

Sandycove and Glashule Residents Association Newsletter



May 2005

Circulation 2,400

Residents Gathering

planned for the Autumn – details in next issue of newsletter

The Baths

A special display of plans for Dun Laoghaire Baths takes place on Monday 23rd May between 5 pm and 7 pm in County Hall, Dun Laoghaire to which all members of Sandycove and Glashule Residents Association are invited. The planners will be in attendance to explain the project and answer queries. From 24th May the plans will be on public view in the County Hall.

Thanks to Ward Councillors John Bailey, Cormac Devlin, Jane Dillon Byrne, Kealin Ireland, Mary Mitchell O'Connor and Eugene Regan for updating us in relation to several of the topics covered in this newsletter, particularly Dun Laoghaire Baths, traffic and bin charges.

The views expressed in this newsletter are based on editorial decisions broadly reflective of the policies decided by the committee of the Association and should not necessarily be attributed to any of those councillors or indeed to any individual committee member.

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Dun Laoghaire Baths

Council officials plan 180 apartment tower block?



It has been reported in the media that councillors have welcomed plans for the redevelopment of the Dun Laoghaire Baths site. Plans shown to councillors are understood to include an 8 storey glass tower and 180 apartments, in addition to leisure facilities. The plans have been drawn up without consulting the public, despite previous promises.

There are concerns that a bulky high-rise apartment complex, out of proportion with the buildings around it, will block the sea view and damage the coastal environment. And what precedent will it set for future development along the seafront? Views have been expressed at many meetings of residents of Sandycove and Glashule that the Dun Laoghaire Baths should be restored as a public amenity for all.

In order for public representatives to influence the development and represent residents' views they must know what those views are. The best way we have of influencing this project is to become involved as early as possible so that we can tell the planners what we want or don't want.

Before any decision is made in relation to the future of the baths the County Council must conduct a real and meaningful public consultation process.

This should include proper models and artists impressions on display for members of the public to view and comment on. And the views expressed must be listened to and acted on, unlike what happened in the case of the Carlisle Pier.

MORE ON THIS VITAL ISSUE ON PAGE 5

BATHS LATEST - STOP PRESS

A meeting of the Save Our Seafront group was held in the Kingston Hotel on the evening of Thursday 28th April, as we were about to go to press. The meeting was organised by Richard Boyd Barrett and Kealin Ireland and members of the Sandycove and Glashule Residents Association were in attendance. The hall was filled to capacity with over 200 people.

There was an overwhelming sense of anger and disgust at the proposals for the Dun Laoghaire baths - a "Crystal Tower" with 180 apartments. Speaker after speaker spoke out against the proposals. The County Council officials, the County Manager and Councillors were given a very clear message of total disapproval. All the Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council Councillors were invited. Kealin Ireland, Jane Dillon Byrne and Círan Cuffe TD were in attendance and spoke out against the proposals. Mary Mitchell O'Connor and Cormac Devlin sent apologies.

We await the response of Councillors who have not expressed a view as to where they stand and we will keep the residents of Sandycove and Glashule informed in our next newsletter.

Bin charges and recycling

– what's wrong

The pay-by-weight bin charges have now been introduced and look as if they are here to stay. While there is significant dissatisfaction with the charges' structure and the limitations of the waiver scheme, it seems that there is wide-spread support for the system in principle. Most people would agree that those who pollute must pay and those who pollute more than the rest of us should pay more than the rest of us. We understand that people in the county have reacted

to the charges by recycling a huge amount of their waste and this increases every week. The resultant danger for the Council is a dramatic decrease in the revenue generated from the scheme (which we are told is an important contributor to the Council's budget) and **it will be interesting to see how the Council intends to address this issue.**

“Recycling facilities in Dun Laoghaire are completely inadequate”

While the county's citizens are doing their bit to reduce the

country's waste mountain, it should be questioned whether the Council is really serious about its own vital role in encouraging us to 'reduce, reuse and recycle'. Recycling facilities in Dun Laoghaire are completely inadequate and the sale of the 'bring' facility at George's Place was a most irresponsible act. Eden Park is simply not able to take the mountains of bottles and other goods that people bring there - and of course the range of items that it can take is limited. In order to be able to recycle plastic, one has to drive to Ballyogan and hope that the queue isn't too long and the officials will accept what you bring. This isn't sustainable and the Council will have to examine other options if it is to really demonstrate its commitment to recycling.

