



# Comhairle Contae Mhuíneacháin Monaghan County Council



# Tuarascáil Bhliantúil 2014 Annual Report 2014



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## Cathaoirleach's message



2014 will be recorded as the year of great change and reform within the Local Authority sector. Following the local elections in May, I was greatly honoured to be elected as Cathaoirleach of Monaghan County Council and I would like to thank my Fianna Fáil party colleagues and fellow councillors for giving me this opportunity. I would also like to acknowledge the appointment of Eugene Cummins, who arrived in the Council in January 2014, and who had the distinction of being the last person to hold the position of County Manager, and the first person to hold the title of Chief Executive.

Monaghan County Council, through the implementation of 'Putting People First', has a broader role and a much greater responsibility in the expansion of existing businesses, creating new enterprise and increasing local employment opportunities. Our Mission Statement is *'to maximise and drive economic, community and cultural development within our county and provide high quality sustainable public services and infrastructure. We do this in an open, inclusive manner in partnership with our stakeholders'*.

June 2014 saw the reduction in elected members as a whole, and a move to greater decision making at local level for elected representatives and communities, enabling us to become more responsive to local needs and circumstances. Through this we will help to develop sustainable, vibrant and viable communities. Our added responsibilities include the bringing together of local communities, public sector bodies, the voluntary sector and elected members to develop, co-ordinate, and implement a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development.

With an escalating regulatory system, Monaghan County Council must change and adapt to an increasing influence emerging from both the EU, and the Irish government. We must abide by various directives, acts, regulations, guidelines and circulars in order to meet legislation, regulation and directives, whilst simultaneously trying to meet the needs of its citizens.

2014 was also seen as a sad year in local politics, as it was with shock and sorrow that we lost both a sitting Councillor - Owen Bannigan, RIP and a former Councillor - Willie Mc Kenna, RIP. Owen and Willie gave many years of dedicated service as elected members of Monaghan County Council. Willie will also be remembered for establishing and maintaining the twinning links between Monaghan and Canada. They are missed greatly by all their Council colleagues and staff. Ar dheis Dé go raibh an amacha dilís.

With the abolition of our five Town Councils, I would like to pay tribute to all Town Councillors for their democratically elected representational service to their constituent, and to the staff who worked diligently over the years.

**Padraig Mc Nally**  
**Cathaoirleach of Monaghan County Council**

## Introduction - Chief Executive

The 2014 Annual Report is a defining report in the history of Local Government, marking as it does the end of one era, essentially “the old way of doing business” and clearly identifying a new era and with it a “a new way of doing business.

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 brought an end to Town Council Government in Ireland and has given effect to a more focused and effective regime of Local Government where the elected member has a more prominent and pre-imminent role in leading the County into a modern era where economic and community development are the frame within which the elected members and staff are charged with developing the County.

For Monaghan County Council the Local Government Reform Act 2014 has reduced the number of elected members from 65 to 18. The Act too has seen the creation of the Public Participation Network making for a more accountable and transparent form of Local Government where local issues are managed through the Municipal District structure thereby freeing up the full Council to concentrate on strategic issues.

For the staff of Monaghan County Council the Reform Act has also given effect to the biggest change ever seen in their working lives. For most staff it has meant new duties, in some cases a new place of work and for all a complete new focus on community development and involvement in all areas of economic activity.

The recessionary times continues to bring budgetary contraction and a further reduction in staff numbers whilst at the same time the level of service expectation from the public continues to increase as their tax burden swells to combat the excessive spend of previous governments.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the staff and members of Monaghan County Council for coming with me on this huge journey of change during 2014. Your support and willingness to change has, to say least been most encouraging and a humbling experience for me. These are challenging times for all of us as we continue to deliver more services with less, in an environment where the best is expected from us and where everything we do is measured and monitored.

I wish to thank the Mayors, the Cathaoirleach and the elected members of both the County Council and of the five Town Councils who have served the people of Monaghan with passion and conviction over the past four and half years. I wish to thank them for their service and offer all those who retired in 2014 my best wishes for the future.

**Eugene Cummins**  
**Chief Executive**  
**31 December 2014**





## Members of County Council - January - May 2014



**Padraig  
McNally**



**Matt  
Carthy**



**Aidan  
Murray**



**Noel  
Keelan**



**PJ O'Hanlon**



**Gary  
Carville**



**Jackie  
Crowe**



**Owen  
Bannigan**



**John  
O'Brien**



**Ciara  
McPhillips**



**Seamus  
Coyle**



**Hugh  
McElvaney**



**Pat  
Treanor**



**Robbie  
Gallagher**



**Paudge  
Connolly**



**David  
Maxwell**



**Brian  
McKenna**



**Cathy  
Bennett**



**Séan  
Conlon**



**Seamus  
Treanor**

## Members of County Council from June 2014



**Padraig  
McNally**



**Com  
Carthy**



**Noel  
Keelan**



**PJ  
O'Hanlon**



**Jackie  
Crowe**



**Aidan  
Campbell**



**Eugene  
Bannigan**



**Pat  
Treanor**



**Ciara  
Mc Phillips**



**Hugh  
Mc Elvaney**



**Seamus  
Coyle**



**Cathy  
Bennett**



**David  
Maxwell**



**Brian  
Mc Kenna**



**Paudge  
Connolly**



**Sean  
Conlon**



**Robbie  
Gallagher**



**Seamus  
Treanor**

# Housing and Building

## Housing and Building

The aim of the Council is to ensure that every household can obtain an affordable dwelling of good quality, suited to its needs, in a good environment, and as far as possible in a tenure of its choice. In order that the aim can be achieved it is important that:

- Unfit and overcrowded houses are eliminated.
- The demand for houses are met as they arise.
- The structural and environmental standards are improved.
- Owner occupation is encouraged to the fullest extent, compatible with national economic and social development.

## Services Provided and Future Plans

The output from 2014 and the proposed 2015 programme is given below. The 2015 programme will be subject to the necessary finance being provided by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Location	Completed in 2014	Under Construction/To commence or be acquired in 2015
McCurtain Street	-	9
Latlorcan	0	17 houses and 20 acres of land
Demountable dwellings	0	0
Farm Homes	0	0
Single Houses Acquisitions (second hand)	5	30
House Acquisitions under Part V	2	0
Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme Phase 3	0	23 (18 L.A. & 5 private) to be completed
Mullaghmatt Remedial Works Scheme Phase 4	0	76 (13 L.A. & 63) private to commence
Long Term Leasing in various locations	0	10
Returning Long Term Vacant Houses to Use	21	15

**Voluntary Housing Schemes**

<p><b>Castleblayney Care Association</b> Facilities for Intellectual Disability Drumillard, Castleblayney</p>	<p><b><u>Revised Budget Approval €2,362,033</u></b> Total Expenditure to the end of 2014 - €2,226,449.40. Construction/ Allocation of Units to be completed mid 2015.</p>
<p><b>Respond Housing Association – Group Home – Facility for Physical / Sensory Disabilities</b> Carrickmacross</p>	<p><b><u>Revised Increased Budget Approved - August 2014 - €1,293,980</u></b> New Planning Application submitted in November 2014. Following re-Tendering process it is anticipated commencement on site in the latter part of 2015.</p>
<p><b>Respond Housing Association - Group Home – Facility for Intellectual Disabilities</b> Carrickmacross</p>	<p><b><u>Property Purchase and Renovations Completed in 2014</u></b> Awaiting HIQA inspection prior to allocation early 2015.</p>
<p><b>Respond Housing Association – Extension to Steadfast House – Facility for Intellectual Disabilities - Carrickmacross</b></p>	<p><b><u>Extension Works Complete</u></b> Unit allocated and occupied since June 2014.</p>
<p><b>Newgrove Housing Association</b> Facility for Intellectual Disabilities 16 Coolshannagh View, Monaghan.</p>	<p><b><u>Purchase Complete 2014</u></b> Contractor appointed to carry out renovation works. Property expected to be occupied early 2015.</p>

**Energy Efficiency Programme**

The Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government provided funding of €326,422 in 2014 to upgrade 326 housing units.

**Maintenance Programme**

Maintenance is a key activity for the Council’s housing service with **€828,554, €232,964 and €351,278 respectively** spent in 2014 on response, work prior to reletting and planned maintenance in respect of the current stock of 1,409 dwellings.

The Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government provided funding of €92,751 for returning vacant properties to productive use.

**Disabled Persons Grants, Improved Works in Lieu and Extensions**

In 2014, **€101,181.12** was spent on 27 council owned properties where adaptation works were necessary to improve accessibility for either the elderly tenants, and/or, those with a specific disability.



### Allocations of tenancy

All allocations were made under the Scheme of Letting Priorities. There were 119 allocations of tenancy to persons on the housing waiting list, from within the existing stock. This enabled the Council to combine the best use of stock whilst addressing the needs of tenants.

	Stock of Rented at 31.12.14	No of Tenant Purchases	Average Rent	Waiting List at 31.12.14	New Tenancies 2014
Monaghan County Council	1,409	0	€45.00	961	119

### Rental Accommodation Scheme (R.A.S.)

At 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014, there were 152 long term recipients of rent supplement in Co. Monaghan.

The following is a summary of the Rental Accommodation Scheme activity to 31/12/2014 in County Monaghan which addressed the demand in the County.

Voluntary housing Rent Supplement recipients to RAS (Total)	<b>97</b>
Private Rental market housed through RAS(Total)	<b>191</b>
Transfers in 2013	<b>5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>293</b>

### Grants

Monaghan County Council operates 3 Housing Grant Schemes for people living in private accommodation to ensure they can continue to live independent lives. The 3 schemes are:-

- Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability (HGD)
- Mobility Aids Housing Grant Scheme (MAG)
- Housing Aid For Older People (HOP)

The table below indicates how many people applied for the schemes, how much was spent in total on each scheme and how many people were successful in securing grants in 2014.

Grant Type	Applications Received	Applications Approved/Paid	Amount Approved/Paid
HGD	65	70*	€909,233.03
MAG	73	67	€324,267.76
HOP	88	76	€260,502.55
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>€1,494,003.34</b>

*\* 5 Approvals from applications received late 2013*

### **Tidy Areas Competition**

There were **16** entries for the Tidy Areas Competition. The principal prize winners in 2014 were:

<b>Best Overall Village</b>	Tyholland Residents Association
<b>Best Floral display</b>	Cloughvalley Development Group, Carrickmacross
<b>Most Improved Village</b>	Tullyree Residents Association, Glaslough
<b>Litter Control</b>	Cappog Residents Association, Ballinode

### **Homeless Support**

In 2014 Monaghan County Council assisted 42 adults who either presented as homeless or who were at risk of homelessness, some whom had children. Following assessment they were provided with appropriate housing supports and advice.

## Roads and Transportation

Monaghan County Council is responsible for the upkeep and improvement of the road network within the county, which consists of 104 kilometres of national roads, 298 kilometres of regional roads and 2,144 kilometres of local roads.

A substantial programme of works was delivered recording significant achievements by the Roads and Transportation Department during 2014.

The grant receipts from the National Roads Authority for National Roads in 2014 was **€4,565,100.00** comprising of:

- Improvement works ..... **€ 3,724,854.00**
- Maintenance works .....**€ 840,246.00**
- **Total 2014.....€4,565,100.00**

### The NRA funding provided for :

#### NP Pavement & Minor Works

The completion of works on the Coolkill East to Corracrin section of the N2 Monaghan to Emyvale phases 2 & 4:

- N2 Monaghan to Emyvale Phase 1 improvement works to tie in with phase 2 at Coolkill East
- N2 Monaghan to Emyvale phase 3 publication of CPO (Gortmoney to Cornacreeve)
- N2 Derryellan to Tullyvin R/B surface replacement
- N2 MN107 Glennyhorn junction improvement.

