries. The project allowed people to undertake a wider range of experience to find a greater degree of self-realisation, self-expression, and awareness of belonging to a community.



South Dublin County Council

## Ready2Read – Promoting Early Literacy Programme



Ready2Read was launched by South Dublin County Council to provide hands-on training for parents to help their children develop six pre-literacy skills which prepares them for formal learning in school and help them in their journey to becoming independent readers. Learning through the programme is accomplished through fun workshops which involve reading, nursery rhymes, songs and group activities and a series of practical tips to demonstrate each of the six pre-literacy skills. At the end of the programme each child and parent is presented with a certificate. South Dublin County Council sees this as an opportunity to develop and support early literacy through upskilling, empowering and enthusing South Dublin parents to undertake early literacy work with their children.



Wexford County Council

## Gorey Community Library – Our Place, Great Space!



Gorey is the fastest growing town in Leinster, a market town with a prosperous rural hinterland and more recently a dormitory for Dublin. In just one year the Gorey Community Library has achieved extensive community integration by offering relevant services, refined to local needs. The project has several aims; to provide a public information service, to create a public space that is welcoming and inclusive, to support personal and community development and deepen a sense of belonging locally and encourage civil engagement. In the 12 month period beginning with the 1<sup>st</sup> May 2011, registered membership of the library was 9,874 with Gorey readers borrowing 156,932 items. Gorey library exemplifies best community action, unified by a shared space and a common concern to welcome strangers and help neighbours, near and far.



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Donegal County Council

## One Donegal Cultural Diversity Month



Throughout November of 2011 Donegal County Council launched their One Donegal Cultural Diversity month festival. The aim of the festival is “Embracing and Celebrating Diversity” and the main objective of the festival is to highlight the rich cultural diversity that exists in Donegal. A range of agencies united to create a programme of events that embraces and celebrates the rich cultural diversity that exists in Donegal today. This past year, over 140 events were included in the programme and between 4,000-6,000 people attended. Activities focus on promoting diversity and addressing sectarianism/racism issues. The events are created to suit people of all ages and are offered throughout the county. The event is developing social capital through inclusion, and empowering groups to address issues in a concerted way.



Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council

## Opening the Door – Summer of Heritage Festival



Opening the Door – Summer of Heritage Festival started in 2008 as a way of providing free access to people who live, work and visit the county of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown. The festival displays the county's heritage assets during the summer months. Now in its fifth year, the Festival runs from the end of June until the beginning of September. All of the events held are free. It has been successful with over 15,000 people attended the festival events. Summer of Heritage events have included tours and living history performances at Cabinteely House and Marlay House; guided tours of the Oratory of the Sacred Heart, Killiney Obelisk, Stillorgan Obelisk, Carrickbrennan Closed burial Ground, Deansgrange Cemetery and the Seapoint Martello Tower; open air tours have included the Dun Laoghaire Seafront Memorials among other tours and activities.



Waterford City Council

## The Tall Ships Races 2011



From June 30<sup>th</sup> to July 3<sup>rd</sup> Waterford City Council hosted the international event, Tall Ships Races 2011. Over 500,000 people visited Waterford and enjoyed an explosive free festival programme that combined music, dance, theatre, street art, artisan food, and craft villages among other activities. Headline acts such as Bryan Ferry, The Waterboys and Sharon Shannon attracted huge crowds to the main stage each night of the event and three additional stages dotted in the event precinct featured free performances each day. The stages sited at: John Roberts Square, William Wallace Plaza and the Frank Casin Wharf had individual musical themes. This event brought huge economic contributions back to Waterford (a seven fold return on investment) and €7.7m spent by overseas visitors in accommodation, food and shopping. Over 700 volunteers contributed more than 13,760 hours in order to make this festival a success.



Wexford Borough Council

## Art in the Open



This is an open air art (painting) festival now in its fourth year. The concept was devised by a group of local artists in Wexford Town and has been supported, encouraged and nurtured by the Borough Council. It consists of capturing the artist in his/her zone. One of the main objectives of this project is to provide a unique tourism project, encourage local artists and bring art to the general population. The idea is that artists paint on the streets of the town, in rural area and touristic areas in the full view of the public. All of the paintings are exhibited at the end of the weekend. The 2011 attendance doubled that of 2010. The festival has been such a success, achieving over 700 bed night sales from foreign tourists in 2011, that next year Fáilte Ireland will provide funding to make the festival bigger and better for 2012.



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Cavan Town Council

## Fair Green Hill Amenity Area



The Fair Green Amenity Area is a prominent hilltop overlooking Cavan Town centre. It is adjacent to Fairgreen Terrace and other local authority estates. Cavan Town Council's main objective in creating the Fair Green Hill Amenity Area was to enhance an unattractive and dangerous green area that had been the location of anti-social behaviour. They also aimed to enhance the quality of lives of residents in adjacent Local Authority estates by developing a series of environmental improvements and to develop a public park with scenic viewing points and picnic areas for children and families. The project was successful and brought in great improvements; it has increased local history knowledge of the site and its archaeology as well as providing the community with a green area for recreational use.



Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council

## Tea, Music and Friendship in Cabinteely Park - enhanced facilities for all ages



Cabinteely Park is located just beside Cabinteely Village in the midst of residential South County Dublin. It provides a range of facilities, free of charge to citizens of the county. Development of this initiative started in the historic Cabinteely Park in the 1980's, when the park contained landscape features associated with period properties such as walls, lodges, iron gates and a walled garden. Through a combination of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council and local staff commitment, technical competence, vision and enthusiasm, the park has vastly expanded its offering to all ages, with further exciting plans being developed for the future.



