

An altogether better place:

A quality of life and well-being strategy for South Dublin County

In South Dublin County we strive to promote social, economic and cultural opportunity to ensure quality of life and well-being for those who live and work there.

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Executive summary: Themes, outcomes and our priorities

THEME 1	OUTCOME (S)
A BUSY PLACE	<p>A county which is a great place to live, work and develop a business; Where there are skills and supports to create and sustain a vibrant, participative, safe and inclusive community; Where education, innovation and creativity are nurtured; Where towns and villages are places of activity, enterprise and employment; Where neighbourhoods and character areas are promoted; Where there is a focus on the Green economy; Where effective infrastructure and sustainable transport support peoples' daily lives; Where economic growth is driven in collaboration with key partners.</p> <p>We will:</p> <p>Ensure that local people benefit from economic activity in the county; Enhance opportunities for education and life-long learning; Create an urban environment that is accessible and attractive in which to work, shop and recreate Facilitate activity, enterprise and employment in our towns, revitalise local business and promote sustainable economic growth; Support mixed, inclusive and vibrant urban neighbourhoods; Nurture innovative and creative thinking in the development of new technologies; Promote the Green economy, including renewable energy, sustainable transport and green tourism.</p>

THEME 2	OUTCOME (S)
<p>A LIVING PLACE</p>	<p>A county where each person is enabled to live a fulfilled life; Where cultural expression is evident in the arts, sport, language and heritage of the county; Where civic leadership and volunteerism are supported and valued; Where equal opportunity is promoted at all stages of the lifecycle; Where social integration is fostered and diversity recognised; Where sustainable housing is in place to meet the changing needs of all citizens throughout their lives; Where a broad range of high-quality health and education services are enabled; Where the causes and effects of poverty are targeted in an innovative and integrated manner; Where structures are in place to optimise and support the Council's frontline services; Where agencies work together towards the betterment of peoples' lives.</p> <p>We will:</p> <p>Continue to implement sustainable, inclusive and appropriate housing policies to meet the needs of our citizens throughout their lives;</p> <p>Implement supports to sustain a vibrant, participative, safe and inclusive community;</p> <p>Value volunteerism, foster civic responsibility and participation in local democratic processes;</p> <p>Maintain our interagency approach to ensure that citizens experience coherent, integrated and effective public services;</p> <p>Target alternative solutions to tackle causes and effects of poverty and worklessness;¹</p>

¹ Worklessness: Those who are out of work but who want a job; those claiming unemployment benefits; people not currently in paid work but who seek employment; those who are 'economically inactive' The Council condition of being unemployed and having little or no prospect for employment.

	Build a sustainable life experience for all our citizens through celebrating and encouraging participation in education, arts, sports and recreation opportunities.
THEME 3	OUTCOME(S)
A CONNECTED PLACE	<p>A county where a high quality, sustainable infrastructure provides for existing and future communities;</p> <p>Where the current network of high quality roads, water and drainage services are maintained and improved;</p> <p>Where ease of movement within the County and access to towns and neighbourhoods are supported by an sustainable public transport system and a network of cycling and walking paths;</p> <p>Where tourism, leisure and business interests work to promote and 'connect' the region locally, nationally and internationally;</p> <p>Where efficient energy practices are promoted and demonstrated;</p> <p>Where there is access to fresh contemporary learning and information, skills development and cultural programmes;</p> <p>Where information and communication re the Council's diverse activities and services are available</p> <p>We will:</p> <p>Encourage compact spatial development which is efficient, accessible and focused on neighbourhood village and town centres;</p> <p>Ensure that our neighbourhood village and town centres are busy and vibrant, enhancing economic activity and the quality of life of those who live and work there;</p> <p>Facilitate a high quality, integrated and sustainable infrastructural network in order to achieve a balanced economic and social environment;</p> <p>Seek to expand and improve the system of roads, water, drainage and all utilities in a professional and efficient manner;</p>

	<p>Use innovative technology to facilitate communication, fresh contemporary learning, information and skills with our partners, stakeholders and citizens;</p> <p>Pursue energy efficiencies and exploit renewable energy resources and technologies to develop a low carbon environment underpinned by a green economy;</p> <p>Connect the county locally, nationally and internationally via tourism, the arts, leisure and business interests.</p>
THEME 4	OUTCOME (S)
A PROTECTED PLACE	<p>A county where a protected environment and heritage support social and economic well-being;</p> <p>Where the principles of sustainable development are observed;</p> <p>Where the efficient management of waste is maximised;</p> <p>Where local heritage, existing green belt areas and natural environmental advantages are cherished;</p> <p>Where the arts and culture express our multi-cultural society across a variety of media</p> <p>Where parks and amenities are provided for the benefit of present and future generations;</p> <p>Where the feeling of community safety is strengthened by collaboration and participation</p> <p>We will:</p> <p>Promote inter-agency and cross-departmental collaboration to protect the landscapes, habitats, built heritage, archaeology and culture of South Dublin county;</p> <p>Ensure that the principles of sustainable development are observed;</p> <p>Develop initiatives to foster safer communities in which to live and work</p> <p>Prioritise the development of green spaces to facilitate the County's green network for people and for wildlife;</p> <p>Focus on high environmental standards including 'best in class' waste management initiatives and ensure that our policies support the natural environment;</p> <p>Continue to develop and support the Irish language, culture and heritage on a county basis and within the County</p>

1 Introduction

South Dublin: The context

A snapshot

- Established in 1994; South Dublin County is the third largest local authority in Ireland covering an area of 222.74 square kilometres
- Assets of 3.7 billion, providing services for more than 265,205 people, 90,019 households and over 6,000 businesses
- A growing well-educated and skilled population currently at c 246,935
- A strong diverse economic base in an excellent location connecting to the rest of the country and to wider international markets.
- A centre of science and innovation within the Dublin city region.
- A dynamic local authority structure serving a vibrant, inclusive, multi-cultural community with a broad range of socio-economic needs.

- 1.1 Despite the challenges that South Dublin County faces over the next few years, we have many achievements to celebrate and many opportunities yet to exploit. We have significant strengths and numerous innovative strategies in place across the life-cycle. They are articulated in our County Development plan and corporate plans and are underpinned by our core mission: to work together to improve the quality of life and well-being socially, culturally, economically and environmentally for the people of South Dublin County. We have a rich vein of corporate and organisational skills which enables our delivery mechanisms through various departments within the Council working individually, together, or in partnership with numerous external stakeholders. We have a long tradition of working in collaboration with other agencies and communities in South Dublin. Our partnership approach enables us to overcome traditional boundaries and has brought us into areas like health, education, safer communities. In more recent times we have led the way with inter-agency initiatives; children's services and its sub-groups; age-friendly counties; traveller supports; and tourism. Successful consolidation of that inter-agency working is part of the South Dublin County Development Board's legacy.
- 1.2 We have prime natural assets: the Dublin mountains, the Liffey valley, the Dodder valley and our canal waterway which provide a physical backdrop to the aims and objectives of our County Development Plan, whose main priority is to sustainably develop and improve the county's social, cultural, environmental and economic capacity.

- 1.3 Four strategic themes incorporating a busy, living, connected, and protected place form the basis of our County Development plan, and show our breadth of vision; ranging from creating more sustainable economic development and employment opportunities to strengthening our designated town centres and our county villages; to protecting our environment; promoting social inclusion; celebrating our culture and heritage and supporting our communities. These themes define and illustrate the extent and far-reaching impact of our work.
- 1.4 The integrated policy document *A Place for People*² first adopted this thematic approach. It aimed to achieve a better quality of life for people in South Dublin County by facilitating increased co-operation between service providers at county and local level.
- 1.5 Our corporate plan 2010-2014³ goes one step further. It acknowledges the eight specific area themes and four cross-cutting themes of ‘*A Place for People*’, and its strategic priorities, goals and objectives. It re-iterates our aim ‘to provide effective, inclusive and participative local democratic processes, together with good quality services and supports that are responsive, efficient and innovative’ that will not compromise the needs of future generations.

2 How we work

Our approach is inclusive and commits us to supporting the citizens of South Dublin County with dignity from the cradle through childhood to working age to retirement. We have the capability to deliver to the highest possible standards and are united in seeking the best outcomes for the people that we serve. We have reflected deeply on quality of life and well-being issues, and have set ourselves ambitious targets across all our services.

- 2.1 Three core values support our fundamental ethos: access, engagement and fairness. These values are at the heart of everything that we do.
 - 2.1.1 At its simplest, access enables a physically accessible and connective place, it encourages walking and cycling, and facilitates the needs of the lesser-abled, the very young and the very old. Beyond this, we encourage access to information, educational opportunities and the widest range of public services through the opening outwards of our information and communication systems.
 - 2.1.2 Since our foundation in 1994, direct engagement with local residents, in the form of public meetings, workshops and consultation has informed our work. This has now extended into issues affecting children and young people, older people, community safety and policing

² *South Dublin: A Place for People*. An integrated Strategy for the Economic, Social and Cultural Development of South Dublin County 2010-2012

³ South Dublin Corporate Plan 2010-2014

matters. We also deploy a variety of social media to test opinions on projects and programmes, inviting feedback and facilitating community participation over a range of issues - from seeking views on our public realm initiatives to facilitating personal travel planning to supporting public transport.

2.1.3 Our emphasis on fairness is rooted in the wide-ranging socio-economic reality of the county and includes the RAPID areas and other areas of social disadvantage. We act with fairness in all our dealings in a variety of ways. For instance, we work to create training opportunities and employment within our structures for the lesser-abled and for members of the Travelling Community. In addition, through providing pro-bono technical and administrative supports to sports clubs, other associations and community social clubs we enable them to fund and complete buildings and programmes, otherwise beyond their reach.

2.1.4 The *three clusters* structure forms the basis of our organisational approach to service delivery: Each cluster is a multi-disciplinary task team comprised of senior staff.

- The *economic and infrastructure* cluster addresses capital projects, infrastructure, spatial planning and economics;
- The *quality of life* cluster focuses on social and community opportunities and challenges;
- The *organisational development* cluster undertakes the rationalisation and optimisation of management and communication systems and human resource planning.