Traffic – is a solution in sight?

News of Traffic Management Plan for Dun Laoghaire

There is an urgent need for a coherent overall traffic plan for Dun Laoghaire, including the Sandycove and Glasthule area. The County Council's intention to devise a Traffic Management Plan for Dun Laoghaire is to be welcomed. A traffic management survey has been underway.

Traffic management has a significant impact on the lives of residents. If the County Council wishes to make any changes, the Council should inform residents well in advance of such changes and give residents every reasonable opportunity to make representations regarding such changes in their locality before any decisions are made.

Traffic volumes have increased substantially and, with significant new developments in the pipeline, will continue to do so. With the community's desire to increase car ownership five-fold and more and the effect of this -

clogging roads, car parks and even our own driveways - we are paying the consequence in lost time, sanity, frustration and even anger and probably losing potential business as well. It is a necessity that the County Council manage our Victorian road system as well as possible.

We are told that the Council is, for the first time, taking a long-term view of traffic and parking in the town, identifying the main issues and proposing sustainable solutions that will be acceptable to both business and communities. This is obviously a challenging task and hopefully achievable.

We understand that a computer model of the area has been set up and traffic flows, road closures, one-way streets and the potential effects are being studied. We are told that consultation with umbrella organisations will follow a presentation to councillors and then the plan will go on public display for all to see and comment on. Finally, the council will view comments and decide on the final scheme.

There is a vital need for full and proper consultation with residents prior to the implementation of any changes for traffic management purposes

It is crucial that Council officials meet with all relevant parties and take proper account of residents' concerns. Ignoring the views of residents will not be acceptable. We have been told that the engineers and planners have given an absolute commitment that they will not implement any plan until they have consulted widely with local representatives and interested groups.

Traffic problems in the locality include congestion caused by parked vehicles and danger to pedestrians caused by speeding traffic.

The creation of one-way roads where demand for residents' parking plus normal volumes of two-way traffic causes the capacity of the road to be exceeded would help alleviate congestion problems.

It is an unavoidable fact that in certain streets the layout of the houses and gardens does not allow for off-street parking and so the residents have no alternative but to park their cars on the street. This need should be recognised and appropriate allowance made. It is not necessary for every street in the locality to provide for two-way *through* traffic. The fact that most streets in the locality are primarily residential streets, the principal purpose of which is to allow access to the houses on those streets, should be acknowledged.

Again, recognising that it is not necessary for every street in the locality to provide for two-way *through* traffic, appropriate and sensible traffic calming measures should be put in place to discourage excessive speed.

Footpaths

Urgent Attention Required

In our January issue we included an article on the state of the footpaths in Glasthule Village, which had already been drawn to the attention of the County Manager. It was also understood the Roads Inspector had this area already on his list of work. In the budget approved for this year, the sum of €825,000 has been provided for footpaths in the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Council area. But alas, none of this will be going to Glasthule Village. Let us hope the village will be included in 2006. We all must keep at the Council to ensure this will happen. While on the subject of the footpaths, we are pleased to learn Eden Terrace and Newtownsmith, from Teddy's to Link Road, are included in 2005 budget to be resurfaced this year.

Another footpaths problem -- missing hydrant covers on Marine Avenue and Elton Park, and we hear in other areas too. The danger of these has been reported to the Roads Department in the County Hall by the Residents Association. We encourage residents to report any they notice missing direct to the County Council. Also, they could include bad conditions of footpaths.

PLANNING



Sandycove House at Newtownsmith – an improvement on what was there before and what might have been, due at least in part to the efforts of local residents to influence the planning process.