Limerick City Council

## Baggot Estate Amenity Enhancement Works



Limerick City Council has transformed a previously neglected 'brown field' site known as a haven for anti-social elements into a popular urban forest amenity. Given the configuration of the city, there are very few 'green field' sites which could have been so developed. The project included the rejuvenation of 1100m of walkways which have been restored as well as adult exercise equipment, six monitoring cameras, a broadband server and the erection of directional and informative signage. Observations suggest that over 250 visitors enter the site daily and there has been vast reduction in the amount of anti-social behaviour and activities.



Waterford City Council

## Waterford Nature Park



Waterford Nature Park is over 130 acres of a natural oasis within the City. The Nature Park incorporates Kilbarry Park which is 50 acres of parkland on the City's remediated landfill, St John's River, wetlands and the Kilbarry Bog pNHA in Kilbarry. It is a fantastic amenity. The Parks wetlands, river and stream, stone walls, meadowlands and over 20,000 trees/plants will add to the City's biodiversity. It is a great educational tool and it offers an opportunity to get close to nature in an urban/city environment.. The Park is a paradise for keep fit enthusiasts with a myriad of paths, walkways and outdoor gym trail. Waterford City Council's vision and foresight has turned what was a negative blight on the City landscape for over 40 years into a fantastic amenity.





Westmeath County Council

## Belvedere House Gardens and Park

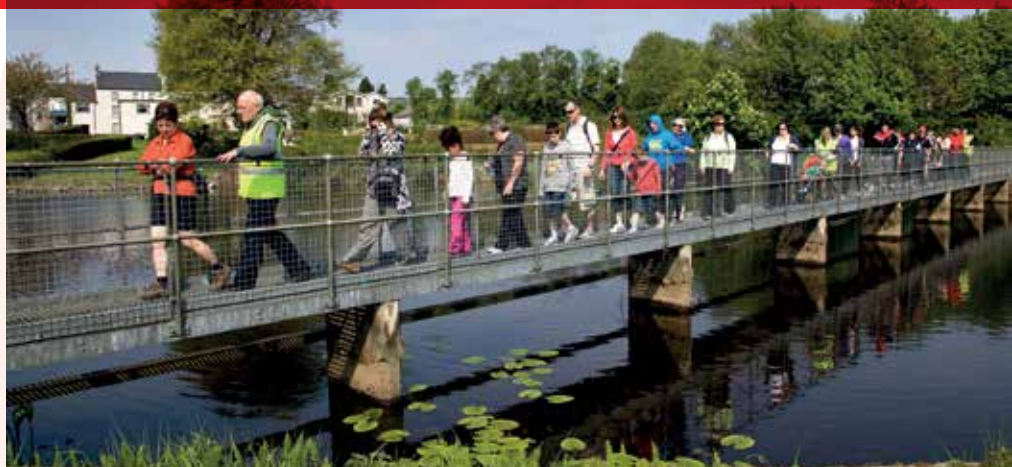


Westmeath County Council has provided support and recognition in the development of Belvedere House Gardens and Park over the last 30 years to where it is today. Belvedere estate is an internationally recognised heritage asset and continues to develop new ways of people interacting with it. Belvedere is resonant of the past and relevant to the future. The estate provides educational services through the organisation of different nature programmes, and is to the fore front in protecting and enhancing understanding of the natural landscape and the biodiversity of the forest and lake areas. In 2013 Belvedere will host the National Launch of Tree Week centred on the Heritage Apple Orchard containing over 40 native Irish Breeds and the Apiary containing over a million bees.



Cavan County Council

## Geopark Ambassadors Project



The Geopark Ambassadors Project has created a network of community volunteers to develop and deliver events under the umbrella of the Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark. This began with the overall aim of providing and maintaining a network of Geopark Ambassadors for the Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark. It aims to generate tourism revenue within the local communities and foster a sense of ownership, therefore encouraging further cooperation between the local authority and the local residents. This project is innovative as it embraces the lack of financial resources available to all Local Authorities and also harnesses the wealth of local knowledge and expertise available in the local communities. It has also enhanced local community integration with and ownership of the Geopark. In 2011 there were 40 applicants and only 20 places available. Fifteen of the applicants successfully gained Geopark Local Tour Guide Status and are still active and involved in training.



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Carlow Town Council

## Carlow County Museum



Carlow County Museum, Ireland's newest museum has a variety of exhibits representing the county, from its geological and archaeological past to modern times. Operated by Carlow Town Council in association with Carlow Historical & Archaeological Society, it is designated by the National Museum of Ireland as a repository for archaeological finds. This project has been over a decade in the making and as a result, the museum has been completely refurbished. The new premises represent the final part of the Cultural Quarter of Carlow; involving Carlow College, George Bernard Shaw Theatre, VISUAL Centre for Contemporary Art, Carlow Cathedral, Carlow Tourist Office, and Carlow County Library and Carlow County museum.