#### HD 28 Pavement Renewals 2014

- HD 28 Pavement renewal at Whites Bridge, on N54 Clones Monaghan road (MN/14/11915)
- NP/NS Safety Barrier repairs at various locations (MN/14/11784)
- Surface retexturing at various locations on the national roads (MN/14/11841)

#### NP Safety Measures HD15 & HD 17 Minor works

- **N2 RSMIS Killycard to Tullyvin** received €680,000 in NRA funding for the reconfiguration of a section of the N2 2 + 1 layout on the Castleblayney Bypass, by providing a dedicated acceleration/deceleration lane, and an access to the Killycard industrial estate, thus enhancing safety.
- **N12 RSRM Tamlet** received €1.2m allowing for construction works on a section of the N12 Monaghan to Middletown road at Tamlet.

#### National Primary and National Secondary Maintenance

Maintenance of the National primary and Secondary roads continued with an allocation of €840,246.00, which included winter maintenance, national route lighting and engineering support.

#### Non-National Roads

Funding for Non National roads was provided through Grant receipts of €7,151,511.00 from the Department of Transport and €2,728,606.00 from Monaghan County Council's own resources.

A total of 47,856m of non national roads were improved under the restoration improvement grant and 66,422m of non national roads (regional and local) were surface dressed under the Restoration Maintenance programme.

The Department of Transport provided funding for the following:

€4,065,302 -	Discretionary & Restoration Improvement grant
€1,708,750 -	Discretionary Maintenance
€1,033,000 -	Restoration Maintenance
€39,749.00 -	Training (Health and Safety)

#### Specific Improvement Grants (Bridges)

SP Impr R188	Monaghan- Rockcorry RD (B68)	€5,381.36
Sp Impr R188	Monaghan – Rockcorry RD (B67)	€9,761.10
SP Impr R189	Newbliss – Cootehill RD (B48)	€12,485.10
SP Impr R190	Ballybay – Cootehill Rd (B76)	€908.10
SP Impr R212	Clones – Scotshouse Rd (B96)	€43,494.66
SP Impr R162	Junction Ballybay/ Cootehill/ Shercock Rd (B96)	€28,789.38
SP Impr R180	Ballybay- Carrickmacross Rd (B129)	€908.10
SP Impr R178	Shercock – Carrickmacross Rd (B120)	€8,342.35
SP Impr R178	Shercock – Carrickmacross Rd (B209)	€6,219.90
SP Impr R162	Ballybay-Shercock Rd (B92)	€8,780.45
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>€125,070.50</b>

#### Low Cost Safety

LCSI (R188)	Monaghan- Cootehill Rd	€13,086.52
LCSI (LP01401 & LT14011)	Old Armagh Road	€15,340.29
LCSI	Analore Bridge NB	€17,120.34
LCSI	Drum Village NB	€15,419.39
LCSI (R183) LT24124	Junction NB	€24,478.23
LCSI (R181/183)	Roundabout, Main St, Castleblayney	€8,591.94
LCSI LP3530/LS7501	Junction at Coolartragh, Castleblayney	€9,779.16
LCSI (R182)	Oram Village, Castleblayney	€14,813.70

LCSI	Main St, Carrickmacross	€48,706.25
LCSI (R178) LT49052	Junction, Carrickmacross	€7,395.69
LCSI	Mokeeran, Carrickmacross	€4,907.29
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>€179,638.80</b>

### **Flood Mitigation Works**

Grants from the OPW together with the Councils own resources catered for flood mitigation works at the following locations:

- **Dunsinaire** – OPW approved funding of €134,472. Procurement of Contractor commenced with a view to carrying out construction works early in 2015.
- **Threemilehouse village:** OPW approved funding of €135,000 for flood alleviation works in the village.
- **Ballybay** – OPW approved funding of €427,500 to carry out remedial repairs to a section of a channel to the Dromore river at Ballybay, all works are complete.



# Motor Taxation

The Motor Taxation/Driver Licensing Section deals with transactions relating mainly to ownership of vehicles and taxation of vehicles. The total number of licensed vehicles is steadily on the increase which has an escalating effect on the volume of transactions processed in Motor Tax.

The National Vehicle and Driver File (NVDF) is a national computerised database which is centrally controlled. The purpose of this database file is:

- To facilitate the Penalty Points System
- Provide greater on-line facilities in the Motor Tax Office
- Improve the level of service offered to the public

Monaghan Motor Taxation office has welcomed the Motor Tax Online System – a component of the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government eGovernment strategy. Renewing Online minimises the impact of geographical constraints on the delivery of services.

## Transaction Levels

Description	Total No of transactions	Total Income
Motor Vehicles/Trade Plates/ C.R.W./VR.C.	48,595	€10,420,648

## Service Indicators 2014

**To be included**

# Water Services

## Public Water Services

From the 6<sup>th</sup> January 2014, Irish Water became the Water Services Authority for public water and waste water in Co. Monaghan. Monaghan County Council agreed a 12 year Service Level agreement (SLA) with Irish Water to provide efficient and quality water services.

On an annual basis there is an Annual Service Plan (ASP) which documents the agreed objectives of Irish Water and Monaghan County Council. The ASP 2014 committed both parties to deliver these specific objectives and standards of performance against a budget covering headcount, goods and services and investment for 2014.

The ASP concentrates on outputs and imposes a commitment on both sides to deliver these agreed outputs, and in particular it included:

- The detailed and specific targets and objectives for 2014
- The performance indicators being monitored to ensure achievement of objectives
- The methodology for measurement and calculation of performance
- The process of reporting against the agreed performance indicators
- The budget and headcount agreed by Irish Water and Monaghan County Council for 2014

In 2014 the headcount for Water Services was 56 and the total net budget was €6.5m.

## Private Water Services

The Council is the supervisory authority for private water supplies. They have the same role that the EPA has for public supplies, and hold a monitoring role overseeing the workings of Group Water Schemes within the county. This role is performed in partnership with the Group Water Schemes and other rural organisations under the ambit of the Local Water Monitoring Committee.

The council administers the **Rural Water Programme** which aims to improve the quality and efficiency of group water schemes, group sewerage schemes, and private supplies where no alternative group or public supply is available.

Group Water Schemes continued to carry out necessary upgrading and improvement works which were grant aided by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Grants to the value of €606,721.11 were paid to 10 schemes in 2014.

A subsidy of €2,546,904.00 towards the operational cost of supplying water for domestic use was paid to 12 Group Water Schemes, and grants totalling €6,121.00 were paid to private householders for the provision or necessary improvement of individual water supplies to their house.

Grants towards Specific Source Protection Works amounting to €5,100.00 were paid in respect of Stranooden G.W.S. and Donaghmoynne G.W.S.

Grants towards Capital Replacement Funds amounting to €45,778.06 were approved in respect of two Group Schemes, Truagh & Doohamlet.

# Finance

## Ongoing Developments

The unification of the Monaghan Local Authorities took effect from 1 June 2014, completing a significant project that was started in 2013. A project team comprising Finance, Information Technology and Town Council staff was established to prepare for the unification. The project involved all aspects of the Financial System including customer accounts, suppliers' accounts, housing rents, housing loans, amalgamation of bank accounts and bank reconciliation. The unification had the effect of amalgamating the accounts of the former Town Councils with those of the County Council, reducing the number of entities to be administered from six to one, and thus streamlining the budgeting, financial reporting and auditing processes.

In November 2014, Monaghan County Council became part of 'My Pay', the National Local Authority shared service for payroll. The shared service is operated by Laois County Council, with some input of data and preparatory payroll work remaining in Monaghan. The move to a shared services payroll is part of an ongoing Local Government Efficiency Review (LGER), covering a wide range of functions provided by Local Authorities. Business cases have also been prepared for the sharing of services across all Local Authorities for Accounts Payable, Treasury Management and Transactional Human Resources. Under the next phase of shared services, Monaghan County Council expects to become part of a shared service for superannuation in 2015.

The transfer of Water Services to Irish Water took place on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014, as planned. This was the culmination of a process commenced early in 2013 and continued throughout 2013. Significant staff resources were invested to complete the data gathering exercise, to ensure that all areas relevant to the transfer were identified and completed within the timeframe agreed at national level.

## Corporate Procurement

Procurement is a key element of the Government's Public Service Reform agenda. The Office of Government Procurement (OGP) was established nationally to ensure that the Public Service operates in a co-ordinated and efficient way and delivers sustainable savings for the taxpayer. The OGP commenced operations in 2014 and will take responsibility for sourcing all goods and services on behalf of the Public Service, in collaboration with Local Government and other key sectors. In addition, the OGP will also take full responsibility for procurement policy and procedures.

Through the OGP and the sector-retained procurement functions, the Public Service will speak with "one voice" to the market for each category of expenditure, eliminating duplication and taking advantage of the scale of public procurement to best effect. This move is in line with best practice in the public and private sector and is part of the continuing reform programme being driven by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

Monaghan County Council's Finance department revised and updated detailed procurement guidelines and procedures in May 2014, to provide staff with detailed information on current best procurement practice and regulation. Procurement is a key value-adding function in Monaghan County Council, and the procedures document is designed to provide all staff involved in the procurement process with a thorough understanding of public sector accountability, best methods and processes involved in acquiring goods and services.

The forthcoming roll-out of Milestone 4 of the Agresso system, scheduled to start in June 2015, will see changes in the Council's purchasing processes, and will be a large-scale project that will require the formation of a dedicated project team to deliver the roll-out.

### **Prompt Payment Legislation**

The Prompt Payment of Accounts Act 1997 and the European Communities (Late Payment in Commercial Transactions) Regulations 2012 are aimed at combating late payment in commercial transactions. The legislation and Regulations provide that interest and compensation for late payments will become payable if supplier payments for commercial transactions are not made by the due deadline, generally 30 days.

Since 2011, the payment period applicable to Local Authorities has been reduced from 30 to 15 days, although interest and compensation for late payment still only applies to payments not met within 30 days. Monaghan County Council completes a quarterly return setting out details of its performance in paying suppliers. These quarterly returns are available on the Council's website.

During 2014 Monaghan County Council did not make any payments of prompt payment interest.

### **Revenue Collection**

Revenue Collectors are the primary means of regular contact with the Council's commercial ratepayers and housing rent and annuity payees, and in certain cases housing loan payees. Revenue collection and debt management are increasingly important in the current financial climate. The impact of the economic downturn has been particularly pronounced and Local Authorities have long led the way in terms of the sympathetic and constructive treatment of borrowers in arrears. As part of the follow-up on arrears, Monaghan Local Authority has put in place the Central Bank's Code of Conduct - a Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process (MARP). The MARP sets out a framework for dealing with mortgage arrears in a timely, efficient and flexible way which is fair to both the lending authority and the borrower. In a small percentage of commercial rates arrears cases the Council has engaged the service of Stubbs Gazette, an outside debt collection agency.

**AFS TO BE INCLUDED**

## Governance & Corporate Affairs

The Corporate Affairs Section provides support to senior management, the Cathaoirleach & elected members and organises council and committee meetings and associated activities. It is responsible for the preparation of the Corporate Plan, the Annual Report, Customer Care, the compilation of the Register of Electors, Freedom of Information, and the management of Corporate Property.

The section also co-ordinates the compilation of National Performance Service Indicators and monitors the implementation of the provisions of the Official Languages Act 2003.

