



John Lahart's Local Review

Councillor John Lahart

6 Orlagh Grange, Scholarstown Road, Dublin 16.
Telephone/Fax: 493 9608 • E Mail: jlahart@sdblincoco.ie

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"...LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS ABOUT ACHIEVING SMALL THINGS..."

Since my election in 1999, a lot has happened in the local area. From a Council point of view, these tend to be small things by comparison to the work of National Government. However Local Government is about achieving small things, whether it is new cycle tracks that make the roads safer for cyclists and school children in particular, litter bins to improve the local environment, more tree planting to add to the aesthetic look of our neighbourhood, improved road surfaces, additional traffic signals, or the monitoring of planning decisions and applications. All these improvements are capable of enhancing our daily lives and indeed the value of the properties we live in. In politics, there is always more to do. In this 2002 edition of my *Local Review*, I have attempted to outline some of my work on your behalf. I hope you find it informative and interesting.

John Lahart

THESE ARE SOME OF THE PROJECTS I ACTIVELY SUPPORTED IN THE LAST YEAR

ROAD RESURFACING

Roads re-surfaced in the area this year included: Butterfield Ave, Knocklyon Road, Edmondstown Road, Ballyboden Road, Stocking Lane, Grange Road, Dodder Park Road, Whitechurch Road.

KNOCKLYON ROAD

There were three separate contracts carried out on the Knocklyon Road this year: (1) The new footpath and realignment of the



Footpath repair on Ballyroan Road - I am seeking additional funds for 2003.

dangerous bend at Darglewood (2) resurfacing works on the road itself from the junction of Lansdowne Park to beyond Superquinn, and (3) the re-lining of the road. The contracts including the building of the wall were carried out by Arthurstown Construction; Cement Roadstone, and by McLoughlin Ltd. The entire works cost in excess of €130,000.

FOOTPATH REPAIR

The only major area of footpath repair undertaken this year was the footpath along Lower Dodder Road. The new county Manager, Mr. Joe Horan, has committed to providing funding for footpath reinstatement works for the coming year. I will keep you posted of developments in this regard. Other works that I have been campaigning hard for in the last year include footpath re-instatement along Ballyroan Road particularly at the Blue Haven end. Some work was undertaken there in November. I am hoping to have more substantial works carried out in the next year.

NEW LANES FOR BALLYCULLEN ROAD

The Councils Roads Department intends to construct an extra lane on each side of the carriageway at the Ballycullen Link Road to facilitate traffic entering and exiting the pitches that are located on both sides of the Ballycullen Link Road (used by Ballyboden St. Enda's GAA Club and Knocklyon Utd FC). In the original plans it had been intended to construct a Footbridge across the road. However, among other problems, there is considerable anti-social behaviour associated with such bridges. Ellier Developments had originally been conditioned as part of their planning permission to pay for the construction of this footbridge. Ellier will now foot the bulk of the cost of the new lanes which will enable parents, players and coaching staff to have off-road parking for matches and practice. I have campaigned hard for these improvements.

- For regular bulletins email me at jlahart@sdblincoco.ie -



FIANNA FÁIL

REPORT ON PARKING AT CASTLECOURT APARTMENTS, RATHFARNHAM

Following a long and tedious representation process, the Traffic section has recommended the provision of double yellow lines on the road opposite the parking bay to allow for safe use of the parking bay and which will also allow safe access to the apartments.

BUTTERFIELD TRAFFIC CELL

The Council Roads Department considers the roads in the Butterfield area (Butterfield, Pinewood, Marian, Fairbrook, Edenbrook, Willowbank, Anne Devlin, Silverwood, Orchardstown, Ballymace) as one single traffic cell. While the traffic calming measures on Butterfield Park some years ago have been successful in reducing traffic speed on that road, the problem has simply



The new car parking system at St Colmcille's JNS and SNS



The granite wall at Marian Crescent which cost nearly £5000. With the support of myself and the local community, we enhanced what had become an eye-sore.

shifted onto adjoining neighbourhoods. The new county manager has committed to allocating funding for traffic calming next year and I am pressing the Council to prioritise certain areas with a view to relieving the problem of rat-running in particular. The Council, through its Strategic Transport Policy Group, of which I am a member, is also examining alternatives to ramps and speed cushions. In the meantime, I have asked that the roads surfaces within the Butterfield Traffic Cell, some of which are fifty years old, be examined with a view to having the surfaces re-instated where necessary. The Roads Department has agreed to carry out an examination of these surfaces.