Donegal County Council

## Donegal Gathering



The Donegal Gathering is a tourism initiative launched by Donegal County Council. It aims to raise the profile of the County by showcasing the huge range of cultural festivals and events that are held annually throughout Donegal. The goal is to reach out and connect to the broad national and international diaspora and people with an interest in Donegal. It is through a mix of private and public sector agencies in the County that the project is being promoted on the website of B&B Ireland. Both the Donegal Gathering along with the Donegal Diaspora Project demonstrate the inventiveness and resourcefulness of the county in attracting commerce from beyond its boundaries while celebrating culture and heritage. Stimulating growth in a positive and constructive manner brings major benefits to local business and the entire community as a whole.





Enniscorthy Town Council

## Enniscorthy Castle – A View from the Keep



Enniscorthy Town Council has successfully renovated Enniscorthy Castle. It has become a significant tourist attraction in the town as well as a visitor information centre, and also a hub of activity for local groups. The workmanship is to the highest standard allowing the building to show its medieval magnificence as well having modern features to suit all visitors, such as a lift and central heating.

At the moment, an exhibition entitled “A View from the Keep” explores the development of the Castle and town from its Anglo-Norman origins. The Council also works with other attractions, local hoteliers, and business to promote the town as an inviting, interesting place to visit. Since the opening on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2011 it has attracted more than 30,000 visitors to the town. This number is expected to grow within the coming years with the addition of new programmes available at Enniscorthy Castle.



Cavan Town Council

## Cavan Town Business Floral Enhancement Initiative



Cavan Town Council joined with the local Chamber and individual businesses to create attractive floral displays/hanging baskets on their shop fronts. The initiative is meant to enhance the look of the town and to provide a welcoming ambiance for visitors. Each participating business purchases their own basket bracket. Cavan Town Council takes the baskets, plants, grows and returns them to each business during first week of June each year.

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## Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council

# Rewarding Excellence and Innovation in Environmental Management



The Envirocom Awards are an annual event which recognise environmental achievers who operate businesses in the county. The event originated from the publication of the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Board's 10-year plan (2002-2012); following the establishment of a committee to develop annual Awards that would inspire all businesses to operate to the highest environmental standards. The Envirocom Awards have proven to be a very effective tool in rewarding excellence, dedication, innovation and success in environmental management in companies and organisations of any size or sector within the county and as such enhance the role of the Council in supporting local businesses to position themselves in the "green space".



Kilkenny County Council

## Supporting the Economic Development of the Agri-food Industry in the South East



Kilkenny County Council recognised at an early date that the ambitious targets set out in Food Harvest 2020 and the “Greening” of food would be damaged if water quality objectives for Kilkenny’s rivers and aquifers were compromised. The aim of the project is to show that the targets of increasing milk production by 50% contained in the food Harvest 2020 can be achieved without negatively impacting on water quality objectives contained in River Basin Management Plans, which were developed to implement the Water Framework Directive and ensure water resources reach and maintain good status. The study in Kilkenny is being used as a pilot that can be rolled out to other counties. The results of the study show that there is capacity to increase milk yield in Kilkenny, if it is managed correctly. Achieving environmental targets will be seen as an asset towards the “Greening” of Irish food.



Leitrim County Council

## Leitrim – One Call to Success



Leitrim – One Call to Success is an innovative, collaborative way of helping private businesses to get access to 10 Support Services with one phone call and one website. The purpose of the line is to provide one point of contact for people thinking of setting up a business in Leitrim or those with an existing business who have queries on supports. It provides direct advice, appointments set up and local links with one call. The service is reviewed regularly within the Economic Development Group in order to identify blockages for people in accessing information as an existing or new business. In addition, the Council organises a yearly Self-Employed Forum event to encourage anyone who has a business of any sort in the county to come in and meet with the local support agencies and hear from both a keynote speaker and people already involved in the business network. In 2011, 100 people attended this event from people working on their own through to people employing up to 20 people. The evaluation of the event highlighted the importance of the chance of one to one meetings with enterprise support agencies in one place.





Navan Town Council

## Navan Town Renaissance Project



The Navan Town Renaissance Project is a collaborative effort between Navan Town Council, Meath Co Council's Economic Development Department, Navan Chamber of Commerce, retailers, businesses and the wider community to transform the face of the town. This project created a town which is known locally, nationally and internationally as an excellent place to invest, to visit, to shop and to live in, renowned for the quality of its employment opportunities, heritage, culture and the strength and viability of its communities. The efforts of this project are reflected in a renewed sense of pride of place among both business people and consumers alike in Navan. The Council with its partners are committed to maintaining this momentum to ensure that Navan's retail environment is improved for the benefit of all.

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## Dublin City Council, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin County Councils and National University of Ireland Maynooth

### Dublinked



Dublinked uses Dublin's public data to facilitate innovative research and commercial applications. Through linking people from different sectors it creates opportunities to collaborate on regional challenges. The concept was developed by four Dublin local authorities (Dublin City Council, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin County Councils) in the Dublin Regional Economic Action Plan 2009. The objective was to use regional data from public and private sources to drive economic activity and research as well as to encourage Dublinked members from commercial, academic and public bodies to network together and use this data to create solutions to Dublin's challenges. The project partners recognised the potential of the emerging field of open data for Ireland and started this initiative in advance of national and European guidelines.