### **Property Asset Management**

In July 2013 as part of the Government's programme for public service reform, the report "Accommodating Change – Measuring Success' – Property Asset Management Delivery Plan" was published. Its purpose is to improve the planning and management of the public service property portfolio in Ireland. All public bodies are now required to record their properties on the National Public Service web based property register which is operated and managed by the OPW. As part of changes made to the Council in 2014 a Corporate Assets and Energy Efficiency Unit has been set up in the Corporate and Governance section. This unit has started the process of reviewing and recording an inventory of all council properties. In addition Monaghan County Council is in the process of identifying energy efficiency and performance of property assets, reviewing the property portfolio and preparing policy procedures for dealing with property.

### **Energy Efficiency**

The Energy Unit has responsibility for managing, coordinating and setting targets for energy efficiency measures. The National Efficiency Action Plan NEEAP set a target of 33% improvement in Energy Efficiency by 2020 for all Public Sector Bodies. In 2014 the Council signed a letter of understanding with SEAI to work together to ensure the Council meets or exceeds the target set.

**Figures for energy usage for 2014 are not currently complete, however the 2013 figures show:**

Monaghan Local Authorities total energy usage	26.3 GWh
With a total expenditure of	€2.6 million

All energy used by the organisation is recorded and converted to kWh and reported to SEAI, who then produce a score card for each public body. This covers all energy use of the organisation including heating of buildings, water services, fleet vehicles, electricity etc.

### ***Monaghan County Council's energy used consisted of:***

Thermal (Heating)	11%
Transport	18%
Electricity	71%



**Of the Electricity this consisted of:**

Public Lighting	26%
Water and Sewerage	57%
Buildings and Other	17%

Irish Water took over the water and sewerage energy bills from 2014 and it is anticipated that the energy cost to the Council will reduce to around 15.7 GWh for 2014. The Council have improved energy efficiency by 11.5% up to 2013 since 2009 with a balance of 21.5% to be achieved to meet the 33% target set for 2020.

In addition to the energy efficiency work carried out on behalf of the council, the council, also in partnership with SEAI employed 2 energy interns with the objective to aid and advise SME's in the county on measures to reduce their energy bills, three large companies took part in the scheme.

**Local Elections**

Following the implementation of the recommendations of the Local Electoral Area Boundary Commission, the four electoral areas of Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Monaghan were re-structured into three new electoral areas – Carrickmacross-Castleblayney; Ballybay-Clones and Monaghan, with six elected members per area.

Elections for the new electoral areas were held on 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2014 with the election count being held on the 24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> May. Twelve councillors were formally elected - six for the Carrickmacross-Castleblayney Electoral Area and six for the Monaghan Electoral Area. However, due to the untimely death of an election candidate on election day, who was also a sitting Councillor – Cllr Owen Bannigan, RIP, a fresh election had to be held for the Ballybay-Clones electoral area. The fresh election took place on 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2014, with the election count taking place on the 8<sup>th</sup> June, following which six Councillors were formally declared elected.

The first meeting of the newly elected Council took place on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2014. Councillor Padraig McNally was elected Cathaoirleach and Councillor Jackie Crowe was elected Leas Chathaoirleach at that meeting. Other committees and working groups that have been established and are at an advanced stage of development include the Corporate Policy Group, Joint Policing Committee and four Strategic Policy Committees.

**Register of Electors**

The Register of Electors is compiled annually so as to ensure that members of the public can exercise their democratic right to vote in any elections/referendum that arise during the year. In compiling the Register we liaise with the Councils Revenue Collectors who act as fieldworkers and undertake the necessary enquiries to ensure an accurate document is produced. Members of the public can check if they are registered at [www.checktheregister.ie](http://www.checktheregister.ie).

**Higher Education Grants**

A new central online application system for student grants, known as Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) is available to students entering third level education. The new system accepts all new student grant applications, including applications from existing students who decide to change their courses or progress to new courses (be they add-on courses or otherwise).

The Council continues to renew grants for students who were awarded grants by the Council prior to 2011 and are continuing on that course. In 2014/2015 Monaghan County Council had 80 renewal grants, 2 were deemed ineligible and 5 have deferred the renewal of their grants.

### **Twinning**

Monaghan County Council continued to progress and expand its twinning arrangements that have been developed over the years, and is twinned with:-

- Geel, Belgium (the parish of Tydavnet in North Monaghan is also twinned with this area)
- Prince Edward Island, Canada
- Peterboro, Canada
- Miramichi, Canada
- Cavan-Millbrook-North Monaghan, Canada

In May, Cllr Gary Carville and Adge King, Director of Services, visited Prince Edward Island, Canada, for Annual Settlers Day.

Expenditure on Twinning amounted to circa €2,500.

### **Implementation of Scéim Gaeilge**

Implementation of the Scéim Gaeilge was monitored on a regular basis during the year. Thirty six secondary school students were awarded scholarships to attend four Gaeltacht Colleges in summer 2014.

### **Civic Receptions**

During 2014, Monaghan County Council held four Civic Receptions (as below), at a cost of approximately €4,000.00:

- Truagh Gaels Football Team
- Special Olympics
- Cavan-Monaghan Development Squad
- Daniel Mc Kenna/ Arthur Kierans & Mannon Castle Ladies Golf Team

### **Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs)**

Following the Local Elections held in May 2014, it was necessary for Monaghan County Council to re-establish the Strategic Policy Committees, which continue to form part of the local government framework for County Monaghan. The Strategic Policy Committees are central to the core principle of enhancing local democracy and are a vehicle to facilitate the participation of local groups and representatives in the provision of local services. The Committees are comprised of elected Councillors, Sectoral and Community Representatives, nominated to serve on specific committees either through national organisations or through the Public Participation Network.

The four Strategic Policy Committee's which have been established within the county are as follows –

- (i) SPC for Housing and Fire & Civil Protection.
- (ii) SPC for Social, Cultural and Community Development.
- (iii) SPC for Economic Development and Enterprise Support.
- (iv) SPC for Environment and Transport.

Each of the SPC's has six Elected Members and six Sectoral Representatives. Meetings of the new SPC's will commence in January, 2015.

# Planning & Economic Development

## Forward Planning

The Forward Planning Section is responsible for drafting, reviewing and publishing planning and development policies for the county.

The Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019 (incorporating the plans for the towns of Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Ballybay) is the principle policy document used to manage physical development in the county. A review of the progress made in achieving the objectives contained within the Plan, as required under Section 15 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) was commenced in late 2014.

During the year work continued on the preparation of the Retail Development Strategy, with sample surveys being conducted with households, shoppers and retailers, in order to validate previous survey results.

Involvement in the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment Management continued with a review of the preliminary flood area maps and associated hydrology reports, produced by RPS Consultants on behalf of the Office of Public Works.

Meetings of the Strategic Policy Committee for Planning and Economic Development took place in January, March and April. Issues discussed included new arrangements in respect of Irish Water, Departmental Manual on Urban Roads & Streets (DMURS), Review of Record of Protected Structures (RPS), and the Retail Development Strategy for County Monaghan.

## Built Heritage

The comprehensive review of the Record of Protected Structures in Monaghan Local Authorities was progressed in 2014, on foot of recommendations arising from the 2013 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage survey of the county. This included the significant task of cross referencing the 1,481 structures recommended by the survey, with 636 already included on the Record of Protected Structures, and the identification of the owners of these structures. Planning section administered the Built Heritage Jobs Leverage Scheme in 2014. The scheme which was concluded in November, provided grant aid of €103,658 to seven projects in the County, leveraging €189,067 of private funds.

## Development Management

Monaghan County Council received a total of 444 planning applications in 2014 and issued 392 notifications of decision. A total of 22 applications were refused during the year, representing a refusal rate of approximately 5.6 %. In 2014, 10 decisions were appealed to An Bord Pleanála, of which 2 decisions were modified, 5 were upheld, 1 was withdrawn and 3 remained undecided.

## Enforcement

When the Planning Authority becomes aware of a breach of permission or unauthorised development, discussions with the offender(s) are often sufficient to ensure remedy. However, where issues are not addressed by the offender(s) then formal enforcement action is taken. Enforcement statistics for the year are shown below.

<b>2014 Enforcement Statistics</b>	
No. of cases subject to complaints	135
Warning Letters under Section 152	95
Enforcement Notices under Section 154	28
No. of cases dismissed	18
No. of cases resolved through negotiation	22
Prosecutions	0

### **Unfinished Housing Developments**

The ongoing review of unfinished housing developments and performance bonds in respect of housing developments was continued through 2014. Site resolution engagement involving developers, lenders, and where applicable, administrators/receivers was progressed.

Monaghan Local Authorities co-ordinated resolution works to four developments under the DoECLG Special Resolution Fund, having secured funding of just over €202,000 to resolve these sites. The Local Authority claimed a total of 16 insurance bonds during the year. Derelict Site Notices were issued in respect of 7 unfinished housing developments. The DoECLG recommended the removal of a further 4 developments from their database of unfinished housing developments in the National Housing Survey in November 2014, leaving 18 unfinished housing developments in County Monaghan.

### **Development Contribution Scheme**

The Development Contribution Scheme for County Monaghan 2013-2019, which sets out development contributions to be levied on developments, was revised in December 2014 to take account of the changes in local government structures and the transfer of responsibility for water services to Irish Water.

The total amount of contributions that will accrue, when, or if development commences, on planning applications granted in 2014 is €602,120. The total amount of financial contributions received in 2014 was €536,332. A detailed breakdown is contained in the table below.

<b>Development Contributions 2014</b>	
Water	€ 63,170
Waste Water	€ 94,755
Footpaths & Lighting	€ 6,851
Community, Recreation, Amenity Levy	€ 360,930
Carpark	€10,626
<b>Total</b>	<b>€ 536,332</b>

### **Service Improvement**

Planning Staff continued to be available for pre-planning meetings and telephone enquiries throughout the year. Although a significant commitment in terms of resources, it is considered that the time invested in pre-planning discussions results in the more efficient processing of planning applications, to the benefit of all parties.

Agents Workshops were held in February and July of 2014 and provided updates and information to agents on topics such as the changes in Building Control Regulations, Water Quality Protection and Improvement, the introduction of Departmental Manual on Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS), Enforcement, the Review of the Record of Protected Structures, and the role of Irish Water in Planning.



A new Agents' Forum was established to enhance the relationship between the planning authority / building control authority and agents, and to provide a mechanism for discussion and resolution of issues of general concern. The inaugural quarterly meeting took place in June and subsequent meetings took place in September and December.

## Tourism

### Tourism Development

A key focus of the Tourism Section in 2014 continued to be the implementation of major INTERREG IVA tourism infrastructural development projects in County Monaghan. These were as follows:

*(1) Development of Clones as tourism hub as part of the CEEB project*

In June 2014 all elements of the Clones Erne East Blackwater (CEEB) project were completed on time and within budget.

These works included the following:

- Development of an Amenity Park and upgrading of existing playground with new parking facilities and streetscape enhancement works at Cara St
- Upgrading of facilities at the Canal Stores with the development of a new kitchen area and outdoor landscaping
- Erection of Interpretation panels at key heritage sites in Clones
- Development of 26 angling stands at 6 lakes in the Clones area



## **(2) East Border Region Tourism Project**

Monaghan County Council secured funding of €250,000 through East Border Region in 2011 to complete a number of smaller tourism related projects. The following project elements were completed in 2014:

- Angling Improvement works at Creevy lake, Carrickmacross
- Development of walking trails at Dartrey Forest
- Enhancement works at Barry McGuigan Park, Clones

### **Community Tourism Diaspora Initiative 2014**

A new community Tourism Initiative for the Diaspora which sought to build on the legacy of The Gathering 2013 was launched in April 2014. The initiative, a joint partnership between Fáilte Ireland, IPB Insurance and the 34 Local Authorities provided an annual fund of €1m over three years to support local community based events and festivals.