Link Road and Newtownsmith — our village is under threat from developers. These perfectly good houses to be replaced by 18 apartments?

Green Coast Awards

Sandycove beach was presented with a Green Coast Award on 27th April. Congratulations to all involved. These awards recognise beaches which have achieved the highest bathing water quality and are prized for their natural unspoiled environment.

The day was a great success and was well attended by local authority representatives, local community beach groups, project partners from Wales, and politicians. The photograph includes Patricia Oliver, Director of An Taisce's Environment Education Unit. On her left is Captain Chris Corcoran from Keep Wales Tidy. Batt O'Keefe TD is next to our Association Chairperson Ursula Maguire. Derek Brady, County Manager of Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown is holding the certificate.



New recycling facility at Eden Park

The development will be located at the junction of Summerhill Road and Eden Park. The facilities will include banks for bottles, cans, plastic containers, clothes, paper and cardboard and will include a supervisor's hut.

This bring centre will open: Monday to Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

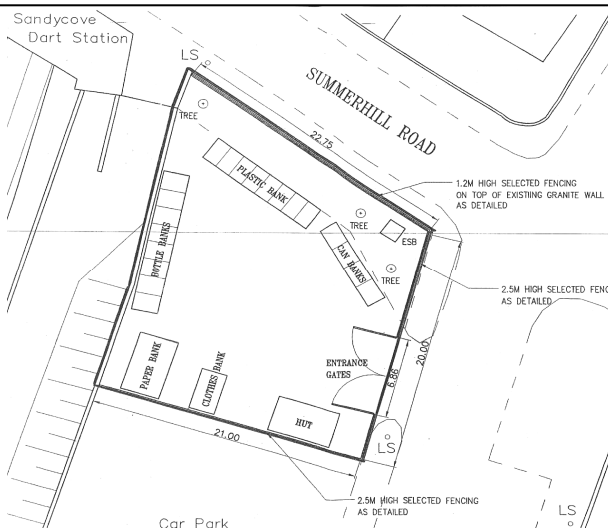
It will be closed on Sundays and public and bank holidays. It will be manned during opening hours.

We understand that on the eastern boundary of the site the low granite wall with 1.2m railing above fronting Summerhill Road will be continued to a "goalpost" type entrance

and on the southern boundary of the site a 1.5m granite faced wall will be erected with 1.2m railing above.

With regard to the remaining car park area, the boulders will be removed as they are not an appropriate boundary treatment of this location and will be replaced by low granite wall, at the inside kerb of the car park, to match that bounding the open space area opposite. The car park entrance presently blocked on the eastern boundary will be reopened. The car park will be marked out to maximise spaces.

The existing footpaths separating the bring centre/car park from the access road will be cleared of all boulders and will be made available for pedestrian use.



Award Scheme

Best Gardens and Best Presented Commercial Premises

For 2004 the Sandycove and Glasthule Residents Association introduced an Award Scheme for the Best Gardens, and also the Best Presented Commercial Premises in the area. The purpose of Best Garden awards is to recognise the substantial work and time invested by recipients in their gardens which is of delight and benefit to all who pass and take time out to admire them. Similarly, there is a very high standard of creativity and care in the appearance of the various commercial enterprises in the neighbourhood. The Awards will be an Annual event.

At the AGM in January were announced the winners of the 2004 Awards. The Awards Ceremony was a great success, with no tear jerking acceptance speeches allowed, and the recipients were appropriately honoured to have their photograph taken with our esteemed Chairperson. Framed Certificates were presented to the Winners and those Commended by the Jury.

Best Gardens Awards:

Best Large Garden: Rockall, Ballygiheen Avenue

Best Small Garden: 41 O'Donnell Gardens

Highly Commended: 11 Eden Villas, Presentation Brothers, 55 Eden Villas, 71 Eden Villas, 91 Eden Villas

Eden Villas have put it up to all gardeners in the area.