Galway City Council

## Meet West



The objective of the three-year programme is to bring together three hundred to four hundred companies based in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon. Reasons include facilitating the development of greater business between these companies and further business opportunities for them locally, regionally or internationally. Specialized software and networking event organizers were employed to facilitate business opportunities between companies based in that region that would not previously worked together. Meet West proved to be an example of intra-regional co-operation involving the local authorities and County and City Enterprise Boards in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon, Enterprise Ireland, the IDA, Údarás na Gaeltachta and the Western Development Commission. Overall 95% of the Delegates rated the initiative as 'good' or higher. Its success now will be built upon the upcoming year.





Local Government Management Agency

## Local Authority Safety Management System



This project was led and supported by key stakeholders including: Local Government Management Agency, Joint Union Management Health and Safety Steering Committee, thirty four County and City Managers; Local Authority National Partnership Advisory Group; National Standards Authority of Ireland; Health and Safety Authority and Irish Public Bodies. The key risk identified for the project was the management of communication and consultation; strenuous efforts employed by the key stakeholders resulted in the receipt of more than 16,000 comments for action. Awareness and support sessions were delivered to more than 500 Local Authorities employees and management teams. The embedding of the outputs will support the building of an evidence base of assurance and the demonstration of good governance.



## Western Local Authority Procurement Network

# Western Local Authority Procurement Network



Procurement Officials from the Western Local Authorities including Galway City and County Councils, Mayo, Roscommon, Leitrim, Sligo, and Donegal County Councils formed a Regional Procurement Network. The main objective of this initiative is to adopt a co-ordinated strategic approach to procurement, so as to facilitate and promote commonality and uniformity and exploit the potential for collaborative tendering to take advantage of buying power and achieve greater value for money. Through close co-operation encompassing a broad spectrum of expertise, the group has succeeded in creating a more advanced, open and transparent approach to Procurement. Through its collaborative approach and its identification of a needs process, the group has shifted the emphasis from reactive to proactive purchasing. The group has created an environment whereby the profile and the importance of the Procurement Function has been raised and enhanced to a level within the participating organisations whereby it has become a driver for real change.



Wicklow Town Council

## Victorian Christmas in Wicklow



Wicklow Town Forum (comprising Wicklow Town Council and Wicklow Chamber) identified the need to implement a series of initiatives to develop tourism and reinvigorate retail and business in the town. This project put on by the Chamber and Town Council saw the town's total transformation; staff in local shops dressed in period costume, while every shop window throughout the town was decked out in Victorian themes creating a vibrant and enchanting Christmas shopping environment. Captivating signage depicting Victorian scenes was displayed on all entrance and exit points of the town. Wicklow Gaol embraced the splendour of this period to create a world which would enchant children of all ages. Deemed a very successful project, it brought over 14,000 visitors to the town and a boost to the local economy. During the time of the visitors, retail was up by excess 36% on the previous year. It also won the RTÉ's Business "Christmas Competition" for its Victorian Christmas theme.



Dublin City Council

## Scanning and Geo-location of Dublin City Council's Property Register



Dublin City Council's Scanning and Geo-location of Dublin City Council's Property Register automated the process of information retrieval from the property register. The data capture process involved the preparation of all documents before handover to the contractor for scanning and geo-location, and the subsequent download of data to Dublin City Council for rigorous quality control/testing prior to the integration of the project. The scanning and digitising of the existing property register, which contained more than 240 paper bound registers, enables a comprehensive online map based search and retrieval of over 40,000 property transaction records in the Municipal area. Dublin City Council's successful completion of this project demonstrated that scanning to pdf on a great scale is achievable and feasible.

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Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council

## Higher Education Grants – Portal to a Brighter Future



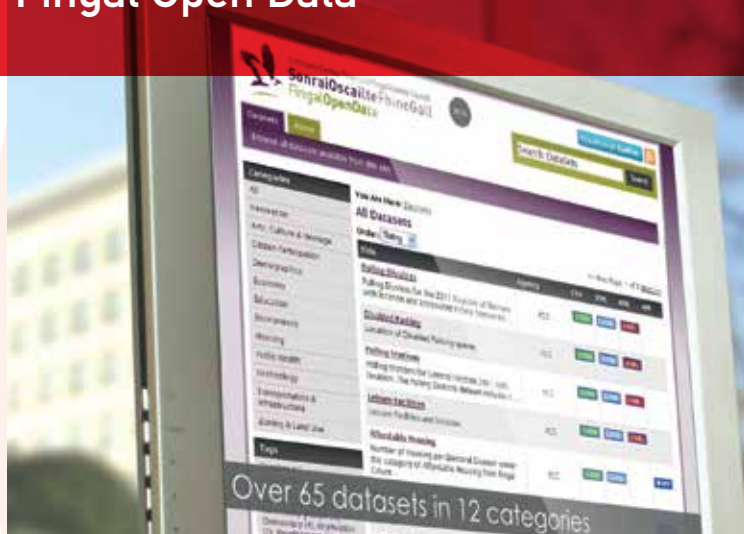
Higher Education Grants Online is an innovation in Higher Education Grants processing led by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council. The Council worked with software companies to develop an interface between eHEGs and Grantsonline; in other words, when a student submitted an application online, it is now brought into the eHEGs system of the correct local authority. The Local Authority represented the sector on the committee for the Online Grant Application Project set up by the Department of Education in 2010, which included participating in the tender, design, testing and launch of the online grant application Grantsonline, launched in 2011. They were able to offer this service to all 23 local authorities using eHEG. The solution was fully tested by the County Council and provided training, documentation and support. It has benefitted thirteen local authorities and thousands of students.