CYCLE TRACKS

Since my last Local News, cycle tracks have been installed on Ballyboden Road, Ballyroan Road and on the Grange Road. The Ballyroan Road cycle track is to include pedestrian traffic lights at the junction with Anne Devlin Road. I have campaigned hard for this since my election and am delighted to see that the lights will be put in place after Christmas. These lights, together with the cycle lane will help to reduce traffic speeds on the road. Further tracks and a bus lane are planned for the Ballyboden Road from its junction with Ballyroan Road to the Tuning Fork and will include Traffic lights at that junction.

GREEN ROUTE

Following the Public Consultation that took place last year and which is obligatory for such roads projects, design work is proceeding. We are now seeking funding from the government for the completion of the Green Route which will see the road continued and completed from the Augustinian's to the Eden Public House.

NEW CAR PARKING SYSTEM AT ST COLMCILLE'S

The Department of Education has spent a total of almost €350,000 on a new car park for St. Colmcille's JNS & SNS at Idrone and this has provided relief for parents and staff alike. I am happy to relate also that following my representations a traffic crossing ramp is being constructed adjacent to the school to facilitate pupils crossing and is being funded under the DTO's Safe Routes to School scheme.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Improving the appearance of the area is a priority of mine as I feel it benefits our quality of life and the value of our properties, and helps to make the area a desirable location in which to seek to live. Below I am outlining some of the improvements that I have lobbied for and supported this year.

PROVISION OF LITTER BINS

New bins were installed on the route to school from the shops at Marian Road to Coláiste Eanna and Sancta Maria earlier this year and brings to 16 the total number of bins in the locality. The cost of purchasing these bins was borne by the local traders and the Council services the bins. Three new litter bins were installed on Scholarstown Road. The Litter Warden has, at my request, asked the local supermarket to install a bin in the vicinity of the supermarket which will be serviced by Council staff if necessary.



One of the new litter bins - There are never enough litter bins to meet demand.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (CONTINUED)

All new litter bins purchased in the current year have already been allocated to their locations and are now in place, therefore it is unfortunately impossible to meet all the demands from local people. A new litter warden has recently taken up duties and will cover the general Terenure/Rathfarnham area. She will be asked to address the litter problem in specific area and the possibility of private sponsorship for new litter bins in the areas.

Wheelie Bins Update

Almost every householder in the South Dublin area has now received a Grey Wheelie Bin. Green wheel bins, for the collection of dry recyclables, have been distributed to 25,000 householders and a further 25,000 green bins were distributed by the end of August. The final 25,000 green bins will be delivered early next year. The distribution of brown bins for the collection of Kitchen and garden waste will also commence next year. It is this waste, producing as it does, gases and chemicals, that is one of the most expensive cost side effects of landfill. Removing kitchen and garden waste from landfill is a priority.

Green Recycling

South Dublin County Council also has a green recycling facility at Esker Lane (well sign-posted off the Lucan Bypass). Householders can bring all their green garden waste, such as leaves, grass, tree-cuttings etc here and can buy composted garden material at a modest charge.

Abandoned Shopping Trolleys

Some residents complained to me earlier in the year about shopping trolleys from Nutgrove Shopping Centre being abandoned in residential areas off the Grange Road. I wrote to Tesco's in Nutgrove who informed me that "an electronic loop will be installed this year which will prevent the removal of the trolleys from the environs of the supermarket".

Dog Fouling

The Council will conduct a pilot scheme whereby "No dog fouling" signs will be erected at a small number of locations in the Terenure/Rathfarnham area. Suggestions from the elected members as to potentially appropriate locations for the erection of these signs would be welcomed by management, and if you have any ideas, please let me know of them.

Illegal Dumps

Earlier in the year I requested information from officials of any illegal dumps found within the administrative area of South Dublin and to outline whether or not any licensed contractors employed by the Council had been found dumping illegally. The response states that "where the Council becomes aware that dumping is taking place illegally, the matter is examined by both the Planning and Environment Departments. Many of such instances refer to bona fide agricultural land reclamation on which no action is warranted. Where breaches of the Planning or Waste Management legislation are evident, enforcement is initiated where this is warranted. A co-ordinated response system has now been put in place involving both Planning and Environment Departments of the Council for such cases. There is no evidence to date to suggest that hospital, clinical or hazardous waste is being disposed of illegally in the South Dublin area."

EDEN ESTATE

Eden Estate is a relatively new estate and has only recently been taken in charge by South Dublin County Council. For this reason it is not in the Council's road sweeping schedule and therefore is not regularly cleaned. The engineer in the cleansing unit has been reviewing the current sweeping schedule for the purpose of adding to it those roads and neighbourhoods which to date have not

been included on the road sweeping schedule. This review is almost complete and Eden Estate is included among those estates which are to be added to the revised schedule.