Monaghan County Council implemented the initiative at county level and was responsible for funds administration, grant applications and awards in accordance with agreed national criteria. The full county allocation of €32,223 was awarded and a total of 17 festivals were funded, bringing in an additional 2,038 bednights into the county.

### **Tourism Promotion**

The following promotional materials/collateral was produced in 2014:

#### **Print**

- Calendar of Events 2014 (and on-line)
- Clones Erne East Blackwater (CEEB) Angling Guide
- Clones Erne East Blackwater (CEEB) Tourist Brochure
- CASA (Castleblayney- South Armagh) Visitor Brochure

#### **Video**

- CASA Angling Video podcast
- CASA Family Fun Video podcast
- CASA Great Outdoors Video podcast
- CEEB Angling Video podcast
- CEEB Heritage & Culture Video podcast
- CEEB Family Fun Video podcast
- CEEB Great Outdoors Video podcast

### **Tourist Office Provision**

Monaghan County Council operated a Tourist Office in the Market House, Monaghan Town from June to end September. The majority of enquiries related to information on things to do in Monaghan and the surrounding areas, places to eat and stay, bus timetables etc.

The County Library at Clones and Carrickmacross Library had designated stands for tourist literature and the library staff was available to respond to any visitor queries.

# Community Development

## **Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)**

The Local Government Reform Act, 2014, provides for the establishment of Local Community Development Committees (LCDC) in each local authority. The LCDC, is a seventeen member committee made up of both statutory and non-statutory representatives. Representatives were selected based on guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment and comprises of 9 community/non statutory and 8 statutory members. It replaces the County Development Board (CDB) structure which was in existence since 2000. The inaugural meeting of the LCDC took place in September, 2014 and its main task is to develop and implement a 6 year Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for the county.

## **Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)**

The LCDC must prepare a six-year Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) in co-operation with the County Council. These plans are to facilitate the emerging role of local government in local development, and must be developed with reference to existing national and local plans such as the National Spatial Strategy, Regional Planning Guidelines, National Anti-Poverty Strategy, the County Development Plan and the local Education and Training Strategy. The plan will identify areas of priority and indicate the most appropriate programme or other resources to be linked with each priority. The focus of the plan should be social and economic issues that have relevance, be addressed at local and community level, and which address the specific needs of communities.

## **Socio-Economic Framework**

To support the development of the LECP, a Socio-economic framework document has been prepared by the Council. This document contains the key social and economic data relating to County Monaghan, covering details on population, age profile, education, employment, unemployment and economic activity in the county.

## **Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP)**

The SICAP (formerly known as the Local Community Development Programme) is to be rolled out by the LCDCs from April 2015, through a tendering process. In Stage 1 of the process, Pobal assessed and approved companies to participate in the actual tender to deliver the programme. In Stage 2 of the process LCDC's issued an Invitation to Tender for the SICAP programme to the companies shortlisted from Stage 1, with a deadline for receipt of tenders of Friday, 19th December. One tender was received for County Monaghan, which was assessed by the LCDC.

## **Monaghan Age Friendly Alliance**

The Age Friendly programme carried out a review of its strategy in 2014. The review took place as a public consultation session with older people. The overall opinion of participants in the review process was that the Age Friendly programme was making a positive impact on the lives of older people in the county.

In September 2014 Monaghan County Council teamed up with the Monaghan Branch of Alzheimer's Society of Ireland to develop '*Monaghan Dementia Awareness Handbook - A guide to Supports and Information for people with Dementia and their families*'. The booklet was launched during Dementia Awareness week as part of a Dementia Awareness Conference held in Monaghan town, with over 200 people attending.

### **Making Monaghan Accessible**

Monaghan County Council took part in the National Job Shadow day in April 2014, supported by Drumlin House training centre for adults with a learning disability. Six people from Drumlin house “shadowed” staff from the Library, the Museum, Community Forum, Canteen, Outdoor staff and Fire service for a day to see what a day working in these areas was like.

To address the abuse of parking in disabled parking bays in the County Monaghan, the Latch Learning Programme and Drumlin House worked with Monaghan County Council to make a short video to help raise awareness of this problem in the county. The film was very successful with almost 1,500 views on YouTube. The video can be viewed by searching ‘**A Minute matters- No badge, No Parking**’.

### **Community Development Fund**

The Community Development Fund is open to any community and voluntary group to support community development activity within the county. In 2014, the annual Community Development Fund was merged with the Environment Fund and Tidy Areas Fund and all three funding programmes were run concurrently. In total, €75,000 was allocated to a wide range of community groups throughout the county.

### **Public Participation Network**

In 2014, work commenced on establishing the Public Participation Network (PPN) in County Monaghan, including registration for interested community groups in the county, which now stands at over 270 groups.

### **National Bike Week**

National Bike Week was a big success once again in County Monaghan, with community groups throughout the county doing themselves proud in their efforts to get people out and about on their bikes. Monaghan County Council supported the events by organising joint promotion, providing road signs, handling the tendering requirements, reporting to funders etc, and organising deliveries of equipment and refreshments to each event. Funding of €5,000 was allocated to the Council by the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport to support Bike Week in 2014. Monaghan County Council would like to thank all the groups and volunteers who got involved.



### **Smarter Travel**

The second section of the Ulster Canal Greenway through Monaghan town opened in May. The route is 4.2km in length, and goes from the Armagh road on the eastern boundary of the town to the Threemilehouse road on the western

boundary. During 2014, 49,485 people used the Rooskey to Armagh road section, and 35,624 people have used the Glen Road to Threemilehouse Road section since it opened in mid May. 'Trailhead' signage has now been installed at both ends of the route, and in Old Cross Square. Additional signs featuring the Greenway logo have been erected at entrance/ exit points in order to aid users in navigating road crossings. A website has been developed ([ulstercanalgreenway.com](http://ulstercanalgreenway.com)) giving information on how the project was developed, as well as providing information on the route itself.



The Council has also developed a website, [GoMonaghan.ie](http://GoMonaghan.ie), which aims to promote the option of smarter travel principles throughout the county. We continue to roll out initiatives aimed at achieving a shift from the private motor car to more sustainable modes of transportation.

### **Community Smoke Alarm Scheme**

Four hundred alarms were received under the Dept of Environment, Community & Local Governments annual Community Smoke Alarm Scheme, and distributed around the county via the Community Alert groups, the Community Gardai and the Community Forum. The alarms were targeted at 'vulnerable' households, which included older people, people living alone and people living in private rented accommodation.

### **Pride of Place**

Pride of Place is an all Ireland competition organised by Co-Operation Ireland, and is open to Local Authorities north and south. A nomination is recognition of the hard work undertaken by the communities, and acknowledges their commitment to making their communities better places to live. The Gala awards night was held in Ennis in November, with the vibrant community & voluntary sector in County Monaghan once again performing very well, with Corduff / Raferagh, Tydavnet and Clones Community Forum, along with Cluain Lorcaín Residents Association, nominated to represent the best of Co. Monaghan by Monaghan County Council.



### **Tidy Towns**

Monaghan County Council provides many supports to Tidy Towns groups and Residents Associations. Some, such as the Environmental & Recreational Improvement Fund, offer direct funding to groups; others are indirect, such as offering free spring bulbs to groups in the autumn and free trees during National Tree Week in March each year.

In 2014, for the first time the county had two Gold Medal winners and a bronze medal winner in the National Tidy Towns Competition. Additional funding of €80,000 was provided by the Department to the Council to support the work of Tidy Towns groups. This has enabled the groups to bulk purchase flower planters with water reservoirs as well as completing a number of projects such as creating a traditional cottage garden at the lock house along the Greenway at Rooskey, Monaghan town.

For the first time, groups from County Monaghan participated in the annual Daubenton's Bat survey in August, as a result of training on bat detection which was funded by the Council.



### **Joint Policing Committees**

As the five Town Councils were abolished following the 2014 local elections, the number of JPC's in County Monaghan has reduced from six to one. The JPC supplied free gymsacs to all Junior Cert students during the 'Don't Pour Your Dreams Away' campaign in September. This project, started by Monaghan town JPC, has grown beyond all expectations, and is now delivered in every secondary school in the county. Gardai have reported a significant drop in the level of underage drunkenness in general, and particularly around the night of the Junior Cert results.

Arising from issues highlighted by the outgoing county JPC, Monaghan County Council and An Garda Síochana established a Community Safety Network in 2014. All Community Alert and Community Text



Alert groups were invited to attend. In its two meetings in 2014 much was achieved with information sharing, and in identifying suitable areas for co-operation.

### **Monaghan Community Forum**

There were over 400 groups registered with Monaghan Community Forum for 2014. The Local Government Reform Act 2014 abolished all Community Fora and replaced them with Public Participation Networks. Monaghan Community Forum has been assisting the Council to re-register groups with the new PPN and to ease the transition to the new structures. The Forum's AGM in November enabled the community to celebrate the achievements of the Forum over its 13 years, and highlighted the impact the community sector has had on decision making during that time.

### **Comhairle na nÓg**

Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg is the recognised voice of young people in County Monaghan. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs oversees Comhairle na nÓg, the delivery of which is the responsibility of each Local Authority. Members representing schools, youth organisations and special interest groups for young people in the county, meet on a monthly basis and undertake a range of projects to consider the issues facing young people. In 2014 their key projects for discussion were on the topics of Mental Health and Youth Entrepreneurship.

### **Journey of Equals Intergenerational PEACE III project.**

Monaghan County Council secured additional funding under the Peace III Programme for a nine month extension to their Intergenerational Peace III project. The "Journey of Equals" Peace III programme was designed to reach out to the five main towns of the county, and engage older and younger people in a series of intergenerational peace building projects.

### **Monaghan Sports Partnership (MSP)**

MSP continues to work with the Irish Sports Council (ISC) in delivering a programme of activities aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles and increase in physical activity. Activities also include promotion of Slí na Slainte routes, Active Adults 50+ Programme, Club Development, Sports First Aid, promotion of Code of Ethics in Clubs, Operation Transformation, and grant support. MSP, in a joint initiative with Cavan SP, and funded through the ISC, also promoted a Sports Inclusion Disability Programme developing opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in sports. It's a joint initiative between Monaghan and Cavan LSPs.

### **Monaghan Peace III Programme**

The Peace III, Phase II Programme drew to a conclusion on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014, with Monaghan receiving €3,958,714.57 worth of EU funding to undertake a wide range of project activity.

In 2014 we successfully completed 14 Peace III funded projects. These projects were delivered using a number of mechanisms such as partner delivery, small grants, and resource model allocation.

This project activity included Behind the mask diversity awareness workshop, Roma One People Many lives exhibition, Delivery of OCN training, Arts network showcase events, Interagency meetings held, English Conversation classes, Anti-racism conference held and Intercultural days held in schools.

# Environmental Protection

Environmental Protection is a topic that continues to hold a place centre-stage within both the national and international arena. However, it is primarily by protecting the Environment at local level that we can hope to safeguard it for future generations.

Monaghan County Council's Environment Section is charged with the responsibility of overseeing the protection of the county's land, waters and air from pollutants that are harmful to humans, animal and plant life respectively. Responsibility for protecting the Environment rests with each individual living and working in the county. The Council's staff needs the support and co-operation of the wider community in order to discharge their duties.