Fingal County Council

## Fingal Open Data



Fingal Open Data launched by Fingal County Council is the first open government data website in the country. It has made a major contribution to improving access to services by taking the first step in opening Irish public sector data. It is an innovative approach to the delivery of online services and provision of information to the public; provides potential new business opportunities in areas such as online services, mobile applications and analytics; and enables existing businesses to carry out analysis based on the data to identify business development opportunities. Since the site launched in November of 2011, there have been 2,885 visitors who have viewed 9,661 pages on the site.



Fingal County Council

## #Apps4Fingal



Fingal County Council made its core data available to the public free of charge and without condition in 2010. Apps4Fingal, as a competition, challenged entrants to use open data published on a website to build mobile and online applications and submit them under four categories. This initiative recognised the practical uses through which most citizens encounter open sources of public data through mobile apps. Apps4fingal was a practical challenge for many of the local Information Technology companies and software developers to use data that had not been made previously available. It brought sectors together with a common interest in commercialising open data and resulted in high quality apps for the citizens and visitors to this county. Many of these stimulate the use of local services and amenities.



## Wexford Local Authorities

# MapAlerter – A free text and email alert system for the public



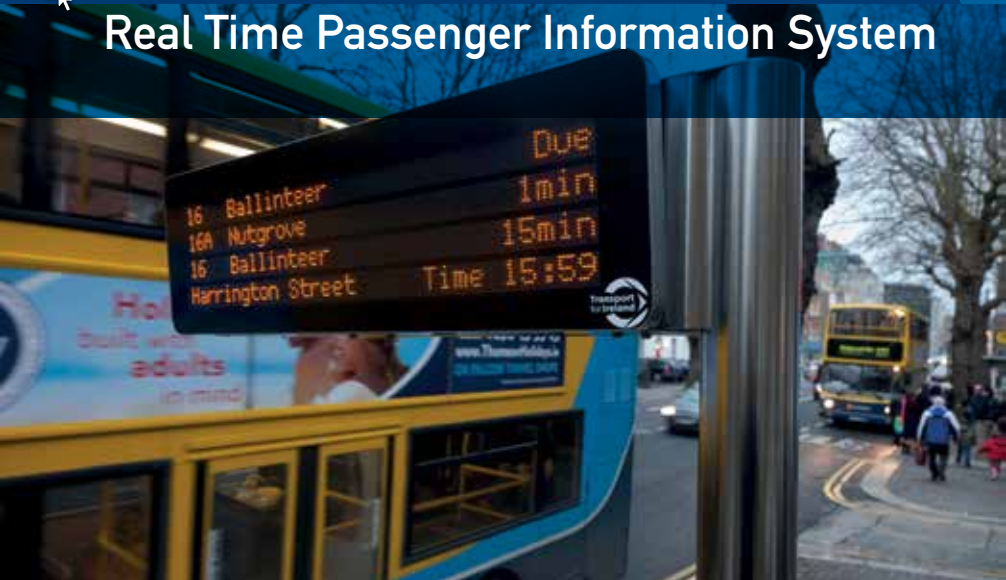
Wexford Local Authorities recognise the value of providing relevant and timely information to the citizens of Wexford. The Local Authorities have consistently been strong in the provision of online service to the public. The MapAlerter programme is a cloud-based system that enables Wexford Local Authorities to use complex alerting and mapping processes over the Internet without the need for on-site software or IT resources. The introduction of MapAlerter provides a new service in the format of a user friendly system that allows citizens to register their home and work location. Staff then send alerts about water service disruptions, road works and closures, floods, severe weather and local events. The programme represents value for money and efficient use of resources as a priority and the implementation of MapAlerter ensures that citizens are kept informed in a timely and cost effective way.

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Dublin City Council

## Real Time Passenger Information System



Dublin City Council's project is an example of how a Local Authority can provide a project across multiple Local Authorities and Councils with multiple stakeholders and working across varied, disparate bus systems and technologies. In this case Dublin City Council with the NTA and the close and sustained co-operation of the Transport Operators have been able to provide this project which when all phases are complete will provide real time travel information. "Real Time" provides real time information of arrivals at multiple bus/tram stops throughout the country to the public by providing electronic displays at stop points, and through the provision of a web site, SMS application and mobile phone apps. Results from the project are as high as 100% accuracy. Internationally, accuracy levels of 90% are judged to be good, the target for this system is an average of 95% accuracy and currently we are achieving an average of 93%.



Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council

## Mobility Management Planning in the Sandyford Business District



The Sandyford Smarter Travel project has been completed by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council. It is a holistic package of measures set up to support, encourage and develop a culture of sustainable travel in the Sandyford Business District. This is being carried out through Mobility Management Planning, infrastructure upgrades and collaborative engagement with businesses and residents in the area as part of a Mobility Management Plan network. The result of this will be that the Sandyford Business District will prosper, attracting inward investment and providing job opportunities for people living in the County. The development of an Area Wide Mobility Management Plan and the setting up of a Mobility Management Plan network will help provide a model for the rest of Ireland on how to engage with a business community in helping to roll out sustainable travel initiatives in an area.