Our commitment to continuous improvement, which is reflected in the positive feedback from those living and working in South Dublin County and in the many awards that we have received, remains focused and absolute.

3 Quality of life and well-being: Our understanding

In 2012

Young people (aged 0-24) in South Dublin represented 36.2% of the population - 96,060

Adults of working age (aged 25-64) represented 55% of the population 145,947

People of retirement age (over 65s) represented 8.7% of the population – 23,053

People with a disability represented 12.3% of the population - 32,678

- 3.1 In identifying how the quality of life and well-being of the people of South Dublin County are enhanced by our policies and strategies and how this impact can be measured, we are conscious that defining quality of life, well-being and their impact is relative to a person's specific situation. Our strategy applies the OECD definition: *'the notion of human welfare (well-being) measured by social indicators rather than by quantitative measures of income and production'*⁴. It acknowledges that quality of life should not be confused with standard of living, which is based primarily on income. It asserts that standard quality of life indicators include not only wealth and employment, but also the built environment, physical and mental health, education, recreation and leisure time, and social belonging.

How people feel, how they function, both on a personal and a social level, and how they evaluate their lives as a whole is integral to a sense of well-being⁵. The potential 'drivers' of well-being refer to external things such as income, housing, education and social networks, and also to certain internal things such as health, optimism and self-esteem, each of which influences how people feel and function. *Being*, *belonging*, and *becoming*: a person's sense of him/herself; how a person connects to his/her environment, and whether a person achieves his/her personal goals and hopes are critical factors when measuring quality of life and well-being⁶.

Instilling the reality

- 3.2 We believe that our corporate priorities are focused on delivering a positive quality of life and well-being for the people of South Dublin County. We accept that comfortable homes, the opportunity to participate in a cohesive community structure where cultural expression is encouraged, and where education and life-long learning are valued, as well as having access to essential reliable services, a reasonable income and a safe protected environment are fundamental to an individual's quality of life and well-being. In an increasingly globalised setting, we also realise that experiencing pride of place and a feeling of belonging within a strong, active community framework are even more essential as our citizens journey through the many life-cycle stages.

Maintaining our pro-active holistic approach and working to create the conditions that enable people to flourish will help us to achieve some of our more challenging goals. It will also lead to stronger community networks, it will build resilience and resolve, and it will influence positive behaviour change. This approach is more likely to mitigate problems such as crime and anti-social behaviour, address educational and economic outcomes, ultimately reduce levels of dependency and optimise the value of spending on our frontline services.

⁴ OECD

⁵ The National Economic Forum of Britain

⁶ University of Toronto research

3.3 Quality of life indicators:How we define them

- 3.3.1 The tools or quality of life indicators that we will use will measure important issues and trends and will help us to better understand the relationships between sustainable development issues in South Dublin. *Putting People First:The Action Programme*⁷ for Effective Local Government urges local authorities to position their service delivery to maximise the quality of life and well-being of citizens and local communities, while delivering the best possible value for money. It also states that existing service indicators will be replaced by an enhanced system of performance indicators which will demonstrate a local authority's overall performance in delivering a particular activity or service, and will facilitate evaluation against the performance standard for that activity or service.
- 3.3.2 This is part of a global conversation where more recently, the OECD has been keenly engaged in the debate about how to measure or assess quality of life or better living and well-being. Based on its research and experience, the OECD has identified a number of elements that are essential to better living and well-being in terms of *material living conditions* (housing, income, jobs) and *quality of life* (community, education, environment, governance, health, life satisfaction, safety and work-life balance). In a quality of life survey conducted by the European Foundation⁸, six core areas were chosen to reflect quality of life indicators: employment and economic resources; family and households; community life and social participation; health and health care; knowledge and education and training. Each of these elements is present in some form or another across all our services, schemes and initiatives; some are delivered by ourselves alone, others happen via our association or partnership with other agencies.
- ### 3.4 Delivering our service
- 3.4.1 For the purposes of our strategy the performance indicators that we have set ourselves stem firstly from our corporate plan, and our cluster strategies; secondly from the business plans and targets of our individual departments, services and teams and thirdly from the more qualitative impacts and other indicators emanating from successful service delivery. They include a broad range of measures designed to identify and communicate economic, social, environmental, democratic and cultural trends and outcomes across four main themes: a busy place, a living place; a connected place and a protected place.

⁷ *Putting People First:The Action Programme* for Effective Local Government (October 2012)

⁸ The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (2003)

3.4.2 Because quality of life is a multi-dimensional concept encompassing individuals' perceptions about the singular and combined impact of multiple service areas on their lives, it is essential to realise that the interplay between these areas and their cross-cutting impact means that no one area alone affects quality of life. Hence, we have represented both the micro- perspective, where conditions and perceptions of individuals play a key role, and the macroscopic perspective, which focuses more on the broader prevailing economic and social conditions. Consequently, in refining potential indicators, we have identified further inter-dependent categories, which also reflect OECD and European Foundation indicators: *civic vitality, cultural life and the arts, the economy; housing; education and health; public safety; the environment; transportation and technology.*

3.5 Ensuring our sustainability

3.5.1 As well as measuring progress towards sustainable development, these indicators raise awareness about current issues and will help us understand how we can live in a more sustainable way. Their mutual dependency will help us as decision makers to anticipate potential pressures on the wider social, economic and physical environments of South Dublin County, and to make sure that everyone enjoys a better quality of life. Ensuring that people's basic needs for warm homes and safe streets are satisfied, and that they perceive themselves to have the opportunity to enjoy a good quality of life through education, participation, good health and employment is key to quality of life and better living. As a local authority, in protecting and where possible, enhancing the environment to enable continuing sustainable economic development, we will help provide the resources required to satisfy these needs, now and in the future.

3.5 Achieving a robust and accountable delivery mechanism for the delivery of the actions embedded in this strategy will be the responsibility of the champions of the individual initiatives.⁹ Measuring the impact of these initiatives will help us to understand the quality of our service delivery, whether there are gaps, how it can be improved, as well as the nature of our communities in South Dublin County, how they are evolving and changing, how our services impact on their quality of life and well-being and what kind of feedback they offer on these services.

4 The Quality of Life and Well-being Strategy is structured in three sections:

- An overview, showing individual themes, and desired outcomes;
- The strategy outlining our priorities, their thematic context, and our approach. Each set of priorities will be followed by narrative describing the nature of the theme, and in as far as possible, its current impact on quality of life and well-being;
- An implementation plan. **(To follow)**

⁹ Appendix

2 OUR THEMES AND OUTCOMES

THEME 1	OUTCOME (S)
A BUSY PLACE	<p>A county which is a great place to live, work and develop a business;</p> <p>Where there are skills and supports to create and sustain a vibrant, participative, safe and inclusive community;</p> <p>Where education, innovation and creativity are nurtured;</p> <p>Where towns and villages are places of activity, enterprise and employment;</p> <p>Where neighbourhoods and character areas are promoted;</p> <p>Where there is a focus on the Green economy;</p> <p>Where effective infrastructure and sustainable transport support peoples' daily lives;</p> <p>Where economic growth is driven in collaboration with key partners.</p>
THEME 2	OUTCOME (S)

A LIVING PLACE	<p>A county where each person is enabled to live a fulfilled life;</p> <p>Where cultural expression is evident in the arts, sport, language and heritage of the Councilcounty;</p> <p>Where civic leadership and volunteerism are supported and valued;</p> <p>Where equal opportunity is promoted at all stages of the lifecycle;</p> <p>Where social integration is fostered and diversity recognised;</p> <p>Where sustainable housing is in place to meet the Councilhanging needs of all citizens throughout their lives;</p> <p>Where a broad range of high-quality health and education services are enabled;</p> <p>Where the Councilauses and effects of poverty are targeted in an an innovative and integrated manner;</p> <p>Where structures are in place to optimise and support the Council's frontline services;</p> <p>Where agencies work together towards the betterment of peoples' lives.</p>
THEME 3	OUTCOME(S)
A CONNECTED PLACE	<p>A county where a high quality,sustainable infrastructure provides for existing and future communities;</p> <p>Where the Councilurrent network of high quality roads, water and drainage services are maintained and improved;</p> <p>Where ease of movement within the Councilounty and access to towns and neighbourhoods are supported by an sustainable public transport system and a network of cycling and walking paths;</p> <p>Where tourism, leisure and business interests work to promote and 'connect' the region locally, nationally and internationally;</p> <p>Where efficient energy practices are promoted and demonstrated;</p> <p>Where there is access to fresh contemporary learning and information, skills development and cultural programmes;</p> <p>Where information and communication re the Council's diverse activities and services are available</p>

THEME 4	OUTCOME (S)
A PROTECTED PLACE	<p>A county where a protected environment and heritage support social and economic well-being;</p> <p>Where the principles of sustainable development are observed;</p> <p>Where the efficient management of waste is maximised;</p> <p>Where local heritage, existing green belt areas and natural environmental advantages are cherished;</p> <p>Where the arts and culture express our multi-cultural society across a variety of media</p> <p>Where parks and amenities are provided for the benefit of present and future generations;</p> <p>Where the feeling of community safety is strengthened by collaboration and participation</p>

4 The strategy and implementation plan

1 A BUSY PLACE: Our priorities and their impact

We will:

- Ensure that local people benefit from economic activity in the county;
- Enhance opportunities for education and life-long learning;
- Create an urban environment that is accessible and attractive in which to work, shop and recreate
- Facilitate activity, enterprise and employment in our towns, revitalise local business and promote sustainable economic growth;
- Support mixed, inclusive and vibrant urban neighbourhoods;
- Nurture innovative and creative thinking in the development of new technologies;
- Promote the Green economy, including renewable energy, sustainable transport and green tourism.