ELKWOOD TREES

Approximately twenty-five trees will be listed for inclusion in the 2002/2003 Tree Planting Programme for the open space at Elkwood. I requested these following an approach from the local residents.

HOUSING

Council Housing and Traveller Accommodation at Ballyboden

There are 16 Council houses under construction at Ballyboden (junction of Taylor's Lane). These are predominantly two-bedroom units with one specially adapted unit for a disabled family. Occupants will come from the Council's Housing List, and are expected to be in their homes by Christmas. Access to these homes is via The Glen, Boden Park. This new development will be known as Taylor's Court.

Traveller accommodation consists of 8 day houses and caravan bays for eight families. The permanent caretaker and the families have moved on site in November.



Some of the council/social housing under construction at Taylor's Court, Ballyboden

ILLEGAL ENCAMPMENTS

Thankfully the summer passed without the kind of encampments we witnessed by the Dodder, Cherryfield and at Stocking Lane earlier in the year and last year. The Dail has passed an amendment to the Public Order Act that provides for a new offense of criminal trespass. This new law is designed to be both a deterrent and to ensure that unauthorised encampments anywhere in the country can be dealt with effectively and efficiently. It covers trespass on any kind of amenity land, including parkland, open spaces, car parks, playing fields, and other areas used for recreational purposes, thereby removing the need for expensive and lengthy High Court Orders to be sought. It offers an immediate remedy where there is likely to be substantial damage to open spaces or where it affects persons making reasonable use of the land, or is unsanitary.

It allows Gardaí to immediately direct a person to leave the land and to remove any object brought onto that land. The penalty is a hefty fine and imprisonment. I strongly advocated the introduction of this legislation and facilitated the local residents' representatives in arranging to meet with the then Minister for Justice, John O'Donoghue, to press the case.

RATHFARNHAM CASTLE PARK

I have taken a particular interest in the development of this park as a public amenity. Since my election in 1999, a

SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL - FACT FILE

Second largest Housing Authority in State

Area 223sq. kilometres
Population 240,000
Electorate 170,000

Employees 1250
Houses Administered 11,500
Elected members 26

No of Primary Schools 98 (disadvantaged status - 31)
No. of Secondary Schools 34 (disadvantaged status - 9)

Capital expenditure in 2001 was €114m
Revenue Expenditure for 2001 was €122.5m
Total Expenditure for 2001 was €236m

High degree of social deprivation - 23.2% of population and 4 areas of the county are designated as most disadvantaged in the country

Terenure/Rathfarnham has a population of 63,173, served by 7 Councillors. Rathfarnham itself has a population of 27,649 and Terenure 27,829

There are 55,478 people on the Electoral Register

number of improvements have taken place in the park and these include:

- The provision of a new entrance at Castleside and the improvement of other entrances.
- Surfacing of the pathways in tarmacadam
- The installation of new signs
- The construction of a low stone wall along the boundary of the

Rathfarnham By-Pass and the main entrances to the park at at Castleside Drive.

- Restoration of the Seismograph House with financial assistance from the Heritage Council, Dúchas - Heritage Services and the National Millennium Fund.
- Establishment of a new herbaceous border along the approach to the Castle.

As part of the 2002 Works Programme, we are installing a railing on top of the recently constructed low boundary wall and two new gates are being designed for installation in 2003. There are no other plans for improvements to Rathfarnham Castle Park at this stage. In relation to the development of the courtyards, this area is now the subject of the High Court action by the developers who were refused permission for the development of the courtyard and the outbuildings for various uses two years ago. The development of the courtyards will require substantial funding which is not available to either the council or to Dúchas.

E-MAIL

I have been providing an e-mail newsletter to constituents for a long period now, and if you would like to receive a regular update on local developments, please e-mail me your address and I would be happy to add you to my database.



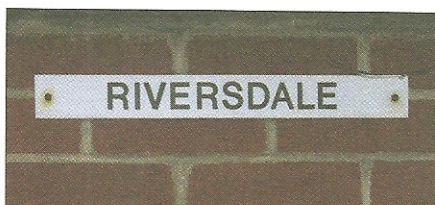
Rathfarnham Castle Park - New wall and railings

SPORTS GRANTS TO LOCAL CLUBS - 2002

- Ballyboden St Enda's GAA Club - €250,000 (For Dressing Rooms at Ballycullen)
- Knocklyon Utd FC - €150,000 (For Pavillion at Delaforde)
- Willington Community Holdings (St Jude's GAA Club and Templeogue Utd FC) - €100,00 (Towards the All-Weather Pitch Facility - opened by An Taoiseach on 3rd November).
- South Dublin County Council - Ballycullen - €40,000 (For pitches at Ballycullen)
- Rathfarnham WASF Athletic Club - €13,000
- Terenure Badminton Centre - €130,000
- Leicester Celtic FC - €250,000 (for an all-weather pitch and dressing rooms)
- Irish Basketball Assoc. - €200,000

I actively assisted some of these clubs with their applications to the Department of Sports and Tourism and look forward to continue working closely and assisting them in whatever way I can.