Westmeath County Council

## “Bike Start” Information, Awareness and Education Programme

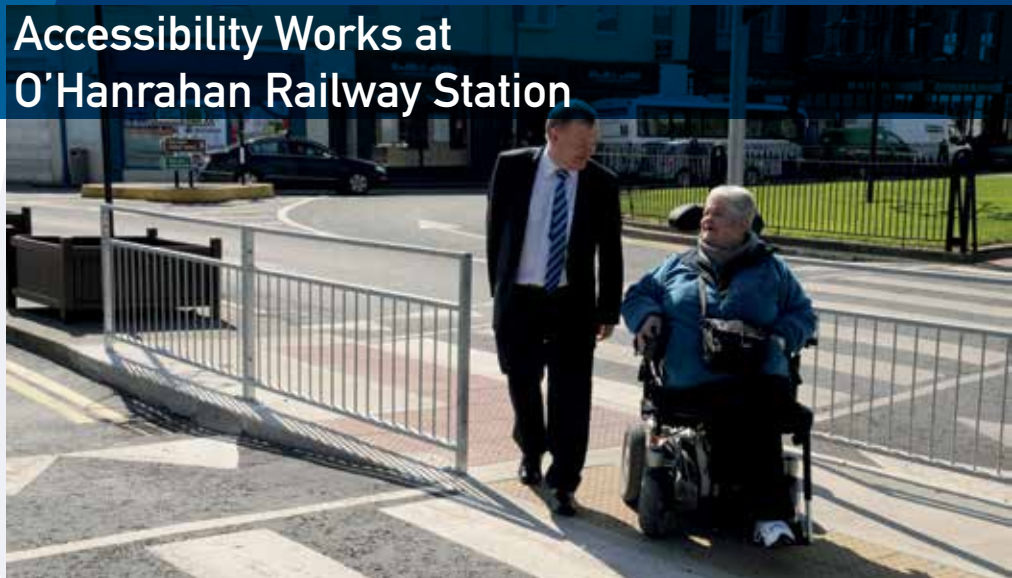


The “Bike Start” Information, Awareness and Education Programme is an integral and crucial element in the implementation of the successful “Active Travel Mullingar” project in Westmeath County. The training/educational programme is currently being delivered in 12 schools (Primary and Secondary) (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Classes & transition years respectively) in Mullingar Town and Environs that have signed up to participate in the project. The training programme has been developed for students to learn how to cycle safely including general knowledge, aspects of safety equipment and bike maintenance. This is a comprehensive educational programme and has successfully trained over 800 participants to date. The benefits of cycling as a mode of transport improves the environment by reducing the impact on residents of pollution and noise thereby reducing green house gases and reducing traffic congestion by shifting short trips out of cars and making urban areas more accessible for public transport. A Safe cycling environment can save lives by creating safer conditions for cyclists and improves the health and well being of the population by promoting regular physical activity.



Wexford Borough Council

## Accessibility Works at O'Hanrahan Railway Station



Wexford Borough Council is delivering the most urgently required works identified by the National Council for the Blind of Ireland (NCBI) and Irish Wheelchair Association in a consultation early in 2011. When funding was announced for Accessibility Works at O'Hanrahan Railway Station project, the Council was in a position to make the best application for disabled users. The project required the works to be carried out in a very short time frame and the Council worked closely with Iarnród Éireann, Bus Éireann, Wexford Bus and Wexford County Council to prepare a plan, agree the works with all the parties, and engage contractors to carry out the works.

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Carlow County Council

## Tone Zone Outdoor Physical Activity Centre



The 'Tone Zone' Outdoor Gym is located within the grounds of the Éire Óg GAA Club in Carlow Town and provides the people of Carlow with the opportunity to undertake physical activity in a safe and secure environment providing an important recreational and social outlet. The Tone Zone programme is a free public facility provided for the whole community, accessible for all ages and abilities. It helps address the social isolation that often threatens the quality of life of all sections of the community.

The strategy to promote and increase usage of the facility will focus on programming that attracts participants. Programme activities include; leader training, target demo sessions for specific groups, public demo sessions open to all and sports festival event for the elderly.



Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council

## “Getting Dún Laoghaire Active” through the DLR Bay 10k Race



The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Bay 10k race is a catalyst for development of the local economy in which local businesses are valued partners. This partnership approach ensures the sustainability of the race, which was successful in its first year and is expected to grow. It demonstrates the bond which sport can create between the different organisations and the business community, creating a sense of institutional belonging. Also it demonstrates the value of sport to the local economy and encourages local business to invest their time and sponsorship. Thirty percent of the participants came from outside of Dún Laoghaire and one percent came from outside of the country.





Leitrim County Council

## Leitrim's Community Club Fitness Programme



This project launched by Leitrim County Council develops and enhances the relation between local sports clubs and the local community inhabitants. It encourages people to get involved in a six week fitness programme. Each club will select ten team captains and they in return must select nine other local people to join their team. The programme format was to have four fitness sessions per week, and teams weigh in once a week. The team that lost the most weight was the winner. This programme encourages clubs to open their facilities to the community as well as to fundraise for their club. The programme educates and transforms the lifestyle of the participants about the benefits of physical activity. It also creates a pathway to getting socially involved in the local sports club.





Wexford County Council

## The Wexford County Council Sports Development Programme



The Sports Active Wexford and Partnership Community Coaching Programme aims for the development of sport in the County and that all people of Wexford will have the opportunity and will be encouraged to take part in organised sport and physical activity at a level that suits their personal needs, wants and lifestyle. Wexford County Council believes that sport development programmes have supported and met the aims to promote participation, physical activity and health and well being for all stages of the life cycle. The programme can be utilized in areas where there are other programme deficits as sport and physical activity is a proven means to achieve societal goals.