1.1 Creating the right conditions

While the repercussions from the recession have prompted a re-focus of our approach to our service delivery, it is widely recognised that local government will continue to be a key player in creating the conditions for material well-being in local areas. It does this through facilitating employment opportunities, regenerating the physical environment, strengthening the local economy and building community capacity. We recognise that we can influence people's lives most acutely for the better in their homes, at school, in their places of work and in their neighbourhoods. This is where citizens are most likely to come into contact with our services and support mechanisms that can improve their lives.

Our economic development strategy underpins *A Busy Place* and has set balanced and ambitious goals. The range of interdependent infrastructural initiatives enhancing people's quality of life is far-reaching. Three major road corridors in the state, the N4 to the west, the N7 to the south and south west, and the N81 to the south east, border South Dublin County. In addition, the M50 running through the eastern edge of the County forms part of the strategic euro route connecting Belfast to Rosslare, and links Tallaght to Blanchardstown and Dublin Airport to the north, and Dun Laoghaire and Bray to the south. These corridors provide unprecedented opportunities for the region, creating easy access into and out of the county.

1.2 Maximising our opportunities

Five key areas, each of which will provide opportunities to build on existing infrastructure and enable future development have been identified in our economic development strategy. In the area of employment generation, South Dublin balances the energy and innovation of foreign direct investment with the incremental sustainability of local smaller enterprises. To the west of the county, a series of high-technology industrial parks from City West through Profile Park and on to Grange Castle Business Park form the Technology Crescent. These parks have presented the county with exceptional opportunities. Innovative workplaces are set in a high-quality landscaped environment with their natural assets optimised to create regional parks, golf courses and canal side walks, making it a conducive environment in which to work and recreate.

The wide range of businesses operating in Grange Castle Business Park provides a mutually beneficial system, where employment is provided by international names like Pfizer, Takeda Pharma, Arysza and Microsoft for more than 2000 people with varying degrees of education and skill levels, while also having many benefits for local economies and society as a whole. Moreover, Grange Castle Business Park makes a significant contribution in annual rates to the provision of services in the county. Maximising the opportunity provided by the creators of Grange Castle Business Park continues to deliver benefits that accrue directly through buoyancy within the local economy. Just as significant is its success in creating further opportunities by identifying the county with high quality, high-end industry and its potential to move the local economy and consequent employment up the value chain.

Developing our networks

The widespread availability of an effective telecommunications network throughout the county is critical to the development of a knowledge-based economy. It will also attract inward investment in hi-tech knowledge based industries, it will affirm the Council county as a premier location for enterprise and create prosperity for people living and working in the county. Our initiatives around the green economy where businesses stand to make great savings through engaging in more sustainable practices (e.g. transport, energy) will also be of benefit; while there are significant business opportunities in the area of renewable energy technologies.

The economic strategy also highlights the opportunities created by the Luas and rail corridors and the economic selling points offered by South Dublin County's towns and villages; each of which has its own unique character, and where plans are already in place to further build on the existing niche retailing and services in these villages in order to increase footfall. Our water supply network will ensure the availability of serviced residential and commercial lands. This in turn will cater for an adequate supply of housing and facilitate continued employment growth and opportunities in the County. Continuing to consolidate development will allow the County to fulfil its role in a coherent way within the greater Dublin metropolitan area.

We have addressed the challenge of unprecedented cuts in expenditure by assessing our situation afresh to see how well we can demonstrate cost-effectiveness and the economic and social value of our services. We are committed to acting as a focal point for sustainability, energy efficiency and the growth of renewable energy technologies and strategies across the County. We are currently progressing a range of evidence-based energy and sustainability related projects, with the aim of ultimately informing the preparation of future plans and strategies. These projects also aim to improve business competitiveness in South Dublin County, reduce energy costs in the workplace and at home, and enhance living and working standards.

Case Study

The Tallaght sustainable energy community

In October 2011, following a competitive process, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) designated Tallaght as one of three new exemplar Sustainable Energy Communities (SEC) in Ireland. This five year programme aims to develop a series of Irish communities as 'living laboratories' to establish a culture of energy innovation by carrying out locally focused projects to increase energy efficiency and reduce energy costs. Since then, South Dublin County Council has extended invitations to homeowners, businesses, schools and all energy stakeholders to connect with the energy challenge through a series of initiatives and programmes.

"I hadn't realised that so much saving in energy and real money is down to our behaviour. It's not half as complicated as I had imagined"
(*Connect with Energy* workshop participant)

1.3 Capitalising on our assets.

1.3. South Dublin County's natural assets are significant; they add to local peoples' quality of life and also attract people to work in the area. Consolidating, strengthening and improving our existing villages is a core objective of our County Development Plan. While each town and village¹⁰ has its own unique attributes, they are also hubs for local services and retailing. Moreover, they act as centres for local community and civic activity and have been the focus of civic and environmental improvements by the local authority. Initiatives such as the *Tidy Towns*, where they have been a positive factor in uniting local businesses and residents and creating a 'feel good' factor.

Further developing these towns and villages will complement existing services, niche retailing areas, tourism, local produce, and events and festivals there. Parks, green areas, childrens' play spaces, heritage projects and cultural activities support a feeling of well-being and increase the perception of the County being a good place in which to live and work..

Case Study

Think Local

Think Local is a response to the growing numbers of unemployed in the County and is an initiative of the South Dublin County Development Board (CDB) which intends to develop community awareness about the benefits of supporting local business and community facilities. The CDB Strategy and its integrated economic strategy aims to support and maintain jobs within the County and to look at innovative and creative projects. *Think Local* asks anybody living or operating a business in the County or a member of a community organisation to make a 10% switch of their existing spend to local products, services and facilities in South Dublin County. www.thinklocal.ie

Residential communities in Fortunestown and Saggart and employees in Citywest business park are benefitting from Infrastructural improvements such as the LUAS red line between Tallaght and the Council centre and a newer extension. Smart travel projects encouraging sustainable alternatives to car travel are being piloted in homes, schools and workplaces in Lucan and Clondalkin. The local permeability projects seek to encourage walking and cycling by improving access from residential areas to schools, shops, community and leisure facilities, through the identification and improvement of established but informal walking and cycling routes. The Villages' programme promotes the eight villages as the centre of their adjoining communities. As the focus on developing networks of amenity and cycle and pedestrian routes evolves, footfall will increase in local areas while the promotion of markets, festivals and other activities will encourage the growth of local businesses.

"Being actively involved with other traders in the village and working with the Council has made a major difference to how we go about growing our business and focusing on the local". (Local trader)

¹⁰ Rathfarnham, Templeogue, Saggart, Rathcoole, Newcastle, Lucan, Palmerstown, Clondalkin and Tallaght, the County town

Case Study

The Tallaght cycle network

South Dublin County Council has carried out an analysis of the Tallaght cycle network with the objective of identifying strategic cycling routes to link Tallaght Town Centre with neighbouring towns, villages and the city centre. It also aims to identify ways of making the town centre more permeable to ensure that cyclists can move easily around the town and to provide a choice of routes to get cyclists to their destinations. Arising from the analysis, funding has been secured from the National Transport Authority for preliminary design work on a number of routes, including an upgrade of the existing route from Tallaght village to Templeogue via the N81; for a new route from Tallaght to Knocklyon across the Dodder valley and for a route along the Dodder valley to the Grand Canal harbour and the Liffey.

1.4 Building further capacity

The widespread availability of a high quality telecommunications network throughout the county is critical to the development of a knowledge-based economy and has already attracted inward investment in hi-tech knowledge based industries. This investment affirms South Dublin County as a premier location for enterprise and will ultimately create prosperity for people living and working in the county. Our initiatives around the green economy where businesses stand to make great savings through engaging in more sustainable practices (e.g. transport, energy) will also be of benefit; while there are significant business opportunities in the area of renewable energy technologies.

Low levels of educational attainment linked to high unemployment prevail in certain areas and impact adversely on peoples' self-perception, frequently resulting in anti-social behaviour in their communities, which in turn affects their quality of life. Providing employment in the county to match the education and skills level of its citizens, and upskilling people to make them more employable or to enable them to access better quality employment is core to our economic strategy. Increasing the accessibility of job opportunities for residents will have the effect of improving life for those who want to work but are currently constrained. It will also expand our productive labour resource.

Case Study

Engineers' week

Engineers' week, a national initiative, is organised locally is organised by SDCC engineers on a voluntary basis. It provides a variety of workshops on an engineering theme for local schoolchildren and encourages them to consider engineering as an option in their future career paths. More than one thousand third to sixth class children from primary schools all over the county participated in 2012. Tallaght Stadium featured for the first time in various activities, hosting the Engineers' Ireland roadshow and providing daily tours of the stadium for enthusiastic classes. Other activities included bridge designing and building during the K'nex workshops which were held in the county library and an interactive quiz with engineering-themed questions at The Big Picture.

"It was cool, the best ever... I'm definitely going to build bridges and dams and everything when I'm big. They're massive!" (Third class student)

1.5 Working in partnership

Delivering on our economic strategy to increase competitiveness, and creating more employment and enhanced prosperity for our citizens is not something that we can achieve alone. It requires a concerted effort from many of our partners across the public sector, private sector and in our local communities. It also entails a partnership approach within our internal structures to recognise the cross-cutting nature of the services we supply, how they interact, and how they are fundamentally interdependent in their impact on local communities living or working in the area.

1.5.1 A number of initiatives are underway examining how we might support and mentor local business; the *Sustaining and Developing Business initiative* is an essential linkage between the local authority, community and business. Focusing on sustainability, the programme considers the triple bottom line of social, environmental and economic accountability for local businesses to gain an understanding of how they can most benefit from considering social and environmental issues. South Dublin Chamber works with South Dublin County Council to offer a comprehensive set of interventions and supports to assist businesses in our county. In particular, the availability of a sustainability executive, who meets one to one with local business owners to guide them through what is available to them, is immensely helpful and has positive impact. The ability to offer a small business a variety of local government and private enterprise services free of charge is an exciting opportunity for them.

"What I have found really useful is the networking and mentoring opportunities this initiative has offered me; I have met people and tapped into ideas about sustainability and environmentally friendly businesses that are actually saving me money in energy costs. I've also been able to pitch local businesses for my own business which I couldn't ever have envisaged. I'd highly recommend it" (Local business owner).