Special Achievement Award: Peoples Park

Best Presented Commercial Premises Awards were awarded in three categories to reflect the diversity of enterprises, with finally an overall winner. The winners in the categories were:

Restaurants and Bars: Rasam

Shops: Glennons Pharmacy

Commercial: Tara Hall Guesthouse

Overall Winner: Soul

In addition to the Certificates, Prizes and Vouchers were presented and the Association Committee would like to thank the following for their generosity in sponsoring many of the prizes: Frees at Londis, Lakes, Harry Byrne, Noel Kavanagh, Florabunda and Juggys Well.

ANNOUNCING THE 2005 AWARDS

The Judging Panel will be scouring the neighbourhood assessing for the 2005 Awards over the coming months.

Categories will be as before with Awards for Best Large Garden, Best Small Garden and a series of prizes for Highly Commended Gardens. Let us see what transformations will be seen in front gardens, flower-pots, hanging baskets and window boxes. So now residents get to work with your spades, forks, rakes and trowels. We want to see plenty of colour during the summer.

The Best Premises awards will follow the same categories of Restaurants and Bars; Shops; Commercial Premises (Offices, Guesthouses, Clinics etc).

Previous recipients should note that they will be assessed for new developments and improvements since the last Awards Scheme. Resting on laurels will be frowned upon (especially in gardens)!



URSULA'S

We wish success to Mary Craig of Dundela Avenue who recently launched a new magazine "ROCK 2 COVE" covering local news from Blackrock to Sandycove.

Kay Lakes and Maria Walsh have taken over Sandycove Dress Hire in Glasthule. As well as dress hire they have introduced a shirt service. They are now trading as SUITS AND SUDS. Good luck in your new venture.

It is sad we no longer have a cobbler in Glasthule. After a couple of generations of one family ANTHONY TEELING has retired from this business. We wish him well in any new ventures he undertakes.

SANDYCOVE PHYSIOTHERAPY AND SPORTS CLINIC has opened at 55 Glasthule Road. We wish Aine O'Neill success.

Congratulations to MITCHELL'S WINE MERCHANTS who are celebrating 200 years in business. In their Glasthule shop Jonathan, Vivienne and Robert Mitchell have supplied wine for our residents gatherings and they have always treated us very generously.

International rugby player GIRVAN DEMPSEY has recently moved into Sandycove. We wish him every happiness in his new home.

DIARMUID GAVIN, well known gardener, and wife Justine and recent arrival baby daughter - best wishes and welcome to the area.

Again this summer we will be without weekend DART services at Sandycove/Glasthule and Glenageary stations. The South Dublin line will close on Saturday and Sunday for the installation of lifts in some stations.

Congratulations to the boys and girls from the HAROLD SCHOOL who planted trees in their local park during NATIONAL TREE WEEK.

Marie Noone has retired. We are glad to learn FLORABUNDA still remains in family hands. Her daughter Jackie has taken over this thriving and important business in Glasthule. Good luck Jackie.

Congratulations to IMOGEN STUART, esteemed artist and enthusiastic Residents Association member, who has again been honoured by being awarded a doctorate by Maynooth University.

FATHER DES O'GRADY is shortly to leave us in Glasthule and return fulltime to his Jesuit Order. We wish him well in his new assignment.

We welcome DEOBRAH MCKENDRY, the new parish secretary to St Josephs.

Any roads, streets, groups, etc. interested in participating in TIDY DISTRICTS this year should contact the County Hall, Dun Laoghaire for details and entry forms.

Don't feed the seals!

Seals are being fed along the coast at Sandycove. The grey seal is a protected species and so should not be fed. The seals are in their natural habitat, able to fish for their feeding needs and should be left alone if we want to enjoy their company. Don't feed these wild animals - it is illegal. If swimming and a seal swims up to you, slow down and swim slowly ashore. If you are nipped by a seal, report it to the Irish Seal Sanctuary and seek medical attention.