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Cavan County Council

## Energy Efficiency at Cavan County Museum



Cavan County Council has welcomed all technologies that may help in its drive to become energy efficient, reduce its carbon footprint and meet its obligations under national legislation. This project was identified as one that could not just save energy to help meet targets but also save money that could be reinvested; in the museum, in particular the use of technology that will help preserve the sensitive artifacts that are on display. Technologies such as, 'variable speed drives' on pump motors, 'microwave lighting control sensors' electric vehicles and 'infrared heating panels,' are just some of those innovations that have been employed since its energy management team was set up and trained in SEAI's Energy Map in 2010. It has taken a progressive approach to energy management and is anxious to adopt environmental friendly technology and practices.



Cavan Town Council

## Green Lough Nature Area



Cavan Tidy Town Committee with assistance from Cavan Town Council has brought this project to fruition. The council has provided technical and financial support to the Tidy Town Committee to develop an ecological park which will enhance the ecology and appearance of Cavan. Those benefits include the increase in tourists that will help the local shops and retailers. It will also create an educational and learning experience for visitors to learn about ecology and sustainability. The Eco Park includes a network of universally accessible pathways, spaces and signage that will facilitate the visitor and local residents experience, learn and interact with the different elements of the site.



Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council

## Re-imagining the Arches – Building A Sustainable Environment in Loughlinstown



“Re-imagining the Arches” is an example of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council’s inter-departmental working as well as the inter-agency and community engagement approach to creating a sustainable future for the challenges of urban estate living. The project was the result of cooperation between Transportation, Architects, Housing, Community Departments and RAPID in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council together with An Garda Síochána, the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, residents and community groups in the area. The residents were substantial contributors to the proposed solution and its design. The project has had positive outcomes, including an aesthetically pleasing courtyard, the elimination of anti-social behaviour and a renewed sense of community ownership and pride.



Kilkenny County Council

## Greening the Iverk Show



Kilkenny Local Authorities in partnership with the Iverk Show embarked on greening the oldest agricultural show in Ireland. Solutions to improve the show's environmental performance were completed by discussing the show operations with the field manager. The two main problems identified were; the lack of litter control, and the lack of waste segregation on site. With a 35,000 footfall on the day of the show, the project served well to raise awareness of waste prevention while improving the show's environmental standards. The Iverk Show committee commented that other show organisers that attended were impressed at the site's cleanliness and the Iverk Show has set an example of how other agricultural shows can improve their environmental performance.





Westmeath County Council

## Eco Friendly Schools Competition



Westmeath County Council recognized the work of many schools in promoting a sustainable environment. It used the Cathaoirleach Awards as an opportunity to highlight this. By placing a spotlight on these schools it has focused on the pride the participants have in their achievements and thus encouraged and spread the project's objective. This Eco friendly schools programme rewards and recognises schools for their promotion of sustainable practices in consuming less materials, water, waste and energy, while creating a healthy environment to learn in. The learning experiences for students involved in the programme creates added value through the application by school pupils of learning in the home and wider community leading to a more sustainable community and environment.



Dublin City Council

## Home Grants business process re-engineering for increased customer focus & value for money



The Home Grant service launched by Dublin City Council is committed to embedding a customer centric approach and customer empowerment in its business processes. It adopts a proactive approach to customer engagement and strives to minimise impacts on customers. The social function of a caring Local Authority is to deal with the vulnerable customer group involved. Work supported by the scheme has major impacts on the daily quality of life of grant recipients and their carers. The Council has an iterative approach to improving service provision. Significant improvements have been attained in value for money and performance since 2009.



Donegal County Council

## Donegal's Fire Service's response to the Gorse fires of May 2011



During a six day period from the 30<sup>th</sup> April to the 5<sup>th</sup> May 2011 County Donegal experienced one of the worst series of gorse fires ever experienced in living memory. As an emergency service, Donegal Fire Service offered their services on demand via the 999 emergency telephone number. Their efficient and reassuring way in dealing with these calls ensured that members of the public were satisfied with the service they received. Donegal Fire Service led the response and were ably supported in their efforts by members of the Defence Forces, the Civil Defence, the Donegal Airport Fire Service, Coillte forestry staff and members of the local community, and eventually succeeded in bringing the fires under control after six long days of intensive fire-fighting.



South Dublin County Council

## Choice Based Letting Scheme – Empowering the Customer



The Council's Choice-based letting Scheme builds on quality CRM initiatives such as Connect, Customer Care Centre, with an open and simple system that is seen to offer customers choice. It is a new on-line allocation approach first introduced in the country by South Dublin County Council which empowers the housing applicant to make decisions over where they live. By embracing the multiple stakeholders – the Housing Applicant, Elected Members, Voluntary Housing Association, Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, Library Services and Council Staff (Allocations and Customer Care Centres) – this project has proven to reinforce the Council's commitment to delivering outstanding customer service. The customer's response to a customer questionnaire has given a very positive feedback showing that 93% found the website good or excellent. The council continues to improve and rollout the system based on feedback received from customers. It has also led to a number of improvements proposed for the site utilizing other South Dublin County Council IT initiatives.