1.5.2 South Dublin Libraries also partnered with South Dublin Chamber in recent times to profile and grow business information services. New dedicated business collections branded as *Books Mean Business* have been provided across branch libraries and a programme of advice clinics, workshops and seminars have been delivered. This work will continue as additional support services are put in place and provides another channel of information for the end user.

Case Study

The Innovation Enterprise Network

The Innovation Enterprise Network was launched in November 2010 by the Dublin Regional Authority - in association with the four local authorities in the Dublin Region - to assist the revitalisation of the careers of high-skilled professionals who find themselves out of work. The network is a publicly-funded service with a private-sector ethos and has an online and offline membership with open registration available on www.ienetwork.ie. It has two primary location bases: a members-only hot-desk facility in Tallaght, as well as access to meeting spaces in several public premises throughout the Dublin region. It includes libraries and an online presence in www.ienetwork.ie which enables virtual attendance by members country-wide, thereby increasing its pool of expertise, knowledge and competencies, whilst maintaining satisfactory economies of scale in terms of physical event organisation. Members can network, get on track with their work search, and establish relationships between the IE network and existing public agencies.

2 A LIVING PLACE: OUR PRIORITIES AND THEIR IMPACT

We will

- Continue to implement sustainable, inclusive and appropriate housing policies to meet the needs of our citizens throughout their lives;
- Implement supports to sustain a vibrant, participative, safe and inclusive community;
- Value volunteerism, foster civic responsibility and participation in local democratic processes;
- Maintain our interagency approach to ensure that citizens experience coherent, integrated and effective public services;
- Target alternative solutions to tackle causes and effects of poverty and worklessness;¹¹
- Build a sustainable life experience for all our citizens through celebrating and encouraging participation in education, arts, sports and recreation opportunities.

2.1 How effective planning helps

Improving quality of life for residents of the county and adapting to climate change are integral to the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. Successful and inclusive planning is about creating vibrant places that accommodate a variety of needs and activities including housing, employment and recreation and above all about the enhancement of quality of life¹². With 9,000 units in our social housing portfolio, and a further 10,000 in rental/leasing arrangements, we aim to develop and implement inclusive and appropriate housing policies which meet the needs of our citizens throughout their lifetime. Good quality housing is also vital to our economic progress in terms of improving and sustaining competitiveness. The county must be seen locally, nationally and internationally by businesses and service providers as a place that not only offers good and affordable housing but creates areas with a strong sense of place and a good quality of life. Making the best use of our available land will result in a reduction in commuting times for people living and working in the area, and will reinforce the value of capital investments, such as public transport infrastructure.

¹¹ Worklessness: Those who are out of work but who want a job; those claiming unemployment benefits; people not currently in paid work but who seek employment; those who are 'economically inactive' The Council condition of being unemployed and having little or no prospect for employment.

¹² South Dublin County Development Plan

2.2 Delivering basic needs: The lifecycle approach

Creating sustainable communities is an integral part of our planning policy. We focus on forming neighbourhoods - understandable, convenient, friendly - rather than large housing estates. We seek to encourage all ages including children and students, people of working age, older people and particularly people with disabilities. We believe that good housing development must be diverse and empower personal choice. Our ongoing challenge is to design residential environments that impact positively on quality of life with attractive safe streets that have a mix of house types, sizes and designs; where there are good pedestrian, cycling and public transport links; and where housing is within walking distance of neighbourhood centres, community facilities and open space. Sustainable residential developments are safe and inclusive, well-planned, built and operated, offer equality of opportunity and good services to all. They meet the needs of existing and future residents, they are sensitive to their environment, and they contribute to a good quality of life. They reflect the belief that thoughtfully-designed housing plays a pivotal role in creating social and economic well being.

Case Study

New beginnings in Adamstown

“I have been living in Adamstown since 2007 and I really love being part of this culturally diverse and young community. It is very peaceful and quiet living here. The people are very friendly and there is a great sense of community among the residents. I feel Adamstown is a snapshot of modern Ireland with people from different countries and culture living together in harmony” (Adamstown resident).

Adamstown is a new town based on a traditional model. Compactly laid out around its train station, it forms a lively, interconnecting network of streets, squares, public parks and gardens, with varied and interesting buildings and a mix of residential, commercial, public and community uses, all in close proximity. The development is well-served by public transport, including the new station on the upgraded ‘Kildare Route’ (Heuston to Cork railway line), and the layout facilitates pedestrians and cyclists. From the outset, we assigned a community officer on site to the project who met with residents as they took up occupancy with door to door welcome calls and targeted engagement. Residents completed an initial survey which identified their skills and an overall steering committee was formed based on those skills. Local schools also became part of the committee which continued to work with SDCC and the developers throughout the project. Apart from identifying population size and profile, the survey aimed to ascertain information regarding travel and transportation, local residents’ leisure and recreation patterns, and highlighted the emerging challenges and issues for the new communities together with the responses and supports that might benefit them. A programme of activities was developed including evening art classes, family fun days, Halloween events, Yoga courses, neighbourhood watch initiatives, *Meet your Neighbours* nights and artist-moderated intergenerational activities to establish links with the old and new Lucan/Adamstown.

2.3 Roads, water and the public realm: Facilitating the infrastructure

Other core services play a large role in ensuring a balanced quality of life in South Dublin County. With 930 km of roads under our care, we are responsible for an extensive network of infrastructure that improve conditions for those who live, work, visit or pass through the county. The roads department looks after all the public lighting columns in the county, 128 signalised pedestrian crossings, 136 sets of traffic lights, 69 CCTV locations and 84 APNR cameras. Footpath maintenance, village signage, traffic management, road safety promotion and improvement come within our remit as well as the maintenance and management of car parking and the county's cycle track network.

- 2.3.1 1,500 km of watermains crisscross the county and our water services undertake a complex operational task managing, maintaining and enhancing the water and drainage systems that provide clean, safe drinking water to the homes and businesses in the county. We maintain the networks on a routine basis and are the first port of call in an emergency. Apart from the essential upgrading and water maintenance service that we provide to our citizens, our water services investment programme aims to ensure that the best possible infrastructure is in place to sustain and attract investment to the county.

Securing the public realm: A litter-free county

- 2.3.2 A clean county plays a major role in how businesses see the county as an investment opportunity; it sustains our natural environment and enhances the experience of people living in the county. Our public realm initiative focuses on securing the effective and efficient management of the public realm. This includes derelict sites, road reservations, lands reserved for housing purposes, burial grounds, open spaces, regional & neighbourhood parks, green spaces, lakes and rivers, roundabouts, medians, roadside margins and roadside hedging. The Council has more than 200 staff deployed in maintaining the public realm and there are a large number of community groups organising clean-ups and promoting better environmental awareness.

Taking stock of our organisational structures and reviewing how we deliver the services has enabled a new way of working. Alerting local residents and keeping people more informed of what is happening on the ground, what has been achieved and what will happen next is where the online schedule management system has a major role to play. Using this system, managers can plan and co-ordinate the deployment of resources across a diversity of tasks ranging from street cleaning, tree planting, grass cutting, litter and dumping, clean ups, gully cleaning, village/town cleansing to litter bin emptying.

The new system enables the preparation of programmes, scheduling of routine and non-routine tasks and also allows managers to target tasks or locations on a priority basis. 'Before' and 'after' reporting on tasks is uploaded through the use of smart phone technology and we now publish the schedules on our website. At the click of a mouse, residents and local businesses can target their local area to see

when the grass will be cut, when roads will be swept, gullies cleaned or what servicing arrangements are in place for litter bins or village centres.

“The place is getting cleaner, it’s plain to see the amount of cleaning that’s happening– both the Council and the local people. If we keep working together we can make it litter-free” (Tidy towns participant)

Snapshot

In South Dublin County in 2012:

20,000 routine tasks and 8,000 non-routine tasks were delivered

380,000 staff hours were utilised

250 machines and materials were deployed at a cost of €80,000 each day

9,800 clean-ups were implemented in 200 estate roads and streets

6,900 cuts happened in 650 grass-cutting locations

700 litter bins were emptied in 10 town/village centres every day

1500 clean ups took place in more than 30+ dumping black spots

7,308 km of roads were swept on more than 100 work-site locations per day

2.3.3 Our innovative approach will ensure a faster response to public realm issues and assist in reaching the target of a litter-free county; placing priority on town centres, traffic corridors and industrial estates, with a view not only to attracting inward investment and promoting the economic viability of the county but also allowing citizens to monitor the quality and regularity of our service, and provide feedback to us on its effectiveness and efficiency.

2.4 Community Services: Working on the ground

2.4.1 Our community engagement approach works to improve the quality of life for all residents in the county - particularly disabled people, those living in communities experiencing social disadvantage, and other relevant target groups. Our community development service delivers its mission through a wide range of projects ranging from the RAPID programme, the community development teams, the estate management team, the social inclusion unit, the homeless service unit, the childrens’ support service, sports and recreation and the arts and library services. We use a variety of community development models and approaches depending on the needs and circumstances of local residents in different areas. These are primarily based on our focused interagency approach and engagement with local residents.

For instance, an asset-based community development programme¹³ is ongoing in Adamstown; the first strategic development zone in the country which is based on a traditional urban town and village format. The Ard Mór Estate community development model; *Working Together with You*¹⁴ and the community safety initiative with Tallaght West Community Development¹⁵ directly address the specific needs of residents in their respective areas.

“The biggest thing for me, since I moved in here has been the feeling that people are watching out for me, I’m getting to know my neighbours, I get door knocks from the Council almost every day about one thing or another. if there’s going to be a meeting, I get a text to tell me. I feel safer walking to the shops; even the teenagers seem better behaved than in other areas” (Local resident).

Case Study

The winter 2012 interagency conference *It takes a village to raise a child: A skills development workshop* for those who work directly with children and families in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors in South Dublin County, was attended by over 120 frontline workers.