The Council has a broad range of environmental functions including:

- Waste Management
- Litter Control
- Water Quality Protection and Improvement
- Environmental awareness
- Food Safety
- Dog Control

## **Waste Management**

Managing Waste in Ireland is now divided into three regions: Connacht Ulster, Southern, Eastern and Midlands. The preparation of new regional waste management plans for the regions has been underway since late 2013 following an evaluation of the previous plans which covered ten regions nationally. The Connacht Ulster Waste Region consists of the administrative areas of the Galway City and counties Galway, Mayo, Roscommon, Sligo, Leitrim, Donegal, Cavan and Monaghan. The region represents 18% of the national population and has 36% of the land area. The regional plan provides the framework for waste management for the next six years 2015 – 2021 and sets out a range of policies and actions in order to meet the specified mandatory and performance targets. The plan seeks to assist and support the community and local business to develop resource efficiency and waste prevention initiatives, and identifies measures to develop an economy where waste management initiatives value waste as a resource or potential raw material.

The draft Connacht – Ulster Regional Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 has key planned targets:

- To achieve a 1% reduction per annum in the quantity of household waste generated per capita over the period of the plan
- Preparing for reuse and recycling rates of 50% of Municipal waste by 2020
- Reduce to 0% the direct disposal of unprocessed residual Municipal waste to landfill (from 2016 onwards) in favour of higher value pre-treatment processes and indigenous recovery practices

## **Landfill facility**

Monaghan County Council operates one landfill facility at Letterbane, Scotch Corner, under waste licence W0020-02 granted by the Environmental Protection Agency. The "polluter-pays" principle is applied to the operation of the Landfill facility. During 2014 the total volume of waste landfilled at the Scotch Corner facility was 45,561 tonnes. This was higher than the volume of waste land filled in 2013,



2012 and in 2011. Again in 2014 a significant amount of this waste was material repatriated from illegal disposal sites in Northern Ireland which Monaghan County Council secured following a competitive nationwide tender during 2013. All landfill operators including Monaghan County Council are finding it difficult to attract waste, which can be attributed to the economic downturn, increased environmental awareness, increasingly stringent license conditions, the proximity of the Indaver thermal treatment plant, higher landfill levies and of course the need to move away from the practice of landfilling as per EU and National policy. In 2014 Monaghan County Council engaged RPSGroup Consultants to examine the future options for the land fill facility including the long term aftercare costs. The report will be completed in Q1 of 2015.

### **Scotch Corner Recycling Centre and Carrickmacross Recycling**

The recycling centre at Scotch Corner comprises of a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) and a Civic Amenity site. At the MRF, recyclables are separated into individual waste streams to meet the requirements of secondary markets, whilst the Civic Amenity Site is primarily a facility where members of the public can recycle household wastes, including WEEE and certain hazardous materials. Both facilities are operated by McElvaney Waste and Recycling.

### **Bring Sites**

1,000 tonnes of glass and 34 tonnes of aluminium cans were collected at the 28 active bring Sites in the county during 2014.

### **Waste Facility Permits and Registrations**

At the end of 2014, 16 waste facility permits were in operation in County Monaghan. As the licensing authority it is a priority of Monaghan County Council to ensure that these facilities are operated to the highest possible environmental standard.

### **Waste Collection Permits**

The National Waste Collection Permit Office in Tullamore processes new applications and applications for the review of existing waste collection permits in the Republic of Ireland. Further information is available at [www.nwcpo.ie](http://www.nwcpo.ie). Waste collection permit holders in Monaghan can be inspected by Monaghan County Council. A total of 63 permits have their headquarters address in County Monaghan.

### **LAPN (Local Authority Prevention Network)**

The Environment Section continued to participate in the EPA-funded Local Authority Prevention Network (LAPN) programme in 2014. Projects completed during 2014 include:

- Participation in Taste of Monaghan Festival focusing on home composting and the promotion of the [stopfoodwaste.ie](http://stopfoodwaste.ie) national campaign.
- Work with a number of business in the County on the Green Hospitality Programme
- Work with Tidy Towns group to increase their marks in the Sustainable Resource Use category of the national competition.

### **Litter Pollution**

A new litter management plan for the period 2014-2016 was adopted in Jan 2014. This will provide the objectives for litter management in County Monaghan for the next 3 years.

During 2014 a total of €500,000 was spent on litter related activities in County Monaghan, with a total of €350,000 spent on street cleaning and 585 tonnes of waste deposited in the landfill during 2014.

74 On-the-Spot litter fines were issued in 2014. During 2014 the number of detections for dumping at bottle banks decreased significantly, an indication that the CCTV monitoring programme has worked as a deterrent. Monaghan County Council responded to almost 250 litter related complaints during 2014, an average of almost 5 a week. 8 litter blackspots were cleared during 2014.

A grant of €18,890 was drawn down for litter related awareness activities, including Tidy towns activities, Green Schools Programme, Spring and Autumn Clean, Radio, billboard and print advertising and sponsorship. 40 groups participated in Spring Clean activities during 2014.



Over 6,000 students are participating in the green school programme with a total of 55 primary and 10 secondary schools now registered and participating in the programme.

Improvements in litter were noted in the Irish Business Against Litter report for Monaghan Town and in the Tidy Towns adjudication for the major urban areas.

### **Water Quality**

In recent years, there has been significant progress in tackling serious sources of pollution, but numerous small point and diffuse source pollution remain. Our monitoring programme indicates that phosphate, sediment and degraded ecology remain a problem in Monaghan's streams, rivers and lakes.

Monaghan County Council continues its programme of water quality monitoring, development control, catchment surveys, licensing and the investigation of water pollution complaints. Over 300 river and lake samples were collected and in excess of 400 investigations and inspections were carried out in 2014. We continue to work with farmers and businesses to address sources of water pollution and to promote best practice. The review of discharge licences is nearing completion and 10 companies' submitted Annual Environmental Reports in 2014 – a new initiative to promote best practice. A significant update of our GIS based information system was completed in Jan 2014 and is proving a valuable resource.

In 2014 the Environment Section focused investigations on river sites that are below good status. River walks, habitat surveys, the use of Small Stream Risk Score and inspections were used to identify factors contributing to the degraded status at these sites. In 2015 we propose to continue this programme. The newly formed EPA's 'Water Framework Directive Integration and Coordination Unit' have identified that a new approach involving more public engagement and better integration among public authorities is necessary to address the complex problem of waters at risk of not meeting objectives of the Water Framework Directive.

The Ulster Blackwater Streamscapes Project was a new initiative in public engagement which took place in September 2014. The Coomhola Salmon Trust delivered their educational programme 'StreamScapes'

to 4 schools and 3 events hosted by community groups in north Monaghan. This proved very successful and we plan to expand this programme in 2015 with the assistance of some DECLG funding.

The second cycle of the River Basin Management Planning process has commenced. We encourage the public to be informed and get involved in water matters.

### **Complaints**

The Environment section investigates complaints covering the whole spectrum of our activities from illegal dumping of domestic refuse, to water pollution, and dumping of hazardous wastes (such as by-products of illegal diesel laundering activities). In 2014, 467 complaints were received, with 384 complaints investigated. The Council may serve a range of statutory and legal notices on landowners etc requiring them to carry out certain works and our investigations may result in cases being referred for prosecution. In 2014, 9 such notices were issued. However, in the majority of cases, individuals respond positively when advised that their activities are likely to cause environmental pollution. Air and Noise Complaints are dealt with by the Council's Environmental Health Officers.

### **Diesel Wash Dumping**

2014 saw a decrease of 23% in the number of diesel wash dumping incidents in the county, with 103 separate incidents handled by Monaghan County Council during the course of the year compared to 134 in 2013, however it is still the second highest year of incidents since 2004. A total of 282 IBC's were abandoned, containing 332,000 Kg's of diesel laundering waste. Costs incurred during 2014 were in the region of €450,000. Since 2004 Monaghan County Council has now handled 474 such incidents with total costs now €2.65 Million.



### **Environmental Awareness**

In an effort to foster a spirit of co-operation between the Council and the community at large, the Council engages in a range of environmental awareness raising activities.

Some of the highlights in 2014 were:

- Maximised participation in Spring and Autumn Clean
- €43,000 was provided to local voluntary organisations under the Environmental Fund for improving local communities. Grants were available for maintenance of open spaces, tree/shrub/hedge & flower planting, litter management, painting etc.
- The Green Schools Programme continues to grow. At the end of 2014, 85% of primary and 75% of post primary schools was registered with the programme, with over 6,000 pupils participating. Other school programmes included Junk Kouture and ECOUNESCO Young Environmentalist Programme.
- €20,000 was distributed in funding through the Local Agenda Environmental Partnership Fund, with a focus on local projects.
- Our Environmental Officer continued to develop linkages with the community and voluntary sectors, such as Tidy Town and Sporting organisations
- Grant of €19,000 from Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government was spent on litter awareness measures

## **Food Safety**

Monaghan County Council has a five year contract until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015, with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI), to provide food safety control and support services to small food business operators in the County engaged in the slaughtering, processing and wholesaling of meat and meat products. The products range from fresh beef; lamb and poultry meat to cooked sliced ham and cooked sausages.

The Council employs a County Veterinary Officer (CVO) and two temporary veterinary inspectors. The inspectors carry out ante and post mortem (i.e. before and after death) examinations on all livestock slaughtered in the four local abattoirs in Monaghan (details are available on the Council website). The CVO carries out regular inspections of structural and operational hygiene standards in premises, and operates sampling and training programmes to assist owners and staff in attaining the required standards set out in national and EU legislation.

New EU rules on the protection of animals at the time of killing have recently come into force. These rules require all slaughterhouse staff involved in the handling of live animals and slaughter of animals to undergo specific training and assessment to ensure that they have the appropriate level of competence to carry out slaughter and related operations.

New EU rules will come into force in 2015 on the labelling of food and the information to be provided to the consumer. These new rules set out the information that must be made available to the consumer on the product label, including that the country of origin must be stated for unprocessed meat from sheep, pigs, goats and poultry. This requirement has been in place for beef from the year 2000.

In 2014, 1,227 cattle and 3,023 sheep were slaughtered in local abattoirs in Monaghan.

## **Dog Control Service**

The council employs one full-time Dog Warden for the county. 5,219 dogs were licensed in the county in 2013, while 16 general dog licences were issued. The general dog licence entitles the holder to keep any number of dogs at a specific location.

There were 13 premises registered with Monaghan County Council under the Dog Breeding Establishments Act in 2014. These are premises at which more than 5 bitches aged over 6 months are kept. Most of these are hunt kennels, but dog shelters, boarding kennels and greyhound training kennels are also included.

645 dogs passed through the dog pound in 2014. Of these, 12 dogs were dead on arrival, having been shot by farmers while worrying sheep or found dead on the road following a collision with a vehicle, while a further 19 were euthanised at the Dog Pound because they were reported to have attacked people or sheep. Of the remaining 614 dogs, 74 were reclaimed by their owners, 266 were re-homed to the public and 272 were re-homed, with the much-appreciated assistance of the Carrickmacross Dog Shelter and the Monaghan Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. No dog that was suitable for re-homing was euthanised in Monaghan Dog Pound in 2014. This compares with the situation less than 10 years ago, when up to 500 dogs suitable for re-homing were euthanised because no one could be found to re-home them. In 2014, 97 on-the-spot fines were issued to people for keeping a dog without a licence, 15 fines for not keeping a dog under control, and 18 fines for not ensuring that the dog wears a collar and/or tag with the owner's name and address on it. 2 dog owners were successfully prosecuted in court for not keeping their dogs under control and allowing them to attack sheep.

# Fire Service

## Fire Operations

Monaghan Fire Service dealt with 339 callouts in 2014 - 22% related to the clean-up process of laundered diesel residue, while chimney fires accounted for 18% of all calls. The other main locations of calls were dwellings (11%), motor vehicles (8%), road traffic accidents (13%) and false alarms (9%). There were no major incidents during the year.

In line with the national trend there was an increase in road traffic collisions involving fatalities and a marginal improvement in the average time of attendance to fires compared with 2013.