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Cavan Town Council

## Town Centre Car Park Lighting Project



The Town Centre Car Parks annual energy running costs were in excess of €25,000 mainly from the building's use. The Town Centre Car Park Lighting Project sponsored by Cavan Town Council installed energy efficient lighting and presence detectors in the Car park, including stairways to automatically switch off lights when not in use. The emergency lighting and internal and external signage lighting was also upgraded. The project has been successful reducing its monthly bills from approximately €2,100 down to €900. The Project has achieved significant cost savings and will pay for itself in two years.





## Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council

### Enhancing Economic Efficiencies through Increased Pro-Active Engagement with Business Customers



Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council recognises it has a duty of care to its customers, in particular its ratepayers, and realises if there is a difficulty in paying one bill, there will be an even greater difficulty in paying several bills. This may lead into a cycle of enforcement – disconnection of service supply, legal proceedings and ultimately credit ratings being affected. Enforcement takes up a considerable amount of scarce staff resources. By utilising staff resources, in the first instance, to prevent arrears occurring, considerable time and costs are saved in the long term to the mutual benefit of the Council and local businesses. Measures include customer relationship management, payment agreements and reduced or no enforcement fees. Since the project's inception, the Council have seen a stabilisation in arrears deterioration.



Fingal County Council

## The Process of Organisational Change in Fingal County Council 2009-2011



Fingal County Council undertook a fundamental review to assess services as efficient and effective. The review coincided with the economic downturn and allowed considerations of resilience in the face of more constrained resources to form part of those considerations. The review process took nine months culminating with a series of cross-discipline sessions with senior staff in early 2010. Within three months after the review the entire new organisational structure for Fingal County Council, that involved reassignment of responsibilities and some work location changes for up to 230 staff, was put in place. The process of Organisational Change in Fingal County Council 2009-2011 restructured organisations in order to meet the challenges of a changing economy and to focus on reducing costs for the business community and affirming a record of citizen-cantered performance so as to provide a sustainable and appropriate level of local service provision through greater efficiencies and value for money.



Laois County Council

## Pump Energy Performance upgrades in Portlaoise Water Supply Scheme



The Pump Energy Performance upgrades in Portlaoise Water Supply Scheme began in August of 2011 with the installation of remote monitoring equipment at each of the wells to gather the information needed to prepare specifications for a pumping system upgrade. Data gathering continued from August to October 2011. This project demonstrates that with the right training and financial supports, engineers can drive real business performance improvements in the Public Sector. This type of project and a business approach to the provision of services is essential to control the cost inflation on commercial water charges and other the Public Sector service costs which directly impact the sustainability of local businesses.



Wexford Local Authorities

## Efficiencies Measures & Achievements in Wexford Local Authorities



Wexford Local Authorities recognised at an early stage of the economic downturn that in order to protect local services provided to the citizens in the county against deterioration due to reduced funding and reduced staffing levels, it would be necessary to act immediately to identify and examine any and all potential areas for cost and administrative efficiencies. It was further recognised that it would be necessary to move as quickly as possible to implement these efficiencies in order to protect services. A primary objective of the project was to ensure that any and all of the efficiency measures implemented were built on a basis of sustainability in order to ensure the value of the efficiency going forward.



Carlow Local Authorities

## Carlow County Development Board Rohingya Resettlement Project



In November 2008, Carlow County Development Board, as part of the UNHCR Resettlement Programme, was requested by the Office of the Minister for Integration (OMI) to facilitate the resettlement of 13 families (64 persons) of Rohingya refugees from Burma/Myanmar who had been living in camps in Bangladesh under the protection of the UNHCR. A committee led the resettlement process and engaged in extensive consultation; identification and planning of appropriate services and put in place an intensive support programme for the families and ensured its appropriate implementation and sensitive responses, which were flexible and effective, in order to ensure the successful integration of the Rohingya families into the Carlow community. This work has ensured that now, three years after their arrival, the Rohingya families are successfully resettled, feel at home and are preparing to apply for Irish Citizenship.





Cavan County Council

## Valuing Voices, Valuing Cultures: A multicultural project between Cavan RAPID Programme & St. Clare's National School



Valuing Voices, Valuing Cultures was successful in promoting respect for diversity in a local DEIS school with 24 different nationalities among its pupils. The initiative was a week-long event that focused on the promotion of respect for diversity and pride in cultural heritage for different cultures amongst the community. Within the week activities included drama, dance, art work, and cultural displays.

The project was set up as a proactive step to prevent conflict arising and to send out a message that all communities are welcome and are considered equal by the school and by the agencies involved in the RAPID AIT. The results of Valuing Voices, Valuing Cultures were linked to a greater social inclusion of ethnic minority families in the life of the school, (including the representation on the Board of Management). It also has had a sustained impact on the school and resulted in this attention to diversity becoming an annual event for the school.



Kilkenny Local Authorities

## Kilkenny Social Inclusion Interactive Mapping Module



Kilkenny Local Authorities launched the Kilkenny Social Inclusion Interactive Mapping Module which provides users with an interactive and accessible mapping tool that uses data from a variety of governmental agencies. The module allows its users to access statistical information for Co. Kilkenny as well as allowing for layers of data from a range of sources to be analysed quickly and accurately by area. The project facilitates up-to-date local information from a number of sources thus ensuring better informed decisions and ultimately better service provision. The project will be delivered on an on-going basis using existing staff resources. The project will facilitate a more accurately targeted use of scarce resources, thereby providing benefits in terms of both financial and human resources. Data sharing also leads to further discourse between agencies, and avoids duplication of service provision.





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