“Delivering practical skills based training on a local cross-agency basis will strengthen intervention skills and build effective inter-agency relationships, leading to improved outcomes for children and we need to focus our energies on delivery of such training opportunities across all our agencies” (Conference attendee)

Conference participants discussed issues like:

- ❖ Strategies to engage and build alliances with hard to reach families.
- ❖ Practical tools and approaches to involving children and young people in their assessments and in decision making about their lives
- ❖ Protecting children: listening to the important voices and drawing on the *Signs of Safety* approach
- ❖ Ensuring that inter-agency work really make a difference for children and families
- ❖ Applying the restorative justice approach to our work with children and families

¹³ ASSET- BASED Correct title

¹⁴ Ard Mór

¹⁵ Tallaght

2.4.2 We also engage with local residents on a more formal basis through our *Deputation Meetings* where residents associations and community groups have an opportunity to directly discuss issues of concern to them with both Council officials and elected Members. There are twenty nine community centres, three sports and leisure centres and approximately eleven neighbourhood centres in the county. As part of new developments, our neighbourhood centres, often consisting of just one or two rooms, provide indispensable supports for local communities and cater for a variety of uses, including after-school projects, crèches and meeting space for residents' associations allowing people to engage, exchange experiences and support one another.

Case Study

Social Credits

The South Dublin County social credit's scheme was established in order to encourage volunteerism and civic responsibility, and to encourage usage of South Dublin County Council's services and facilities. It rewards community groups who improve their environment by carrying out pro-social actions such as community cleanups, maintenance of community gardens, graffiti removal and weeding of footpaths. The scheme is open to all community groups in South Dublin County.

A member of the Griffeen Community Development Group reported that "We really enjoyed taking part in the social credit's scheme, it gave another dimension to our group, helped to clean up the area and we had a fun day swimming with the kids as our reward. It also showed that you can contact the Council not just to complain! We were all happy at the end of the day"

Benefits of the scheme to the community include greater interaction with Council staff who can help local groups with practical advice; the esteem conferred on local communities through receiving a reward and the incentive it presents to local residents to consider working towards cleaner, greener, safer communities. www.socialcredits.ie

Encouraging creativity

2.4.3 Our County arts strategy supports the development of participative communities and touches on the three elements of our fundamental ethos; access, engagement and fairness. It seeks the creation of a strong cultural identity for South Dublin County and fosters an environment where artists can explore their creativity to produce innovative and ambitious works of excellence while engaging with local audiences. The Arts office runs an extensive vibrant, dynamic programme of activities that have a major positive impact on the county and enrich local peoples' lives as audiences in the Rua Red, South Dublin Arts Centre and other venues.

In Context, our Per Cent for Art programme, is one of the most ambitious and progressive local authority public art programmes in the county. It engages with a broad people-profile through its innovative and imaginative programmes; each of which focuses on local and regional audience participation and development. The Arts office also supports local arts organisations and venues including Alternative Entertainments, the Civic Theatre, Tallaght Community Arts Centre and Rua Red, the County arts centre as well as many smaller arts organisations and artists through its arts grants and bursaries. An eclectic range of projects including *Manage YAM* (Your Arts Map) an interactive website for young people which is a partnership project with Dublin City Council, Temple Bar Cultural Trust, and the National Association of Youth Arts and *The Dinner Party: Not just a Dublin Coddle*; a disability and arts project involving young disabled people from Tallaght and Liverpool, demonstrate the ambition of our programmes.

CASE STUDY

UNWRAPPED: Annual winter celebration

UNWRAPPED 2012 took its theme from Oscar Wilde's 'The Selfish Giant'. Audiences joined a lantern-lit promenade through the garden of the Giant involving animation, puppetry, music and visual arts that brought the story's themes of friendship, love, and generosity of spirit to life. Performances featured Monkeyshine Theatre Company; musician Michael Buckley; St. Jude's Parish Junior Choir, Templeogue; St. Mary's Senior School, Rowlagh; St. Kilian's Children's Choir Kilnamanagh; Suburban Sounds choir and St. Mark's Church Choir, Springfield with the lighting of the county Christmas tree. Warm mince pies and hot chocolate were welcomed by the crowds who attended. UNWRAPPED has been taking place since 2010 through a creative partnership between South Dublin County Council Arts office and Corporate Services department; South Dublin Libraries; Tallaght Community Arts; Alternative Entertainment; Contact Studio; Civic Theatre, Tallaght; RUA RED, South Dublin Arts Centre and South Dublin County Music Education Partnership. *UNWRAPPED 2012* is also supported by the Arts Council, Monastery Music and Tallaght Credit Union.

A learning hub

2.4.4 The old model of the public library as a warehouse for books has been replaced by a democratic public space offering a myriad of opportunities for learning, recreation and access to the information needed for people to be fully engaged with the world around them. More than 1.5 million visitors accessed our seven libraries, including the County Library in Tallaght town centre and a mobile library service in 2012. They offer citizens a range of services and also provide access to further education and learning. In addition to traditional book-borrowing, services include a village history site with cultural and heritage walks for which apps are being developed; a heritage mapping facility; and a large range of free cultural events programmed every year including the *Red Line Book Festival* initiative. The demand for digital services and access to

verifiable online information, particularly in the health information area, has developed steadily with more than 200,000 computer sessions booked across the branch network in 2012. This facility will increase substantially with the opening of the innovative, light-filled Ballyroan Library with wi-fi throughout and 35 computer stations with free access, encouraging research and study by people of all ages. These services help to build the capacity of local groups, empower individuals and promote participation in community activity through collaborative work with the statutory and voluntary agencies and community groups. Initiatives like the *Ready2Read* a pre-literacy project, which delivers books into the heart of local communities, are testimony to the fact that literacy skills are indicators of future performance and success in life. *Ready2Read* harnesses the goodwill of parents to work in the development of their children's pre-literacy skills and raises awareness and provides experience in family learning.

Case Study

Ready2Read

"I was really struggling with how to read and what to read to my three year old. My Mam never read to me and I wasn't great in school. Then I took part in Ready2Read the pre literacy course in the library and I loved it. Now I read to her all the time - she loves 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' and there's three books going into her stocking from Santy".

Suzanne, aged 21 years, is involved in the *Ready2Read* project which involves hands-on training for parents to help their children develop six pre-literacy skills. These skills are what children need to know about the reading and writing process before they can actually read and write. Learning is accomplished through fun workshops involving reading, nursery rhymes, songs, a group activity and a series of practical tips to demonstrate each of the six pre literacy skills. Following the success of the pilot phase, the programme was offered to all crèches and pre-schools in South Dublin in conjunction with the County childcare committee. South Dublin mobile library service supports the programme, visiting crèches and pre school facilities. The programme has been delivered in seventeen preschools and crèches with over five hundred parents trained. Fifty-three childcare workers and library staff have also received training and are delivering the *Ready2Read* programme across the county.

2.4.5 Healthy lifestyles: Feeling good

For some time, we have been working with our partners in the HSE to support local communities to better understand the social determinants of health and to recognise how their individual lifestyle choices can impact on them and their family's personal health. The Tallaght Health Fairs were an initiative primarily to support and encourage people to be aware of the steps they can take to promote better health and a healthier lifestyle within the four West Tallaght communities, and to educate West Tallaght residents on the various services available and pathways to accessing these services. In doing so, each fair aimed to raise awareness of various health issues that can occur across the life span and promote ways by which such illnesses can be prevented, alleviated and/or managed as well as providing information and contact details for statutory and non-statutory health services, health promotion and social services. Fairs were held locally within each community to ensure ease of access for community residents, and also to ensure that the information provided addressed the individual health needs of each community.

The success of the initiative showed the capacity of the fairs to promote health, encourage personal responsibility and prevent illness. Local residents commented that people were not aware of the magnitude of services actually available in Tallaght; nor had people realised that there were services providing support regarding health issues outside of the HSE.

Referring to health information packs from the HSE Crisis Pregnancy agency one mother commented "We were only just saying this morning how should we talk to our children about relationships and then we come and find all of these DVDs and books. I never knew there was stuff like this out there".

Recreating for living

2.4.6 Sports and recreation play an important part in community and personal development with many programmes and initiatives rolled out by South Dublin County Council. We maintain approximately 1,650 hectares of parks and open spaces, providing for both active and passive recreation with five regional parks and more than fifty neighbourhood parks under their management. South Dublin County Sports partnership operates on an interagency basis to increase participation in sport and physical activity across the community. Our sport, recreation and play office works in partnership with clubs, community groups associations and national governing bodies of sport to implement a varied and comprehensive programme that delivers a major return on investment in supporting local residents' quality of life. "The soccer blitz was about having pure fun while being conscious of the need to promote tolerance and social inclusion. It was about doing things together and after a while the players recognised the reality: sport can have a hugely positive impact for them, it's not just a trivial way of passing time, sport has no boundaries" (Soccer coach)

We are also home to the Tallaght Stadium, the National Basketball Arena and Tallaght and Clondalkin Sports and Leisure Centres who provide swimming pools, gym activities and playground facilities to the surrounding districts. All of these facilities play an important role in encouraging cohesive communities and social inclusion. Our 240 allotments in four different locations have been an outstanding success; offering the opportunity to provide education in horticulture as well as on the sustainable value of home food production.

CASE STUDY

The Fettercairn community garden club

“There is great excitement in the local area about the community garden. I live in an apartment and don’t have a garden of my own; I can go there for some rest and relaxation and grow vegetables into the bargain” (Garden user)

In March 2011 following an application from the Fettercairn Estate Management committee, a grant of €10,000 was received from the community growers fund. Planting began in the community garden soon afterwards and local residents became involved in planting vegetables and flowers in the garden. The Fettercairn community garden club was formally set up with 10 members with meetings to plan work in the garden taking place on a monthly basis. At present, there is plenty of activity in the garden. Raised beds are being used by various groups in the community including senior citizens; the multi-ethnic community; and disability groups including the Tallaght Unemployed group. Produce from the garden is cooked in the adjoining community-café with surplus produce then sold in the weekly market nearby. There are plans to use the garden in a variety of ways in the future, including having an area where young and old can learn about planting and growing vegetables, and about general environmental awareness issues, such as composting.