Along with the natural retirement process, two fire-fighters retired on medical grounds, which resulted in the recruitment of 4 new fire-fighters in 2014. Equally, the staffing compliment of Monaghan Fire & Civil Protection was improved with the appointment of two administrative personnel.

The fire station in Castleblayney had significant repair works completed to the roof and also benefited from acquiring a 'fit for purpose' muster bay and lecture room. The provision of temporary changing and toilet facilities adjacent to the new compartment fire behaviour training facilities, has also been completed.

In addition to the annual training programme conducted at drill night, 1,530 training hours has been completed in Monaghan. Monaghan Fire Station held a pilot 3-week recruits training course which has now become a national standard for new entrants into the fire service.



The relocation of our Local Co-ordination Centre for Major Emergencies from the MTEK 2 building to Monaghan Fire Station was completed and a Major Emergency tabletop exercise was undertaken involving each section of Monaghan Council in December. The exercise offered an opportunity to test the Local Co-ordination Centre and each sections action plan.

A replacement Emergency Tender for Carrickmacross fire service was purchased while funding was secured to purchase a 4x4 personnel carrier and the replacement of a compressor unit from the DoECLG.

A Risk Area Categorisation for County Monaghan has been completed, which has classified each of the 5 station areas in Monaghan. The Fire and Civil Protection Operational Plan for the period 2015-2019 has been prepared in draft form and will be presented to the council members for adoption in early 2015.

## **Fire Prevention**

Further progress was made in 2014 with regard to premises built or in use without Fire Safety Certificates. A total of 69 fire certificate applications were processed in 2014. There were 61 license applications, 13 planning reports processed, each requiring an initial inspection and subsequent follow-up inspections. In total, 158 inspections took place and this will form an integral part in the review of pre-fire plans for buildings within Co. Monaghan

Four Fire Safety Notices have been served on buildings in County Monaghan under the Fire Service Act 1981 & 2003.

## **Building Control**

During 2014 Monaghan Building Control Authority received a total of 166 Commencement Notices (an increase of 19% on 2013), 19 Disability Access Certificates (a 46 % increase on 2013) and conducted inspections on 19% of all works.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014 the new Building Control Regulations came into affect requiring the owner/developer and builders of a building project to certify design, conduct inspections and certify completion of works to Building Control standard. Monaghan Building Control Authority engaged in a number of information meetings, consultation and advice sessions on these changes. The appointment of a designated Building Control Officer to inspect and management the new Building Control Management System (BCMS) has improved the standard of inspection.

Surveillance of the Construction Product Regulations (CPR) has been maintained throughout 2014, which involves ensuring that a mandatory 'CE' marking is in place for all construction products placed on the market. Information notes and advice is ongoing with manufacturers, importers, distributors, builders, specifiers and designers in County Monaghan on their obligation to conform to the CPR.

As part of the EBR energy efficiency and micro-generation project the retrofitting of double glazed windows to improve the energy efficiency of the building and carbon output at Monaghan County Council Offices at The Glen, Monaghan was completed.

## Civil Defence Service

Monaghan Civil Defence provided community support to 91 community events in 2014, as well as acting as a multi-skilled second line service to the main emergency services of the Fire Service, Local Authority, An Garda Síochana and HSE. Civil Defence membership in County Monaghan currently has 91 active members with 8 new members in 2014. All new members attend induction training, manual handling, CFR & OFA courses. Cost for running Civil Defence in 2014 amounted to just over €160,000.

The following training was carried out along with our weekly training classes:

- Cardiac First Responder Instructor Courses
- Occupational First Aid Courses
- Emergency Medical Technician up skilling
- Rope Rescue Level 2 Course
- Instructional Teaching Methods Course
- Radio Instructors Course
- Manual Handling & People Moving Instructors Course
- Power Boat Level 2 Certificate Course
- Field Skills Course
- Advanced powerboat & Diver coxswain course
- Emergency Medical Technician Course

Civil Defence classes are now being held in the Carrickmacross Fire Station.

Civil Defence visited four secondary schools to help promote the organisation and to make the public aware of Civil Defence's work in the community.

Introduction to first aid was held for five schools & community groups, and provided Cardiac First Responder to ten community based groups in Monaghan during the year.

The Boat Unit continued to provide assistance to Monaghan County Council in the lake monitoring programme and also at numerous water based events.

Civil Defence ran a full days training exercise at Lough Muckno in December 2014 incorporating all aspects of Civil Defence, Rescue, Boats, Welfare, Casualty, etc. This involved 41 Civil Defence volunteers testing skill levels, communications and command structure, and consisted of workshops in the morning & exercises in the afternoon.

During the year we purchased a Mitsubishi Sprinter Ambulance, Mitsubhisi Pajareo 4x4 personnel carrier and a Ford Transit 16 seater mini-bus with substantial funding from the Civil Defence College.

# Library Service

The role of Monaghan County Libraries has been redefined from simply a place to borrow books to one which allows access to the world of information and supports all members of the community in their quest for knowledge, education, employment and self development.

The Library Service is administered from the library headquarters in Clones. Its services include:

- Five fully automated branches located in the principal towns of Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Ballybay. The five branches provide a continually updated collection of popular fiction and non-fiction books, audio books, DVDs, CDs and magazines for lending.
- A Mobile Library Service to pre-schools, playschools, crèches and afterschool services operating from 24 service points around the county on a fortnightly basis.
- A Primary Schools Library Service visiting each of the 64 primary schools a minimum of once a year and visiting rural schools twice yearly.
- In conjunction with Cavan Monaghan ETB, a wide range of computer classes are provided for adults in the Monaghan, Castleblayney, Carrickmacross and Clones branches, either through 52 branch Internet PCs or through the 26 laptops shared by the branches.

## Library Statistics 2014

- 234,540 Visitors to the 5 branch libraries
- 340,241 Items borrowed
- 10,046 Active Members of the library
- 36,385 Internet Sessions booked
- 8,773 WIFI connections made
- 783 Local History enquiries answered
- 400 Computers classes taught
- 2,953 Book requests answered
- 1,071 Library events organised, attended by 16,665

## Wi-Fi Service

The free public WIFI service continues to increase in popularity in our four larger branches, Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney and Clones. Demand for the service has grown steadily throughout the year with a total of 8,773 sessions booked, an increase of 49.2%.

## Outreach

In 2014 Monaghan County Library again managed to stage a surprisingly diverse and appealing range of Outreach events despite having no budget from which to fund it. This was achieved by concentrating mainly on low cost or no cost events, as well as successfully networking with neighbouring Library Authorities when sourcing authors, storytellers etc.

Events included;



- Children’s Book Festival, Summer Reading Challenge (735 participants in 2014), Bealtaine Festival, Fleadh ‘64, Heritage Week Events, World Book Day, Seachtain na Gaeilge, Clones Film Festival, Department of Social Protection Information Sessions (Jobs Week).
- **Classes.** Creative Writing, University of the Third Age, Adult Computer, English Language, Irish Language, Literacy, Driver Theory, National Council for the Blind IT Training Classes, BenefIT4 Digital Literacy Training Classes, National Learning Network Courses, Form Filling Sessions (ETB ), Arts and Crafts, Millinery Workshops, Silver Surfers.
- Lecture Series, Exhibitions. Parent and Toddler Group visits, School Class Visits, Author Talks, Storytelling Sessions, Nursing Home Visits, National Learning Network Groups visits for participants in TURAS, Fresh Start and Access courses. Open University Information Sessions. Engineers Week Information Sessions. Book Clubs, Sewing Club, Craft Afternoons, Film Club.

### **The National Strategy for Public Libraries 2013 – 2017**

2014 saw work begin on a number of the key objectives identified in the National Strategy. These included:

- Preparation for the migration of all library records to the new National Library Management System for all Library Authorities. The system will provide a single national shared library catalogue and a single National membership card. The new system will also facilitate a National tendering process for all stock. In addition a saving in maintenance over the present system is anticipated to be in the order of 70%.
- The procurement of an RFID Self Service Unit for Clones Branch Library. This is the first of the five branch libraries scheduled to introduce self service facilities over the next three years.

### **Erasmus + Project**

Monaghan County Library Services submitted a funding application in partnership with 6 EU countries in April 2014 under the EU Erasmus+ funding program. The service was been successful in securing funding for the proposed project, entitled ‘*LinkINjob: Job-hunting with the Help of Librarians*’. The Project Partners are Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania, Austria, Finland and Lithuania. The project will develop a training course for library staff working with the unemployed and will develop a program of learning activities for the unemployed to be rolled out in our branch libraries. The overall budget allocated to the project is **€108,224**. This includes project management costs, costs towards outputs, and training and travel costs. The first meeting of the group took place in Romania on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

### **Local History**

In 2014 the following resources were added to the Local History collection;

- Death Notices & Obituaries in The Northern Standard Newspaper 1936 – 1939
- Death Notices & Obituaries in The Monaghan Argus Newspaper 1954 – 1959
- Rossmore Estate Rental Book 1845 – 1853
- Monaghan County Infirmary Admittance Register 1858 – 1868
- Death Notices & Obituaries in The Farney Leader Newspaper 1908 – 1909
- Philadelphia Pennsylvania Death Certificates Index of County Monaghan natives 1803 – 1915
- Vaccination Register for Castleblayney area 1863 – 1927
- Selection of church records for the Aughnamullen & Tullycorbett area

**Local Community Development Programme**

Monaghan County Libraries launched an initiative with the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Libraries Development Unit, LGMA and Monaghan Integrated Development Ltd. to provide local access to third level courses on subjects such as Sociology, Psychology, Community Development and Local History.

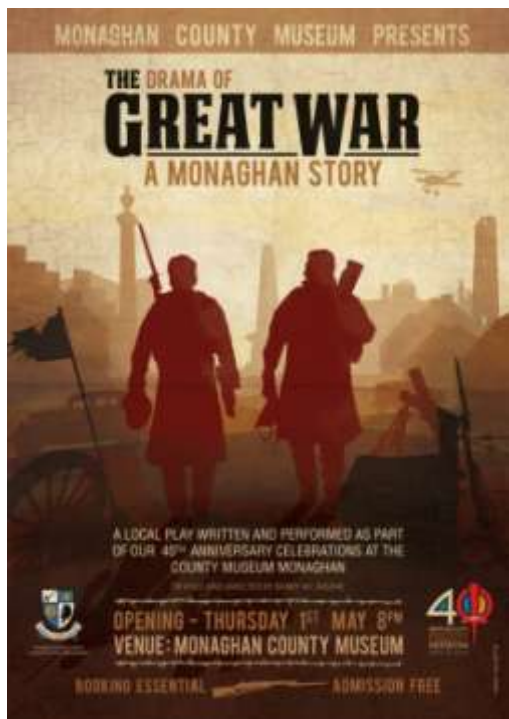
The 26 week course, which was completed in April 2014 in Clones Library was aimed at Unemployed People Under 25, people who have not previously completed a 3<sup>rd</sup> level course and participants currently in the NEET Target Group (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

**Library Partnership Project**

Monaghan County Library Service provided advice and assistance to the Tyrone Guthrie Centre at Annaghmakerrig, in the work they are undertaking on their substantial book collection. The centre, a residential workplace for artists, has accumulated almost 10,000 items. The collection includes very rare, out of print books, which have been acquired over a period of 150 years by the Moorhead, Power and Guthrie families. Lisa Blum-Braks, an exchange student from Leipzig University, Germany, working with Monaghan County Library Service, was assigned to work on the project compiling a new catalogue of records. The Library service will continue to work in partnership with the Centre on this and future projects.