PLANNING ISSUES



A decision on a further appeal to An Bord Pleanála is due in January

ESSO STATION - PLANNING PERMISSION GRANTED

Despite huge local opposition and a strong public campaign by local residents, ESSO Ireland has been granted permission to re-develop its filling station at **Grange Road**. I think that this is a very retrograde step and this is why I opposed it. While 24-hour petrol stations offer many facilities, local experience of when the last time this station operated on a 24 hour basis is vivid and negative. Large, anonymously run petrol stations with convenience stores have spelt the death knell for small businesses in other parts of our community. I strongly supported the residents objections to this proposal. **Grange Road** is located close to a number of small and well supported retail stores which have served the community for many years and are, in the main, owned and operated by local people. I hope that



The ESSO filling station on the Grange Road - While it could benefit from a face-lift, the recent grant of Planning Permission is a step backward for the local community.

An Bord Pleanála takes a different view to the application and I will be supporting any appeal the residents submit.

SCHOLARSTOWN ROAD

An application was made by Caldercrest Ltd. to build a three storey with penthouse building consisting of 37 apartments at Rosmor, Scholarstown Road. On the 21/5/2002 planning permission was granted by the Council. Third party appeals were lodged against this decision with An Bord Pleanála (ABP) who by order dated 16/10/2002 granted permission subject to conditions.

KNOCKLYON

An application was made by Cardoe Ltd for permission to demolish an existing dwelling and construct a 3-4 storey block of apartments containing 24 apartments at **Garthy, Knocklyon**. South Dublin refused this permission but it was subsequently granted by ABP, subject to the omission from the proposed third floor of one apartment. A subsequent planning application has been submitted by Cardoe Ltd but at time of print, no decision was made. Despite opposition from local residents associations and local councillors these applications were granted permission.



LORETO ABBEY

I am strongly opposed to the attempt by Riversmith Ltd to considerably increase the density of the development at Loreto Abbey.

PLANNING ISSUES *(Contd.)*

65 MARIAN GROVE

I have objected to this development on behalf of local residents.

EDENBROOK MANOR

Contact is being made by the Council with the developers of Edenbrook Manor through the Construction Industry Federation to explore the issue of putting in place an adequate Management Agreement with resident representation and other outstanding planning issues. I will continue to inform residents of the outcome of these contacts.

RATHEARNHAM SHOPPING CENTRE



Rathfarnham Shopping Centre

An appeal was lodged with An Bord Pleanála against the Department's decision to grant permission to CFI Property Management Ltd. For development comprising alterations to the permitted plans for the partial refurbishment and upgrading of the Rathfarnham Shopping Centre. The scheme no longer permits the upper-level car parking deck over existing shops and omits the permitted basement car park.

The proposal also seeks the re-organisation of vehicular access to and around the centre, including removal of the mall entrance at the junction of Fairways and Butterfield Avenue; the redesign of the southern vehicular entrance from Fairways, and improved pedestrian and cycle access comprising priority pedestrian and cycle access and the provision of two cycle parking facilities.

The Bord granted permission for the development, subject to a number of conditions. These include the condition that the development be reduced by a total of 140 square metres; that servicing take place to the rear of the development only; the drawing up of a staff mobility plan (reducing the car parking requirement of staff to not more than one space per unit); the construction of an additional pedestrian crossing on Fairways.

There are other conditions, too detailed to outline here, but if you wish to obtain a

copy of the document, please contact me.

BALLYROAN BOYS N.S.

New school windows for Ballyroan Boys N.S. Major refurbishment works are needed at Ballyroan Boys N.S. In the interim, the



The Carnegie Library on Taylor's Lane - There are many local Ballyboden and Whitechurch activities held here, including the new Citizen's Advice Bureau



Improvement works being undertaken at Entrance to Knockcullen/Ashton. This has been years in the waiting. The residents are now looking for an Entrance Stone/Sign for the area and I will be prioritising this for 2003.

Department of Education and Science has agreed to pay for the installation of much-needed new windows.

BALLYBODEN FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE

Both Tom Kitt T.D., Minister of State, and myself hold clinics at the Ballyboden Resource Centre on the first and third Friday of each month.



The council propose to put new speed limiting "Roundals" on Whitechurch Road, to reduce the speed of the traffic