The community voice: Having a say

The Council aspires to a dynamic, active citizenship where residents willingly participate in community life. Promoting public awareness of the our activities, policies and objectives and consulting with the public on a continuous basis is the first step in building a sense of common civic purpose and mutual regard. ‘Connect’ is the overall information access-platform which accommodates a broad range of communication opportunities. This programme encourages innovative uses of technology for citizens, businesses, educational and community services. It will grow in usefulness as the internet becomes our everyday tool to access opportunities for lifelong learning, leisure, personal, social and civic development. For instance, the cycling / permeability programme carries out surveys online to test interest and support for projects initially at design stage. Residents can, in turn, contribute to the planning consultation process online and when the projects are physically completed, further surveys evaluate their popularity and impact. This allows a full consultation process across the project’s life span in a simple but practical way.

Case Study

The Lucan-Adamstown time bank: sharing skills

Five *Educate Together* schools in the Lucan-Adamstown area have come together to form the Lucan-Adamstown time bank. Time banks are community exchanges where units of time are the currency and means of exchange. Members of the time bank earn credits by volunteering, sharing their skills and giving their time. For every hour that members 'deposit' in a time bank, they gain a time credit which they can spend at a time bank event. Everyone's time is equal and each of the five schools lists activities where credits can be gained and spent by the students, teachers and parents. Activities to gain credits range from schoolyard cleanups to running the *Park Safe* programme to a fun approach to maths, while events where credits can be spent include the movie club, driver theory classes, pet farm tours and tickets for Tallt Stadium. On the day of the Lucan-Adamstown time bank launch, pupils, teachers and parents got an opportunity to register on an online system to become members of the time bank and were each presented with a giant time credit.

"This is a wonderful innovative way of sharing skills and resources. There are gains for everyone. We look forward to the time bank spreading into the community". (Time bank founder member).

3 A CONNECTED PLACE: THE IMPACT AND OUR PRIORITIES

We will:

- Encourage compact spatial development which is efficient, accessible and focused on neighbourhood village and town centres;
- Ensure that our neighbourhood village and town centres are busy and vibrant, enhancing economic activity and the quality of life of those who live and work there;
- Facilitate a high quality, integrated and sustainable infrastructural network in order to achieve a balanced economic and social environment;
- Seek to expand and improve the system of roads, water, drainage and all utilities in a professional and efficient manner;
- Use innovative technology to facilitate communication, fresh contemporary learning, information and skills with our partners, stakeholders and citizens;
- Pursue energy efficiencies and exploit renewable energy resources and technologies to develop a low carbon environment underpinned by a green economy;
- Connect the county locally, nationally and internationally via tourism, the arts, leisure and business interests.

- 3.1 South Dublin County is a well-connected area in terms of transport, environmental services, telecommunications and energy. The County Development Plan seeks to promote ease of movement within the county as well as wider access to the county by integrating land use planning with high quality sustainable and integrated transport, waste, and technological services. Provision of a well-oiled sustainable infrastructure such as the transportation network of roads, bus corridors, rail, light rail cycle lanes and pedestrian routes - all of which are pre-requisites for safe and efficient movement within and through the county - benefits everybody living there, working there and visiting. With the N4, the N7 and the N81 running through South Dublin County and the M50 on our eastern edge, we have unsurpassed infrastructural inteconnectivity within and outside of the county

Tackling waste

- 3.1.1 Our waste management policies have had a significant impact on our local communities and many initiatives have taken place at local level in relation to the management and disposal of waste. We have made good progress in diverting waste from landfill through waste prevention, reduction, re-use and re-cycling initiatives. We continue to implement the *Dublin Regional Waste Management Plan* at a strategic level where we oversee the the provision of adequate waste infrastructure and the implementation of waste management policies by waste producers. We have a vibrant series of public education programmes where we promote effective and efficient collection and disposal of waste to influence domestic, institutional and business behaviours.

Case Study

Creating sustainable employment

Clondalkin Community Recycling Initiative (CCRI) is an interagency collaboration supporting labour market activation in an area of high unemployment specialising in the waste management of electronic and electrical equipment (WEEE). It was set up in 2002 with the support of the Environmental Working Group of SDC Partnership (formerly CPLN Partnership). CCRI operates a WEEE recycling facility in South County Dublin where all end-of-life household appliances can be dropped off. These appliances are then broken down and treated in an environmentally and legally-compliant way. CCRI has waste collection permits for all four Dublin local authorities, Wicklow County Council and Kildare County Council. CCRI offers a free WEEE door-to-door waste management collection service in approximately 95,000 households annually in the greater Dublin area.

CCRI employs a manager, an administrator and nine general operatives. These positions are part supported by the Department of Social Protection, Community Services Programme. Three DSP CE and Tús participants are also employed in CCRI. These latter positions are administrated by SDC Partnership. The Board of CCRI includes representatives from the local community; an environmental scientist and a number of committed local volunteers; it also includes local development agencies – the SDC Partnership and Action Clondalkin Enterprise (ACE). CCRI works in close collaboration with a number of other partners including South Dublin County Council, WEEE Ireland, the

Department of Social Protection (DSP), the EPA and the Community Reuse Network (CRN). These agencies provide key resources and support for the ongoing work and development of CCRI.

3.2 Getting around the county

Continuous improvements in public transport have taken place in the last few years including the construction of the Luas Red line to Tallaght and the ongoing construction of the Luas City West line to Saggart. The quality bus network project office continues to roll out a programme of quality bus corridors across the county. New rail stations are being provided at Kishoge and Fonthill Rd, and the Kildare rail line has been double tracked. We have continued to expand provision of up to the minute travel time information to commuters through strong links with AA road watch and direct links to the National Roads Authority camera network. The journey time SMS text to 51678 is available to the public providing accurate travel times on major routes which benefits those living and travelling through the county.

We are also currently facilitating the payment and topping-up of parking by mobile phone which will facilitate more user-friendly parking in the county. There are well over one hundred accessible parking spaces providing for disabled drivers/passengers at South Dublin County Council owned buildings and in facilities and on streets in villages across the county. Tallaght is now numbered among Europe's most disabled-friendly towns for the range of innovative services it offers to improve the quality of life of its citizens with disabilities, including older people. Examples of best practice include a 48 hour repair service for streets and pavements, information services, accessible pedestrian walkways, accessible recycling facilities, accessible libraries and books available in different formats for the visually impaired.

"You don't get much for nothing these days; those parking spaces around the place have made getting around much easier for me and I feel more confident. That new Smartphone app showing me the different locations for accessible parking around the place and in the Council is really useful **and** I can download it for free. It has saved me a lot of hassle" <http://accessible.southdublin.ie> (Service-user)

3.2.1 A number of walking and cycling routes have been designed to service local communities in the county and to enable better living conditions for residents. These local links will create more sustainable neighbourhoods with direct pedestrian and cyclist links to popular local destinations. The aim is to encourage people to leave their cars at home for short trips by bringing more households within easy walking and cycling distances of local amenities. Cyclists and pedestrians, including those with decreased mobility will be able to access safe, direct, hard surfaced routes to the local shops, schools, community centre bus, rail or LUAS stops, cycle routes or parks and playgrounds. Increasing the number of people walking and cycling within local communities reduces carbon footprints, encourages a healthier lifestyle, increases passive surveillance, and in turn, the perception of safety for local people living in these areas.

Case Study

The Grand Canal green route

“Last summer, I cycled this route into town a couple of times with my husband. It is very nice, I really enjoyed the fact that there was no traffic and you get the feeling you are in the countryside. It’s nice to pass the ducks and swans on the canal. I will use it again”.

Tina, living in Inchicore, has discovered the Grand Canal Green Route; a high quality pedestrian and cycle route along the canal towpath from the 3rd lock at Inchicore to the twelfth lock at Lucan. The route facilitates access to a major natural resource for improved amenity, recreation, education and transportation uses. In July 2011, South Dublin County Council officially opened an extension of the route to Adamstown and Griffeen Avenue. The route provides 2.5km of cycle/pedestrian paths, public lighting and CCTV, and a new canal over bridge. The new route enhances the accessibility of the Grand Canal from surrounding residential areas, and creates a first class pedestrian and cycle route between Adamstown, Lucan South and Dublin City. It also facilitates a secure, safe and attractive connection for commuting and leisure purposes.

Keeping connectivity live

- 3.3 Telecommunications, broadband connectivity, energy supply and the promotion of renewable energy are crucial to the county’s continued social and economic development. Providing a high quality network is also desirable in terms of equality outcomes and the narrowing of the “digital divide.” An accessible, high quality network will be of particular benefit to those who have not traditionally benefited from modern advances in telecommunications, in particular the elderly, those who are disabled and those from backgrounds of disadvantage.
- 3.3.1 A keen focus on spatial development which respects the integrity of rural villages and neighbourhoods is high on the Council’s agenda. We want to ensure that these are accessible places, that their individual identities are maintained with integrity and that they capitalise on their unique selling points in order to enable them to ‘connect’ with opportunity, so that balanced economic and social development can be achieved for our citizens. We want these village settings to be more vibrant, open and accessible, facilitating walking and cycling, experience increased footfall, and encourage social and community encounters through festivals, performances and open air markets so that they recover their individual character-dynamics within a contemporary setting as well as benefitting their local communities.

CASE STUDY

Lucan: A heritage village

Lucan's important heritage buildings and its memorable streetscape have inspired its elected members, Tidy Towns group, festival committee, Chamber of Commerce and planning council to undertake a fresh initiative to enhance the 'brand' of Lucan and grow economic activity as a result. Community volunteers already host an annual Italian food festival which is lively and well-attended. A village heritage plan and design statement have been completed in consultation with local groups and will inform development in the village while heritage tours bring the buildings to life on certain occasions through the year.