Dun Laoghaire Baths— Facts for your attention

In 2003 the Council promised to set up a steering group to examine the site and identify possible solutions for its development. But this group did not meet and the baths continued to deteriorate without any intervention. Councillors were assured that a "workshop" would be arranged in the immediate future and that they would have a direct involvement in any plan for the baths. However, instead of councillors being involved in plans at the earliest stage, the council officials have been working on a plan for the baths and which was recently presented to councillors.

The Council can't ignore the views of local residents. The last time it did so, it came up with a development so unsuitable that it vanished without trace. This time things must be done properly.

We need a first-class building that respects its environment – natural and built – and that has bathing facilities that are accessible to the public. Anything less will not be acceptable and will be rejected again.

It is crucial that the Council prepare a scale model of the development; only when we have this will we be able to see a true depiction of what the building will look like in the context of other buildings and developments. Some people say that the scale of the development will obliterate the view of Sandycove Point and surrounds when viewed from the east and obliterate the view of the Victorian coastal houses and the town's church spires and so on when viewed from the west.

We understand that preliminary examination of the proposal indicates that the building will be about twice the size and height of both the Pavilion developments combined. It will also have twice as many apartments as the Pavilion. When the building is viewed from the sea, it will dwarf the current white elephants along the coast - the Pavilion, Dun Laoghaire Shopping Centre, Anchorage Apartments and so on. It will be by far the biggest development in both Dun Laoghaire and along the coast. It will set the precedent for the other 10 development sites identified in the Development Plan. It will also pave the way for development at Bulloch Harbour - which was re-zoned last year.

We are told that throughout their recent presentation on the development to Councillors, Council officials continuously referred to 'The Golden Mile'. They did not specify what this was but we imagine it is the area between Crofton Road and Sandycove – and there seems no doubt that they were speaking in terms of development potential. The forthcoming trip by some councillors and officials to Bilbao is to view the coastal development in that city.

In June 2002, Councillors adopted the Local Coastal Plan which states, in relation to the Baths (emphasis added):

"Key Elements of the Proposal

Design and materials must be of the highest quality and take cognisance of the maritime and historic location. It must be attractive when viewed from both the land and the sea. There is potential for a 2 to 3 storey development over two basement levels, provided that a design of sufficient architectural merit is proposed.

Provision of a high degree of public access to the site including the continuation of the coastal walk through the site, sea viewing areas, public baths and access to the sea.

Appropriate mix of uses: public baths, recreation (maritime), and commercial (retail, restaurant, gallery space etc.). Residential development will not be permitted. Proposals that constitute a variation of the development plan will be considered. The provision of a restaurant is seen as a necessary commercial element of a viable scheme."

Less than three years later the Council is intending to breach both of these key elements.

Save Our Seafront will be holding a march and rally on Sunday 15th May at 2:30 pm to protest against the Baths plan. The gathering point is the rear entrance of the People's Park.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM was held on 20th January 2005 and was very well attended by over 100 members. The Chairperson, Bob Waddell, welcomed old and new members and introduced the committee.

The report on the 2003 AGM, which appeared in the subsequent edition of the newsletter, was adopted as the minutes of that meeting.

Councillor John Bailey (Fine Gael), Councillor Cormac Devlin (Fianna Fail), Councillor Jane Dillon Byrne (Labour), Councillor Mary Mitchell O'Connor (Progressive Democrats) and Councillor Eugene Regan (Fine Gael) attended. Councillor Kealin Ireland (Green) sent apologies.

Chairperson's Address

The Chairperson reported on a busy year, involving numerous committee meetings, meetings with Councillors and council officials, liaison with other residents associations, 2 editions of the newsletter, important planning objections and contributing to Tidy Towns. Letters had been received from County Council election candidates and their promises had been noted.

Grateful thanks were expressed to the newsletter distributors and an appeal was made for more volunteers.