# County Museum

## Celebrating 40 Years Serving the Community



Monaghan County Museum has enjoyed one of its most successful years to date in 2014. We celebrated 40 years of serving the community of Monaghan through a year-long series of events. We hosted a spring lecture series from February to April in association with the Friends of Monaghan County Museum, which saw capacity crowds at each event. We marked the beginning of World War I with a play based on archives in the museum called *The Drama of the Great War*. The play opened to a packed house of over 100 people and the subsequent workshops aimed at schools were completely oversubscribed. It is intended to develop this project further in the coming years. Our exhibition *'Castle Leslie – Between Two Worlds'* was extended due to popular demand and is now the most successful exhibition ever produced by the museum attracting over 13,000 visitors during its run.

## 40th Birthday Street Party

The museum's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday on September 27<sup>th</sup> was marked with a street party which was attended by an estimated crowd of 2,000 people. The museum's 40th anniversary exhibition *'The Treasures of Monaghan'* as well as our commemorative booklet *'Monaghan County Museum – A Museum of Memories 1974 – 2014'* were officially launched on the same day by Minister for Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys. At the launch the Chairman of Monaghan County Council, Cllr Pdraig McNally, stressed the need for a new museum building for the ever growing service. 2014 was a wonderful opportunity to look back on 40 years of the museum's history and justly celebrate the service's many achievements and remember too, the many challenges it has experienced in that time.



## **Strategic Management Plan 2014 – 2018**

### **A new building for a new service**

Monaghan County Museum's Strategic Management Plan 2014 – 2018 outlines a number of key aims and objectives, chief among them is the construction of a new purpose built museum. The museum's user numbers have risen by over 200% in the last decade and the museum's resources are stretched every year to produce a wide and varied programme of events and projects that can develop this audience even further. While our current home at 1-2 Hill Street, Monaghan Town, is a beautiful building and a good location, there is little or no scope to expand on the current site and the museum collection and service user volume has simply outgrown it. We envisage a new building and service that is embedded in the social and emotional spirit of the community of Monaghan, a place where you can go to learn and enjoy the rich history and cultural diversity of the area, but also as a centre for the community to meet and exchange ideas and develop new partnerships - a cultural and community landmark in Monaghan Town and a service that extends throughout the county.

## Arts Office

Monaghan County Council through its Arts Office supported Arts projects in the county through The **Arts Partners Grant** scheme. A total of **€55,500** was invested in 2014 in the projects listed below:

- **The Garage Theatre**, Monaghan Town
- **Clones Film Festival**
- **Muckno Mania**, Castleblayney
- **Castleblayney Arts & Resource Centre** (Iontas)
- **Patrick Kavanagh Weekend**, Inniskeen
- **Scoil Cheoil Na Botha**, Scotstown
- **Carrickmacross Festival**
- **Féile Patrick Byrne**, Carrickmacross
- **Castleblayney Drama Festival**



Separate to the above listed grants Monaghan County Council awarded both **The Garage Theatre** in Monaghan & the Iontas Theatre in Castleblayney (Arts well) €25,000 each towards their programming.

### **The Artists's studios**

The artist's studios has been secured in **The Old Post Office** in **Clones** under the stewardship of an Artists collective which has been set up by 2 professional Monaghan Artists. Funding was secured from LEADER in 2013, with the hope that this funding may continue.

### **The Market House**

The Market House is a unique venue and continues to host music event and exhibitions. It is now used by a variety of groups nearly every evening and at weekends, whether for rehearsals or workshops.

A major project run directly by the Arts office is the international "**Harvest Time Blues Festival**" which is held in September each year. It has become widely recognised now as one of the Top Blues festival in Europe. 2014 was the 19<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Festival which continues to grow, and is seen as a major cultural and tourist attraction in Ireland.

Continued assistance and support has been given to individual Artists e.g. writers, theatre practitioners, with visual Artists receiving grants from both the Arts Council and Culture Ireland, which ranged from travel assistance to material purchases and direct funding matched with secured arts council funding.



# Human Resources Management

The Human Resources Department supports Line Managers and Employees in achieving an efficient and effective delivery of Monaghan County Council's corporate and business objectives. It promotes a positive working environment, manages workforce planning, the training and development of staff, staff recruitment, is responsible for the delivery of statutory and non-statutory staff welfare policies and procedures, maintains stable industrial relations and works to create an equitable, consultative and supportive working environment within the Council.

## **HR, Payroll and Superannuation System (Core)**

In June 2014, the Municipal Districts of Carrickmacross-Castleblayney, Monaghan, and Ballybay-Clones were established and a major reorganisation and re-assignment of staff took place. The HR Section implemented the new staff structure on the Core System, which involved setting up new work groups and areas to ensure staff were assigned correctly within the revised structures.

Monaghan County Council successfully moved to the MyPay Shared Service in 2014. A project team, consisting of staff from HR and Finance, was established. Work commenced on the project on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2014 and Monaghan County Council went live with the first MyPay payroll on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

## **Staff Training and Development**

Monaghan County Council is committed to develop staff through a range of leadership development programmes, study assistance and training opportunities in order to embed into the organisation a performance culture that recognises, empowers and develops its staff to achieve their own and the Council's goals and objectives, overcome challenges, and lead within the Council. Training opportunities support many areas of the Council such as personal and operational performance and can contribute to employee welfare and satisfaction. In 2014, 3.63% of total payroll costs was spent on staff training and development and 3,806 training days were provided by external and internal trainers.

Health and Safety Training formed a considerable part of the 2014 Training Plan.

A broad spectrum of work related third level courses were undertaken by staff in the academic year 2013/2014. Monaghan County Council's commitment to training and staff development ensures that staff has the necessary skills and competencies to respond to the ongoing challenges of providing a high quality, customer focused and cost effective service.

## **Staff Recruitment**

Monaghan County Council is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to the provision of a work environment that is safe and supportive, where individuals treat each other with dignity and respect. The Human Resources Department processed applications for various positions during 2014. Vacancies were advertised in the local and/or national press and also on the Council website: [www.monaghan.ie](http://www.monaghan.ie).

Monaghan County Council continues to facilitate Internship Placements under the National Internship Scheme as a Host Organisation and facilitated a total of 9 interns in 2014.



**Gateway**

“Gateway”, launched in 2013, is a local authority placement scheme designed to provide short-term working opportunities for unemployed people. The work placements are a valuable route for participants who have been in receipt of job seekers allowance for a minimum of 22 months, to gain or update experience of the workplace, to learn new skills and to return to the routine of work. The scheme also assists the personal and social development of participants by providing short-term work opportunities with the objective of bridging the gap between unemployment and re-entering the workforce. At the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014 Monaghan County Council had 33 people employed under this scheme.

**Attendance Management**

The percentage of working days lost to absenteeism reduced from 4.97% in 2013 to 3.77% at the end of 2014. The aim is to reduce absenteeism to 3.5% or below by the end of 2015.

**Industrial Relations**

The policy of the Human Resources Department is to foster good industrial relations at corporate level and this has continued during 2014. The establishment of the three Municipal Districts was the biggest change in Local Government in the county since the foundation of the state. The Council availed of the opportunity to change, reform and reposition staff and resources, to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead. Every effort to resolve staff issues, at the earliest possible stage, was made in an open and co-operative manner with Trade Unions.

As resources reduce, both human and financial, the Council has prioritised essential services in the assignment of staff and it is considered that increased productivity has been achieved.

**Retirements**

In 2014 a total of fifteen employees, including four Fire fighters left the service of the Council. This included 5 staff who retired under the Voluntary Redundancy Scheme and one staff member who was redeployed to another Local Authority. Management and staff of the Council would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the retirees for their years of dedicated service and commitment to Monaghan County Council.

**Work Life Balance Initiatives**

74 staff availed of a number of work life balance schemes during the year 2014.



# Council Committees

## Corporate Policy Group (CPG)

Cllr Pdraig Mc Nally, Cathaoirleach  
Cllr Robbie Gallagher  
Cllr Brian Mc Kenna  
Cllr Ciara Mc Phillips  
Cllr Pat Treanor

## Strategic Policy Committees (SPC)

### Housing, Fire & Civil Protection SPC (11 Members)

Cllr Ciara Mc Phillips, (Chair)  
Cllr P.J. O'Hanlon  
Cllr Hugh Mc Elvaney  
Cllr Cathy Bennett  
Cllr Seamus Treanor  
Cllr Colm Carthy

Barry Mc Carron (Environment Sector)  
Marc Mullen (Community/Voluntary Sector)  
Fiona McCaffrey-Jones (Community/Voluntary Sector)  
Teresa Carolan (Community/Voluntary Sector)  
Tom Freeman (Community/ Voluntary Sector)  
Business Pillar - Vacant

### Economic Development & Enterprise Support SPC (11 Members)

Cllr Pat Treanor (Chair)  
Cllr PJ O'Hanlon  
Cllr Seamus Coyle  
Cllr Sean Conlon  
Cllr Aidan Campbell  
Cllr Seamus Treanor

Aidan Quigley (Trade Union)  
Colm Mc Bride (Development/ Construction)  
Michael Connolly (Environment Sector)  
Joe Rudden (Farming Sector)  
Orla Cassin (Community/ Voluntary Sector)  
Business Pillar - Vacant

### Environment & Transport SPC (11 Members)

Cllr Robbie Gallagher (Chair)  
Cllr Noel Keelan  
Cllr Pdraig McNally  
Cllr David Maxwell

Cllr Cathy Bennett  
Cllr Paudge Connolly

Kathleen Ward (Farming)  
Jean Rosney (NFGWS)  
Conan Connolly (Environment Pillar)  
Colm Lynch (Trade Union)  
Paddy Sherry (Community/ Voluntary)  
Business Pillar - Vacant

**Social, Cultural & Community (12 Members)**

Cllr Brian Mc Kenna (Chair)  
Cllr Eugene Bannigan  
Cllr Seamus Coyle  
Cllr Paudge Connolly  
Cllr Hugh Mc Elvaney  
Cllr Jackie Crowe

Anja Nohlen (Environment Pillar)  
Fiona Keenan-O'Brien (Community/ Voluntary Sector)  
Noel Carney (Community/ Cultural Sector)  
Henry Blackburn (Community/ Voluntary Sector)  
Ursula Mc Kenna (Community/ Voluntary Sector)  
Lorraine Cunningham (Community / Voluntary Sector)

**Twinning Committee**

Cllr Padraig Mc Nally  
Cllr Aidan Campbell  
Cllr Sean Conlon  
Cllr Pat Treanor  
Cllr Seamus Treanor

## Number of Meetings held during 2014

Council meetings	13
Adjourned Council meetings	2
Council Budget meetings	2
Special Council meetings	1
Municipal District of Monaghan	6
Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones	7 (Inclusive of one Special Meeting)
Municipal District of Carrickmacross-Castleblayney	6
Joint Policing Committee	2
Planning SPC	3
Rural Water Programme meetings	2
CPG meetings	8
North Monaghan Area Committee	1
Clones Area Committee	1
Carrickmacross Area Committee	1
Traveller Accommodation Committee	2
Coiste Gaelige	2
Audit Committee	3
Heritage Forum	5
Landfill Sub Committee	1
Monaghan Leisure Centre	2
EirGrid Sub Committee	1
Muckno Development Committee	4