Plans to bring the heart back into Lucan have met with an enthusiastic response from local residents and business owners alike. "We're very excited by this village idea, we want to reclaim Lucan's special character and identity. This seems to be a good way of doing it and increases footfall and business in the village. My kids loved the Ruaille Buaille Lucan Festival too, it was a great family day out and the park was the perfect place for it".(Local business owner).

The village initiative seeks to make Lucan the focus of its surrounding communities, and an attractive destination, accessible by foot and bicycle. Pleasant looped walks along the Liffey and the Grand Canal via Griffeen Park will be reinforced by on-site signage, tourist leaflets and web-site promotion. Implementing these actions will help Lucan achieve a vibrant local economy, a dynamic local gathering centre, and conserve its heritage.

3.4 New media: New ways

Social media has transformed the way we work and presents us with the ideal opportunity to brief our citizens. Our aim is to deliver real citizen-centred services by sharing information and receiving feedback from them. Public information campaigning, media relations and crisis management have all been transformed by the introduction of Web 2.0. It gives greater democratic engagement and it provides us with a medium for local people to give us instant feedback on how we deliver our services. SDCC is now actively engaging with a fast-growing and informed social media population; we stay updated on the public's needs and opinions and can respond with effective policies. We have re-developed our website in line with international trends and are moving towards a service / task based menu where people can see at a glance the service or information that they require. We currently have more than 3,200 followers on Twitter and over 1600 Facebook accounts 'liking' the Council's page and receiving updates, as well as almost 500,000 visitors on YouTube channel. This digital journey is certain to continue into the future.

Case Study

Fix your Street

Created by South Dublin County and launched in August 2011, www.fixyourstreet.ie is a publicly-accessible web site using mobile phone technology to allow citizens to report non- emergency issues such as street lighting, drainage, graffiti, illegal dumping, road and footpath maintenance to their Local Authority. It is now a national system and South Dublin County Council, with the support of the Local Government Management Agency, has been working with a number of other local authorities to provide training and information on it. It features interactive content which is crowd-sourced yet moderated by the Council, thereby ensuring a safe browsing experience for users of the service. The citizen becomes the 'sensor' on the ground in order to advise the local authority of issues of interest and/or concern in the local area. A guaranteed response happens within 2 working days advising the citizen about what the next action will be in relation to the matter. As actions are taken, the report is updated on www.fixyourstreet.ie.

3.4.1 Not only does our library service deliver a contemporary model of the public library as a gateway to learning and to literacy, it also introduces local users to the expanding digital world and to the written word in all its formats. It is an incomparable asset to our communities; encouraging engagement and it knows no social boundaries. We use social media, Web 2.0 tools and a range of other digital communications platforms to connect to the community. Additional self-service facilities recently installed in branch libraries have freed staff up to work out in communities and across formal and informal networks. Over 1.5 million visitors used our walk-in library service to date; where they availed of services ranging across employment support, language learning, mental health support, career information for school leavers and over three thousand other cultural and education events. With over 2.6 million hits in 2012, the website is a vital information tool for communities and offers 'always open' services including online health, reference, homework and heritage services.

Establishing further links

3.5 South Dublin County Council is widely regarded as a dynamic organisation and continually attempts to ensure equality of access and outstanding customer service for all people who interact with Council buildings and services, including the 13% of the population of South Dublin County who are disabled.¹⁶ The provision of quality customer service and care is a priority for us and to support and guide more effective customer service delivery, we have written and adopted a detailed Customer Action Plan and Citizens' Charter.

¹⁶ Census 2012.

Observations from our customers are acted on within our customer charter guidelines. The most recent upgrade to the Customer Contact System includes capturing and reporting on the customers' experience when contact is made with the Council. The results of feedback received are rated and particular attention is being drawn to areas where contact could have been "avoidable".

Other prime examples of our high standards in customer service are the installation of induction loop facilities at every customer service point (County Hall, Tallaght and Civic Offices, Clondalkin) to facilitate customers with hearing impairment and the development of virtual online access guides for County Hall Tallaght, Civic Offices Clondalkin, and the Council County Library Network. The access guides and a guide to the National Disability Strategy are available on the <http://accessible.southdublin.ie> website.

- 3.6 Our social Inclusion unit continues to progress initiatives that deliver an effective, efficient response to social exclusion in marginalised areas. Our community development team works to develop increased participation and stronger communities; engaging local residents in conversation. We develop pro-social initiatives together with residents and align the physical build with the community-build programmes. We make links across our different communities via a collaborative-working approach of our joint policing committee, local policing fora, our interagency traveller strategy and our RAPID co-ordinators, community teams and estate management officers on the ground. Our children's service committee, through focusing on its key priority areas guarantees that every aspect of children's and families' lives will be fulfilled. Working with Comhairle na nÓg, we give young people a chance to have their voices heard at a participative level, where they identify and discuss matters affecting their daily lives, and where they can pass on their concerns to decision makers in both local and national government.

Case Study

TEDxTallaght

TED is a non-profit programme of talks devoted to technology, entertainment and design. In the spirit of harnessing ideas worth spreading, TEDx are local, self-organized events where live speakers and digital media combine to spark deep discussion and social connection. Individual talks are required to be brief but rich in content and diverse in range. Libraries have always been places where ideas are shared and disseminated and South Dublin Libraries have been following TED discussions for some time. Limited numbers of TEDx licenses are granted worldwide and we are delighted to have secured a license to run an annual TEDx event in Tallaght library. It is a prestigious event and brings a wealth of local, national and international talent to the area. All of the speakers tell their stories with passion and enthusiasm about how they strive to make the ordinary extraordinary. The thoughtful and the curious intrigue and challenge each other to exchange and interact. View the TEDx Tallaght videos at www.tedxtallaght.com.

Public representatives: how they engage

3.5.1 The County Councillor, representing as many as 10,000 persons in their local area, is the first tier of our system of representative democracy. We have twenty six councillors in South Dublin County. The councillor participates in the Strategic Policy Committee, Area Committee and County Council Meeting proper as his/her core activity. In addition, they attend meetings relating to the Joint Policing Committee, County Tourism, Traffic Management Committee, and Deputations. The work of each of these committees play different but important roles in improving quality of life for local residents in in their daily lives in many different ways. During 2012, almost 4,000 representations were made by elected members on behalf of constituents. Over 200 events were attended by the Mayor in 2012, reflecting the Council's interaction with local community groups, schools, businesses and other public bodies. Highlights included the Chinese New Year celebration, National Engineers' week, National Bike week, The Haunted, Social Inclusion Week, the Red Line Book Festival and Christmas 'Unwrapped' organised by the County Arts office.

Growing older and remaining young in South Dublin County

3.5.2 Following an in-depth consultation process with older people and agencies and the development of the *Age Friendly* strategy by the Age Friendly County Alliance, South Dublin County was designated as a World Health Organisation *Age Friendly* county. The establishment of the *Age-friendly County Alliance* has provided an opportunity for us to strengthen our working relationships with our partner agencies and service providers, and given us a new awareness of the issues affecting older people. This initiative particularly will ensure that South Dublin continues to grow as a safe, healthy and positive place and a great county in which to grow older.

The strategy includes details of the many projects and initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life of older people such as the annual Bealtaine Festival, the new exercise equipment in our Parks, and the projects and events that take place in our libraries across the Councilouny. The strategy also includes details of plans for the future, including the establishment of an older person's forum, a business of ageing forum, and the development of age-friendly towns and businesses across South Dublin. Throughout our consultation process, it was clear that the people of South Dublin County are living longer and healthier lives; they want to be active and make positive contributions to their communities.

"We would be only delighted to pass our skills and experience on to younger people, we want to talk if they are willing to listen". (Tallaght Resident)

The actions included in the *Age-Friendly County Strategy* will ensure that South Dublin continues to grow as a safe, healthy and positive place in which to grow older.

Case Study

Retired Active Men's Social (RAMS)

“Joining RAMS got me out and about; I am learning and achieving new things all the time. It's a great place to meet people. You also feel you are giving back to the community. We help out in the national school with their garden and they give us the use of their computer room for long-life learning courses”

Feedback from John, a member of RAMS which was first established in August 2010, and aims to provide an opportunity for retired men to get together, to meet like-minded men and to participate in activities such as bowls, gardening and as well as outings to various places. Members enjoy playing pool, darts, card games, bowls, table tennis and a book club as well as computer training, restoration of local monuments, gardening and maintenance of areas in the village. The group also plays an active role in the local community. There are now 70 members with an average of 40 men attending activities on a weekly basis. Several visits have been arranged by the groups to places like Dail Eireann, Punchestown Race evening meeting, Baldonnell Aerodrome and a Dublin City Tour. The group have successfully sourced funds from various public and private bodies and members have also assisted the Marie Keating Cancer Foundation in their fund raising. RAMS are members of Active Retirement Ireland.

Engaging with visitors

- 3.6 We are working to enhance South Dublin County as a tourism destination; making it more accessible and demonstrating our synergies with the sector's needs. South Dublin County Tourism is the lead agency in the development and promotion of South Dublin County as a primary conference, event and sports destination. Since 2009, South Dublin County Tourism has assisted members in securing large scale events for the county that have attracted much additional income into the county and assisted in both job retention and job creation of our local residents.

“Clondalkin is a beautiful monastic village, imagine my amazement when I discovered that I could access wifi in the shadow of a round tower and at no charge to myself. It is so Irish”.

Connecting through our twinning programmes has seen South Dublin County establish formal twinning arrangements with the London borough of Brent and Kreis Segeberg in Germany. We also support the community twinning arrangements between Rathcoole and École

Valentin in France. This is a broadening experience for our local communities and focuses on a European theme where people develop further insights into the workings of the EU and its policies.

“Although the theme of the Gathering will be a strong focus in 2013, we hope to apply the gains from the numerous events planned for the year and to establish them in the County on a longer - term basis”.

