

1988 - 2003

# LOCAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A TIME TO REFLECT



38

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39) Blackrock  
Millennium Project

40) Ardee Playground

41) Tholsel Street  
- Carlingford

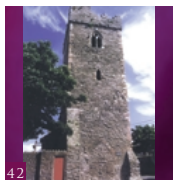
42) Seatown Castle

## Local Development

A variety of projects have brought renewed life and vibrancy to local communities.

Every effort was made to attract funding from available sources. Grants from such headings as Urban & Village Renewal Schemes, International Fund for Ireland, Peace & Reconciliation, Interreg, etc. which had been matched with funding from Louth Local Authorities, has made a significant impact on the upgrading of towns and villages within the county. The following represents but a sample of such schemes over the years in question:

- Ardee (Carpark & landscaped area)
- Clogherhead (Refurbished tennis courts)
- Omeath (Facelift of pier)
- Castlebellingham (Streetscape project)
- Knockbridge (Stephenstown) (Landscaped park & pond)
- Refurbishment and restoration of Seatown Castle
- Seafront and village improvements at Clogherhead
- Promenade at Greenore
- Restoration of motte & bailey at Millmount
- Restoration of St. Finian's Park
- Provision of a playground at Carlingford
- Refurbishment of Magdalene Tower, Drogheda
- Ardee (Completion of carpark at Bridge Street)
- Refurbishment of Smarmore Castle
- Omeath Recreational Park
- Tullyallen Village Enhancement
- Renovation of Carlingford Courthouse to incorporate a new branch library
- Barrack Corner footpath
- Annagassan Harbour
- Omeath Seafront Amenity Scheme
- Footpaths at Kilsaran, Castlebellingham and Tullyallen
- Upgrading of facilities at Monasterboice Round Tower
- Pedestrian access to Orchard Villas, Termonfeckin
- Refurbishment of Wolfe Tone Hall, Knockbridge
- Undergrounding of public lighting at Carlingford and Blackrock promenade
- Refurbishment of Grove Hill Gate, Drogheda
- Provision of children's playground at the Fairgreen, Ardee
- Refurbishment of Blackrock promenade
- Undergrounding of overhead wires and new streetscape at Carlingford.
- Refurbishment of Ardee Castle
- New public conveniences at Carlingford, Port Oriel, Blackrock



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43) St. Helena Park  
- Dundalk

44) Dunleer Area  
Office & Library

45) Carlingford  
Public Toilet

46) Xerox  
Development

Another highlight related to a co-ordinated strategy pioneered by the Louth County Strategy Group. In passing, this level of co-operation was to prove instrumental in the successful establishment of the County Development Board structure in later years. The establishment of "Partnership Court" represented but one example. Also worthy of mention is the first in a series of sculptures to be located in the county under the "Percent for Art" scheme which was erected at the Fairgreen in Ardee in December 2001.

#### **Station Masters House, Dunleer**

An example of integrated development where Council services are brought closer to local communities. This beautifully restored building houses a fully integrated branch library and area office.

#### **County Development Board Strategy**

Based on the partnership theme, this will provide a longer term view in terms of economic, social and cultural development. Its associated structures will provide a renewed impetus in terms of community development.

#### **International Investment**

Recent years have witnessed

considerable advances in the level of job creation, both from the indigenous and overseas sectors. Business enterprises such as Quantum, Xerox, AFL, ICL and ABB represent but a sample of recent investment.

#### **Development Control**

The establishment of the planning clinics together with the realignment of the planning areas to correspond with the reinvigorated area structure would prove to be pivotal in terms of customer service as would the scanning of all planning files from 1963 to date.

#### **Forward Planning**

Local area plans have been finalised in relation to all towns and villages. These will provide a plan-led focus particularly in terms of the residential, commercial and amenity potential of all development centres. The strategic plans relating to Dundalk and its hinterlands together with the North Drogheda environs will provide for the orderly development of these major towns. Similarly, the draft county development plan which was recently completed will provide further coherence of planning policies notwithstanding the extent of development pressures which are ongoing as a result of the county's success. In turn, these

ANNUAL REPORT SUPPLEMENT



1988 - 2003

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A TIME TO REFLECT

47) Partnership Court

48) Tullyallen Village Square

49) Ardee Castle Interior

50) Tallanstown Old Schoolhouse

51) Building Sensitively and Sustainably in County Louth

plans will be augmented by other policies which were recently adopted including the housing, retail and childcare strategies.

Other major plans included:

- Review of County Development Plan (at draft stage)
- Dundalk and Environs Plan (at draft stage)
- North Drogheda Environs Plans (at pre-draft stage)

A major joint strategic study of the Drogheda area including the functional areas of Louth County Council, Drogheda Borough Council and Meath County Council has also been initiated.

Local Area Plans were developed in relation to the following Category I Centres:

Carlingford, Omeath, Dromiskin, Castlebellingham/Kilsaran, Knockbridge, Annagassan, Tallanstown, Termonfeckin/Baltray, Collon, Clogherhead, Louth, Tenure, Ardee, Tullyallen, Dunleer.

The following additional plans were also finalised:

Category II Development Centres (32) Retail Strategy, Childcare Strategy, Industrial Policy and landscape assessment.

In the course of the period, particular attention was focused on the difficult problem of

controlling residential development in rural areas where a balance needed to be struck with environmental considerations. In this regard, a special task force comprising of councillors, officials and independent architects was set up to oversee a project aimed at improving the quality and visual appearance of new housing developments in rural areas. The report entitled "Building Sensitively and Sustainably in County Louth" would prove to be an invaluable guide to planning applicants and was indeed instrumental in achieving a high standard of development in keeping with the county's rich architectural heritage. Also of significance in this regard was the appointment of a conservation officer under a joint sharing arrangement with Meath County Council.

Possibly the most significant single event under this heading was the Council's success in the Supreme Court in a compensation claim relating to the proposed Ballymascanlon Designer Village. In this instance, there was a potential exposure of some €27 million and certainly it had proved to be a brave decision to successfully endeavour to overturn two High Court judgements.

In terms of economic development, the mid to late nineties witnessed considerable advances in the level

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Building Sensitively and Sustainably in County Louth  
LANDSCAPE, DEVELOPMENT AND BUILT HERITAGE



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A TIME TO REFLECT

## 52) Ardee Fire Station

of job creation both from the indigenous and overseas sectors with many of the county's multi-national businesses undertaking new recruitment. This, combined with graduate output from Dundalk Institute of Technology and other educational and training establishments focused on software, languages and IT training, would lead to continued jobs growth as the county moved towards the new millennium. Indeed, the establishment of the new Xerox plant would represent but one example of such a trend.

A new marketing strategy involving DKIT, possibly to include a regional dimension, is currently at inception stage.

The establishment of the Community and Enterprise Section, together with its associated structures in the form of the community fora, etc., would prove to be a key development in terms of social, economic and cultural renewal. This new approach stressed the importance of the reform of local government structures particularly in relation to integration with the various local development agencies.