## Seminars & Conferences attended by Members in 2014

Title	Venue	No's Attended
Political Reform	Bewleys Hotel, Newlands Cross, Dublin 22	3
ICBAN	Creighton Hotel, Clones	2
Training Seminar for Councillors	Carlton Shearwater Hotel, Marina Point, Ballinasloe, Galway	1
Celtic Conferences – Branding in Political Elections	Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, West Cork	6
TJK Conference Ltd.	Scots Limerick, Ashbourne Avenue, South Circular Rd, Limerick	2
Training Seminar for Councillors – Media Skills for Councillors	Clifden Station House Hotel, Clifden, Galway	2
TGR Seminars – How Councillors can access Grant Aid for Communities	Bunratty Castle Hotel, Co. Clare	2
Celtic Conferences – Doing More with Less	Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, West Cork	2
LAMA	Four Seasons Hotel, Monaghan	5
Association of County & City Councillors	Slieve Russell Hotel, Cavan	2
AMAI	Great Northern Hotel, Bundoran, Co. Donegal	2
Training seminar for Councillors – Seanad Reform & the Councillors	The Millrace Hotel, Bunclody, Wexford	5
Clare Tourist Council	Falls Hotel, Ennistymon, Clare	4
25 <sup>th</sup> Colmcille Winter School – The Irish Economy Post Bailout	The Colmcille Heritage Centre, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal	3
Association of Irish Regions	Kilronan Castle, Ballyfarnon, Co. Roscommon	1

Training Seminar for Councillors – Budgets & Financing of LA’s	Talbot Hotel, Wexford	7
Training Seminar for Councillors – Alternative Energy & LG	The Falls Hotel, Ennistymon, Clare	3
Training Seminar for Councillors – Media skills for Councillors	The Great Northern Hotel, Bundoran, Co. Donegal	2
BG Seminarz – Value for money in LG	Clanree Hotel, Letterkenny, Donegal	3
TJK Conference – Role of Ombudsman	Scotts Limerick, Ashbourne Avenue, South Circular Road, Limerick	2
Ace Training – Meeting Management principles & best practice	Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Cork	3
Dundalk Chamber – In Business for Business	Ballymacscanlon House Hotel, Dundalk, Louth	1
Training Seminar for Councillors – Tourism in Local Communities	Talbot Hotel, Wexford	1
Ace Training – MABS & the Insolvency Services of Ireland	The Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Cork	1
BG Seminarz – Crime & it’s impact on Quality of Life	Quality Hotel, Killarney, Kerry	1
Ace Training – Chambers of Commerce Building Business	Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Cork	1

Ace Training – Waste Management Legislation & WEEE	Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, West Cork	1
The Public Procurement Directives Conference	Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire, Dublin	1
BG Seminarz – Strategic Environment Assessment	Clanree Hotel, Letterkenny, Donegal	2
Centre for Regeneration & Development	University College, Dublin	1
Training Seminar for Councillors – Local Government Act	The Great Northern Hotel, Bundoran, Donegal	1
Training for Councillors – Elected members Induction seminar	Clanree Hotel, Letterkenny, Donegal	8
Training for Councillors – LG Budget & Audit Processes	Nuremore Hotel, Carrickmacross, Monaghan	11
LAMA Seminar	Inishowen Gateway Hotel, Buncrana, Co. Donegal	13
AILG – Housing	Hotel Kilmore, Cavan	9
AILG – Annual Conference	Hotel Kilmore, Cavan	7
AILG – Planning	Great Northern Hotel, Bundoran, Co. Donegal	11
IPA – Accountability & Responsibility in the Public Sector	IPA, Landsdowne Road, Dublin	1
Nuclear Free Local Authorities All Ireland Forum	Dublin City Hall, Dublin	1
Intercultural & Diversity Education Centre	Gort Road, Ennis, Clare	6

Expenses incurred by non members of the Council during 2014 amounted to circa €566.00.

Total payments (including travel & subsistence for Elected members) incurred for conferences, seminars and training amounted to circa €65,000, €12,000 approximately of which was payment for training/conference fees.



# Ballybay Clones Municipal District

## Clones Erne East Sports Project – “The Peace Link”

The President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, officially opened the iconic €7.8 million EU PEACE III funded cross -community sports complex, called the ‘Peace Link’ in Clones on 26th September 2014.



Now completed, the project has transformed a twenty acre site at Liseggerton in Clones into a state-of-the-art multi-use sports and recreational facility that will

be able to host major sporting competitions. Following an extensive public consultation held last year, it was decided to call the new facility the ‘Peace Link’, which will ‘Help Build Peace through Sport’. The core objective of the facility is to encourage greater levels of positive cross-community engagement through a shared interest in sport. It will also provide much needed cross-border access to high quality sporting facilities for people living across County Fermanagh and County Monaghan.

## Operational Structure of the Peace Link

This project is run by a community led company (Clones Erne East Community Sports Facility Management Company Ltd (CEESCSFMC)) who are appointed to manage and operate the facility subject to the CEESCSFMC being formally added as a sub partner to the Letter of Offer/contract with the SEUPB.

SEUPB have also confirmed their acceptance of the Councils proposal for CEESCSFMC to deliver the Building Relations Through Sport (BRTS) programme.

The community led company are obliged to:

- operate and maintain the facility within agreed parameters
- deliver the SEUPB BRTS programme (this requires the employment of an integrated sports officer, over four years
- produce monthly accounts for the Councils review
- Subsequent to the application of SEUPB (if any) to any operational deficit and if any such operational deficit remains, Monaghan County Council shall pay this deficit provided that the Councils liability for such deficit shall not exceed €50,000 per annum
- CEESCSFMC are fully responsible for discharge of all future water/waste water charges

## Peace Link Staff

The Peace Link is now operational. Feral Corrigan has been appointed Facility Manager, along with ten new staff members. As visitor numbers increase it is envisaged that the number of staff will increase.



## Monaghan Municipal District

Some of the works undertaken by Monaghan MD during the year included:

- Replacement of Killygoan Playpark
- Provision of assistance towards the Country Music Festival, Taste of Monaghan, Monaghan Has It, St. Patricks Day Parade, Blues Festival, and Monaghan Museum's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations
- Hosting of delegation of Chilean members of Clann Mc Kenna
- Upkeep of the Greenway project, including provision of trailhead signage
- Taking in charge of numerous housing estates
- Erection and operation of Christmas lights
- Landscaping of Coolshannagh roundabout
- Surface dressing on both local and regional roads

### Monaghan Leisure Centre

The Leisure Complex is situated on the Clones Road, Monaghan and is the largest health & fitness centre in the county. Facilities include a six lane, 25 meter pool, Sauna, Steam room, spa pool, fully equipped gym, including a wide range of cardiovascular and resistance equipment as well as an extensive free weights section, 2 specialist fitness studios, and 2 outdoor tennis courts. It is operated under a licence agreement by Coral Leisure Ltd. 2014 was a special year for Monaghan Leisure Complex as it was awarded the Ireland Active White Flag Awards at Gold Standard for the second year running.

A Leisure Complex Committee consisting of members of Monaghan County Council monitor its operation through meetings with the management company on a quarterly basis. This committee is advised by a Consultative User Group consisting of representatives of a wide variety of groups and clubs who use the complex.

The Leisure Complex continues to develop a close relationship with the Monaghan Sports Partnership Office to organise programs that increase the number of people participating in sport, exercise and physical activity in County Monaghan. Programmes that target people with disabilities, minority groups and older people were facilitated in 2014 such as aqua aerobics class for older women. These classes and fitness programs are organised at convenient times for these participants.

The facility caters for schools, clubs and special needs groups, both north and south of the border. In 2014 a number of swimming galas were held at the complex in conjunction with Swim Ulster and the local Sliabh Beagh Swimming Club. The facility has also recently introduced inter school swimming galas, the first of its kind in the county. These galas attract significant numbers of visitors to the county from throughout the Ulster region and further afield and allow both competitive and non competitive swimmers the chance to participate in swimming gala's.

During the year the complex in co-operation with the councils Environment section engaged in many council led initiatives among them the STEM Project (Sustainable Together through Environmental

Management) - a two year project, part financed by the European Union's INTERREG IVA Cross Border Programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body. This programme has helped the centre to reduce its energy costs and promote the centre as role model for good environmental practice in the community.

In 2014 the Council carried out significant capital investment, purchasing 21 Spin bikes for the spin studio and installing a modulating skid boiler system to replace the existing 400kw LPG boiler – this has significantly reduced LPG consumption at the complex. All of these improvements should serve to prolong the life of the centre and ensure that it caters to the needs of a broad spectrum of users.

## Carrickmacross–Castleblayney Municipal District

	CMX CBY MD	% OF COUNTY
<b>POPULATION</b>	<b>21,413</b>	35.4%
<b>AREA</b>	354 KM2	27.8%
<b>ROAD LENGTH</b>	758KM	30.2%
<b>HOUSING</b>	454 UNITS	33.4%

Carrickmacross-Castleblayney Municipal District undertook the following projects in 2014:

- Completion of Extension to Shirley House Lane Car-Park
- Realignment of Kingscourt Road Junction, Carrickmacross
- Lisanisk Nature Trail
- Maintenance to ‘Monaghan Way’ walking trail
- Castleblayney By-Pass (2 +1) NRA Contract Ongoing
- Carrickmacross / Castleblayney hedgecutting contracts
- Cloughvalley MUGA – Contract Award
- Road Restoration at Bree, Castleblayney
- Palladine Fencing at the Courthouse in Castleblayney
- St. Maeloids Pig (Percent for Arts Piece) on Castleblayney By-Pass
- Cloughvalley SkatePark – Contract Award
- Low Cost Safety Improvements - Farney Street / Convent Hill – Loop Control Traffic System & Oram Village
- Commenced Restoration of Gates to Hope Castle
- Carparking Area on Main Street, Carrickmacross
- Magheross Church – Conservation Survey – Advance Works
- Public Lighting – Inniskeen & Ashling Grove, Castleblayney



# General Information

## Administrative Headquarters

Monaghan County Council

County Offices

The Glen

Monaghan

**Telephone:** 047-30500

**Fax:** 047-82739      **Email:** info@monaghancoco.ie

Office Hours – Monday to Friday, 9.15 a.m. – 1.00 p.m. and 1.30 p.m. – 5.15 p.m.

Offices closed on Bank Holidays

Section	Tel. Number
Main Telephone Number	047-30500
Chief Executive's Secretary	047-30546
Director of Services	047-30551 / 30523
Human Resources	047-30586
Register of Electors	047 - 30551
Accounts	047-30589
Water Services	047-30504/ 30571
Planning	047-30595/30532
Housing	047-30529
Housing Loans & Grants	047-30527
Housing Construction	047-30587
Roads	047-30597
Fire & Building Control	047-30521
Economic & Community Services	047-73719
Monaghan MD	047-73777
Local Enterprise Office	047 71818

<b>Address</b>	<b>Tel. Number</b>	<b>Office Hours (Monday to Friday)</b>
Motor Tax Office Market Street, Monaghan	047 – 81175	9.30 a.m. –3.00 p.m. (open to public) 9.30 a.m. – 4.45 p.m. (office hours) Office closed on Bank Holidays
Monaghan County Library '98 Avenue Clones	047 – 74700	Individual office hours for each branch can be obtained from the County Library
Monaghan Arts Office, Hill Street, Monaghan Market House	047 – 38162/38158  047 - 71113 (Fax)	9.15 a.m.– 5.15 p.m.
County Museum, Hill St. Monaghan	047 82928	9.15 a.m.– 5.15 p.m.
Carrickmacross- Castleblayney MD Civic Offices Riverside Road Carrickmacross, Monaghan	042-9661236	9.15 a.m.– 5.15 p.m.
Environment Section Carrickmacross Civic Offices Civic Offices Riverside Road Carrickmacross, Monaghan	042-9661240	9.15 a.m.– 5.15 p.m.
Ballybay-Clones MD Monaghan County Council Monaghan Street, Clones, Co. Monaghan	047-51018	9.15 a.m.– 5.15 p.m.