4 A PROTECTED PLACE: OUR PRIORITIES AND THEIR IMPACT

We will

- Promote inter-agency and cross-departmental collaboration to protect the landscapes, habitats, built heritage, archaeology and culture of South Dublin county;
- Ensure that the principles of sustainable development are observed;
- Develop initiatives to foster safer communities in which to live and work
- Prioritise the development of green spaces to facilitate the county's green network for people and for wildlife;
- Focus on high environmental standards including 'best in class' waste management initiatives and ensure that our policies support the natural environment;
- Continue to develop and support the Irish language, culture and heritage on a county basis and within the Council;

- 4.1 The Council's rich historical and natural heritage is reflected in the design of our Council's crest and in the intent of its motto: *This We Hold in Trust - Ag Seo Ár gCúram*. That heritage is important to us. It helps define us as a community. It is something that we have inherited from preceding generations; something that we shape ourselves and a legacy that we leave for the future. Planning for the protection and conservation of this valuable resource is therefore a pre-requisite to developing a sense of pride in our origins as a county and a strong sense of cultural and community identity.

Protecting our natural heritage

People, whether they live, work or visit the county benefit from our rich built, cultural and natural landscape. Our resources of fertile land, rivers, and mountains, coupled with a high quality infrastructure and strategic location close to Dublin city, form the basis of South Dublin County's long historical association with centres of learning and teaching, agriculture, industry and trade. We have areas of outstanding natural beauty and amenity, green belt areas, natural heritage areas and two proposed special areas of conservation. The Liffey and Dodder rivers and the Grand Canal are important waterways flowing through the county.

Our natural heritage and biodiversity must be protected in order to maintain and enhance our natural systems such as wetlands, tree cover and peatlands. These vital resources shield communities from flooding, improve the quality of our air and water and help us deal with the impacts of climate change.

Our very existence, our economy and our quality of life depend on this natural infrastructure. We also acknowledge that the protected place is one where both built and natural heritage are constantly under threat from human influence and change. We recognise that our heritage is a vital component of our existence in terms of placemaking and community shaping. Our Development plan aims to achieve the conservation and enhancement of our natural and built heritage.

4.2 A sustainable future

Landscape is the physical framework surrounding people's lives, giving our communities a sense of identity and belonging and bestowing a sense of place on their surroundings. We want to create a well-defined and linked green structure in rural and urban areas where biodiversity, heritage, amenities and landscape are afforded protection, management and enhancement. We know that together with our stakeholders we must manage change in a way that is respectful of the natural environment and rural areas. Encouraging elements of the rural landscape into urban areas through greenways, linear parks and wildlife corridors will enhance people's surroundings in these urban areas. But, the onus is on us to strike a balance between improving the quality of life of residents and adapting to climate change through the protection of the natural environment and facilitating access to amenities.

Case Study

Corkagh Park

Parks can be busy and functional as well as tranquil retreats and Corkagh Park is much more than a place where people go to walk. Located in the heart of the county between the N7, M50 and Clondalkin Village, Corkagh is South Dublin's favourite park. The original house and demesne, dating back 400 years, became a 140 hectare park in 1986. Horticulturally complex, there are also interesting features - a Victorian -styled rose garden, laid out in the form of a rose when viewed from above; a famine commemorative arboretum with trees from the five continents and an historic farm complete with artefacts from its industrial heritage. Corkagh 'put and take' fishery covers an area of 3.6 hectares and is a popular spot with local as well as visiting fishermen. The pet-farm is a favourite with families while allotments can be leased for those with green fingers. Also located within the park is the award winning self-contained Camac Valley caravan and camping park, complete with children's playground, which attracts over 20,000 visitors a year from over forty different countries.

Fact box

90% of visitors rated Corkagh Park as good or very good
86% stated that they had enjoyed their last visit to Corkagh Park
21% of visitors use Corkagh Park on a daily basis
91% of visitors surveyed would recommend Corkagh Park as a place to visit
90% of users felt that the facilities provided had improved in the last five years.

4.2 Managing the public realm

Safeguarding our natural environment and ensuring reasonable living conditions for our local communities through effective management of the public realm is a major part of our environmental services department which it delivers in many different ways. Effective environmental management coupled with a firm commitment to collaborative agency working also contributes to peoples' perceptions of feeling safer in their communities and enhancing their quality of life. The various clinics which are facilitated jointly by Council staff and An Garda Síochána, the specially dedicated allocations support staff, the Council's welfare service, the community safety fora and other services provided at community centres around the county all contribute in this regard.

Activities like the late night league programme are funded and facilitated by the Council in association with the FAI and An Garda Síochána. This very successful programme targets young people involved in or at risk of becoming involved in anti-social behaviour.

"It's a great example of people working together, taking part, getting to know young people who could be troublesome and doing it at a time when they've nothing to do except walk the streets, it has changed the whole dynamic of a late Friday night in Tallaght and Clondalkin and has made everybody's life easier and safer. (Volunteer coach)

4.3 Living more sustainably

Creating more sustainable living conditions for our future generations through responsible and sustainable development together with undertaking environmental initiatives such as participating in sustainable energy projects have enabled us to partner nine other local authorities to develop local leadership in sustainable energy through an approach of planning, commitment and action. Part of this initiative is the development of a sustainable energy action plan for the county and a planning strategy seeking to facilitate and direct proposals for renewable energy projects, such as windfarms. Our cycling, transport and permeability programmes are devised with a keen focus on sustainability while our Dublin Mountain recreation programme looks to capitalise on our natural heritage asset. Our pro-social programme continues to emphasise and support positive environmental action amongst communities in the county and we have a wide range of environmental awareness

programmes. Participation in events like national tree week and national ECO week also maintain high levels of awareness in relation to maintaining the county's natural heritage.

Case Study- need a context setting sentence here

Clean Build

In 2009, South Dublin County Council initiated a legal case, against a permitted waste recycling company, Cleanbuild, then in liquidation; its former Directors and the owners of the site at Bohernabreena. The company had illegally landfilled in excess of 100,000 tonnes of C&D waste on the site. Following an extremely complex case heard on 14 days over a period of more than two years in the High Court, the remediation of the site was ordered. The ruling has become a landmark case in the interpretation of the waste regulatory framework in Ireland. It has had a significant impact on the powers of statutory waste authorities; the status of guidance standards in relation to the law; the liability of company directors and landowners and how that liability can be apportioned; the definition of waste; how and when waste can or must be managed. This case has set a precedent that will have significant implications for all future waste enforcement cases. The High Court imposed personal liability upon all but one of the directors of Clean Build Limited for the clean up of the site at an estimated cost of €400,000.

4.4 Labhair Gaeilge linn

There is a vibrant Irish-speaking population which supports twelve Gaelscoileanna in South Dublin County, where thousands of children attend every day. We also have clubs and societies such as Áras Chrónáin and *Pobal na Gaeilge, Baile Átha Cliath Theas*; a new group whose main aim is to bring together all the people in the County who have an interest in Irish, or who are completely fluent in order to create an Irish-speaking community. South Dublin County is working assiduously to provide services through Irish and it is now possible to do business in all the interactive self service points in South Dublin. Our *Seachtain na Gaeilge* saw more than seven thousand people attend more than one hundred events. deisighdoshraid.ie is the bi-lingual version of fixyourstreet.ie and South Dublin Libraries have launched a new Irish mobile app account, from which accounts can be viewed, items renewed or reserved while on the move. The home page of www.athcliaththeas.ie has been developed to include daily notices and news articles.

Case Study

Bain úsáid aisti

Tá Comhairle Chontae Átha Cliath Theas ag obair go dian chun seirbhísí a chur ar fáil trí Ghaeilge. I mbliana sheolamar www.deisighdoshraid.ie -suíomh inar féidir leat gearán a dhéanamh linn ar líne faoi fhadhbanna ar do shráid, mar shoilse briste, graifítí etc. Chomh maith leis sin tá aip

nua leabharlainne inar féidir leat breathnú ar do chuntas, athnuachan a dhéanamh ar d'iasachtaí, leabhair a chur san áireamh agus neart eile. le haghaidh tuilleadh eolais féach ar www.athcliaththeas.ie nó cuir ríomhphost chuig Gaeilge@athcliaththeas.ie le bheith ar ár liosta teagmhála.

A rich architectural heritage

- 4.5 South Dublin County has a large varied number of buildings, structures and places of cultural, historical and architectural value which contribute to its essential character. Examples of large country houses, industrial units, middle class suburban dwellings, the terraced homes of the industrial workforce, and labouring workers' cottages reflect our mixed economic base. Large farm houses and outbuildings were built in the rural areas of the county while the more vernacular architecture of the settlements in the uplands also added to the county's rich architectural legacy. This is a unique resource and over time, structures and places have acquired a special character and a unique identity. They are embedded in the county's sub-conscious psyche, which once lost or damaged can never be replaced. It plays an important role in enhancing people's sense of well-being and attitude to living.
- 4.5.1 However, architectural quality is not limited to buildings from the past. South Dublin is a young county committed to recognising and promoting the best in modern design in both individual buildings and urban/landscape settings. The Council supports academic design programmes and commissions innovative architects to benchmark contemporary design in housing and civic building projects. Modern values of light, space and transparency animate and bring life to many recent buildings including Brookfield Youth Centre (exhibited at the Venice Biennale), and Ballyroan Library. Named after an earlier house on this site in historic Clondalkin Village, Valhalla is a sheltered housing courtyard where younger lesser-abled residents find their first independent home. In partnership with Clanmil Housing Association, this complex approaches zero carbon emissions through energy efficiency and innovative use of renewable resources. Its optimistic modern language, bright corridors and sunny garden all encourage interaction and promote confidence in its vulnerable young residents.

Case Study

South Dublin History Website

The South Dublin County history website is a resource for those who want to know about the history of the area. It gives people a flavour of that history and tells the story of the of the county's old village centres. It includes a written piece on the history of each village, maps of the area over time from 1760 until the present day; a chronology of the villages' history, a reading list, images and a piece on the new communities that have grown up around the various villages in the county. A guided walk of each village is included. The walks are available for downloading. South

Dublin History is planning for the future and is developing a mobile phone app which will be trialled in the Lucan area. The material linking the diaspora with the history and developments of the places where their ancestors may have originated. <http://www.southdublinhistory.ie>

5 Appendix tbc

6 Bibliography tbc

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