The Chairperson drew attention to some of the key items in the most recent newsletter, including the report of the residents meeting held in April 2004, the promises made by election candidates, Sandycove's success as the most improved village in Tidy Towns, councillor contact details (a reason for keeping the newsletter), the letter from Barry Andrews TD about Presentation College and the article which had been contrib-

uted by Eamonn Gunne about the inadequate response from the Council in relation to footpaths.

The Chairperson said he had been very impressed on a recent visit to Harolds School and stressed the need for community sports facilities for young people. We had praised the Festival of World Cultures and the new lighting on the seafront, although this had pointed up the need for consultation.

There were still many things needing to be done and the Association will keep pressing for changes.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer, Cathy McGovern, gave the report on the annual accounts for 2004 which were available for inspection. Income from membership subscriptions reflected the lower level resulting from a calendar year during which no AGM had been held and the main expenses had been the newsletter, residents meetings expenses and public liability insurance.

Officers and Committee

The following officers and committee were elected for 2005. Chairperson Ursula Maguire, Secretary Kay Gleeson, Treasurer Paul O'Callaghan, continuing committee members Wesley Curran, John Elliot, James Howley, Cathy McGovern, Paul Martin, David O'Neill, Bob Waddell, and new committee member Chris O'Malley. Sean Coakley retired from the committee and was thanked for his long service to the Association.

Awards Ceremony

Ursula Maguire introduced herself to the meeting and then along with Paul O'Callaghan introduced the garden and shopfront awards. They said the judges had found it very hard to decide. A report on the awards appears elsewhere in this edition of the newsletter.

Open Forum

Following a break for refreshments the meeting became an open forum. Many issues of concern were raised by residents and a lively debate involving the Councillors took place.

Among the concerns expressed by residents were those listed in this newsletter in the section headed RESIDENTS AGM ISSUES.

SANDYCOVE AND GLASTHULE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Who are we and what do we do?

Join now if you are not already a member –

Application form enclosed with this newsletter

The objects of the Sandycove and Glasthule Residents Association are to promote the best interests of the residents of the area and:

- (a) to promote a sense of community and neighbourliness among residents of the area;
- (b) to promote the preservation and improvement of the area as a suburban residential area;
- (c) to monitor issues and problems affecting the area;
- (d) to promote public interest and participation in issues affecting the area;
- (e) to provide a forum for open discussion of issues affecting the area;
- (f) to make representations in the interests of the members of the Association as a whole to all levels of government, other public authorities, organisations and persons whose decisions and actions may affect the area;
- (g) to publish a newsletter for purpose of informing members and residents generally of matters of common interest;
- (h) to co-ordinate the activities of the Association with organisations having similar objectives;
- (i) to promote cultural, educational and recreational activities for the residents of the area.

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The Association is a voluntary members organisation. It has no official status or powers; no legal right to be informed or consulted by councillors or officials of the County Council. What can be achieved by the Association depends entirely on the voluntary efforts of the members of the Committee and other members of the Association. It is important that we all remember that the Association is completely dependent on the input of its members. If we are to have a vibrant and active Association, which makes a worthwhile difference to our locality, we need regular and widespread involvement from as many members as possible. Despite the lack of formal power it is possible to have an active and influential residents association if there is enough support from the members.

RESIDENTS AGM ISSUES

- What are residents without wheely bins to do with rubbish?
- The absence of the No 8 bus is unacceptable.
- Why are there very few facilities for young people?
- An overall traffic plan based on full consultation is needed.
- There is an urgent need for action on traffic before the summer.
- Serious damage to Killiney Hill from mountain bikes is taking place.
- The powerlessness of Councillors as compared with County Manager.
- Shock at Councillors who appeared to be ambiguous about recycling.
- What is actually happening with the Dun Laoghaire baths?
- The baths should to be developed as community facility.
- How can the Council justify high-rise developments?
- The inadequacy of recycling facilities in Dun Laoghaire.
- Recycling is too complicated and too geared to people in cars.
- The disgraceful situation over plans for recycling at Eden Park.
- The danger posed by zoning of school lands for residential purposes.
- When is the sculpture outside Meadows and Byrne going to be moved?