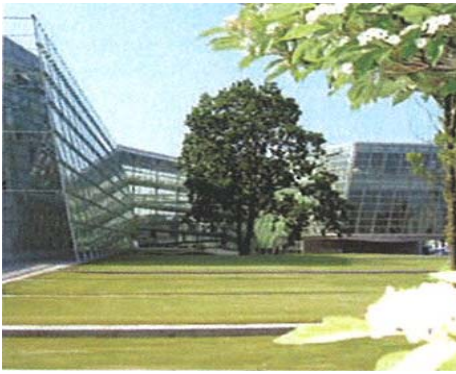




# NAAS TOWN COUNCIL



# ANNUAL



# REPORT



# 2009





## Naas Town Council Annual Report 2009



Naas, County Kildare's county town that straddles the canal in the heart of the county has a population in excess of 20,000 and was previously the seat of the Kings of Leinster. The town sits just off one of the country's main arterial routes that gives citizens easy access to the Capital and while providing local attractions such as horse racing, motor racing and golf. Naas has managed to retain its unique character with valued heritage and attractive built environment while embracing the challenges of an austere economic climate and constantly seeking to build strong inclusive communities that promote a sense of place and belonging.

### Naas Town Council - Elected Members and the Executive



Naas Town Council has nine elected members who meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month in the Town Hall to decide policy and conduct the business of the Council. Meetings are open to the press and public. This Council is currently serving a term of five years having been elected in June 2009. Councillors Callaghan, Scully and Moore are also Members of Kildare County Council. Naas Town Council Members are also represented on a number of local community groups as well as the County Council Strategic Policy Committees.



**Back row;** Cllr. Alan O Kelly, Cllr. Darren Scully, Cllr. Willie Callaghan, Cllr Ger Dunne, Cllr Seamie Moore

**Front row;** Cllr. Emer Mc Daid, Mayor Pat Clear, Cllr. Anne Breen, Cllr. Riognagh Bracken

### **Naas Joint Policing Committee**

The Naas Joint Policing Committee was established in November 2009 comprising of nineteen Members including the nine Naas Town Council Members, Three Members of the Oireachtas, three Community and Voluntary sector representatives, two Garda Officers and two Council Officials. The Community representatives were appointed following a public notice seeking expressions of interest from the community and voluntary sector.

The Joint Policing Committee provides a forum where the Local Authority and the senior Garda Officers responsible for the policing of the town, with the participation of Oireachtas Members and community interests, can consult, discuss and make recommendations on matters affecting the policing of the area.

Further details can be obtained from the JPC's website <http://kildarejointpolicing.ie>



## Naas Town Council Annual Report 2009

---

Naas Town Council has strived over the last year to ensure that the demands for an increased level of service could be maintained while meeting the challenges of the economic downturn and the resulting financial and human resource restrictions. Naas Town Council acknowledge the co-operation and support received from Kildare County Council, Government Agencies, Commercial sectors and the local community in maintaining Council services. The following report will take a look at the progress made over the last year by Naas Town Council in the provision of services and the promotion and development of the Town.

### Budget

The population of Naas has increased considerably over recent years and this increase in population has given rise to greater expectations for projects to be delivered by the Council and a higher standard in service provision. Previous budgets for Naas Town Council would have provided for increases in services and new Work Programme Initiatives being developed year on year. However in 2009 the Council had to recognise the economic climate in which the Council operated had changed considerably and the 2009 Budget reflected this reality.

The 2009 Budget provided for a total expenditure of €11,212,412 and income of €3,528,705. The allocation from the Local Government fund was €1,533,822 leaving a balance of €6,149,885 to be levied from Commercial Rates requiring an annual rate on valuation of 69.14 which represented an increase of 1.8% on the 2008 rate.

The Capital Programme report for the three-year period 2009 – 2011 was brought before the Members early in 2009 with anticipated expenditure of €51 million euro. The sources of capital funding – government grants, valuations on proceeds from the prospective sale of assets and development contributions had significantly reduced on previous years and the contracted funding base was reflected in the planned Capital Programme which had been halved from the previous Capital Programme brought before the Members.

## Naas Town Council Annual Report 2009

### Projects

2009 was a challenging year for the commencement of projects by Naas Town Council for the Town and the following is a brief synopsis of their progress:

#### Naas Heritage and History Trail

The Historic Town Trails for Naas was officially launched in September 2009. A total of five different trails starting at the Town Hall have been established that help focus visitors' attention on the historic significance of Naas with the information boards and signage providing a comprehensive source of guidance for visitors and townspeople alike seeking out information on the history of our town. The aim was to maximise the tourism potential of Naas as a Historic Town and enhance our visitors' overall experience. Funding was provided by Naas Town Council with support from Fáilte Ireland.



#### Naas Wildlife & Habitat Information Boards

In recognition of the fact that Naas is one of the few towns of its size with a large diversification of habitats in its lakes, streams, parks and wooded areas the Town Council approved the production of a series of Wildlife & Habitat information boards around the town. Fourteen of these Naas Wildlife and Habitat Information boards located in around the lakes area and the Canal were erected in the last quarter of 2009.



## Naas Town Council Annual Report 2009

---

### **Corban's Lane/Friary Road – Road Improvement Scheme**

The Members approved the Corban's Lane/Friary Road- Road Improvement scheme in June 2008 which would involve considerable improvements to the roads and footpaths in the vicinity of the new Naas shopping centre at Corban's Lane. The Scheme was appealed and a decision has yet to be made by An Bord Pleanala.

### **Naas Southern Interceptor Sewer**

The Members of Naas Town Council approved the Part 8 Public Consultation Process for proposals to construct two pumping stations at the Ballymore Road and the Blessington Road as part of the Naas Southern Interceptor Sewer project. These pumping stations assist in transferring foul water flows from the catchment to the existing Osberstown Waste Water Treatment Plant. Both pumping stations were commissioned early in 2009.

### **Universal Access Naas Town Hall**

The public consultation process for the delivery of a universal access to Naas Town Hall commenced on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2009. Naas Town Council procured the services of McCarthy O'Hora Architects to put together draft plans for consideration and following a detailed assessment the final draft was decided on and the plans were placed on public display with submissions invited until the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2010.



### **Lakes Dredging Project**

Major dredging works on the three lakes at Fairgreen/Craddockstown are required to sustain the future use and functionality of the lakes as both a wildlife habitat and sustainable drainage system. Naas Town Council allocated funding in 2009 as well as 2010 towards the project. It is proposed to work closely with the Heritage Officer of Kildare County Council in relation to ensuring that the works are planned and delivered in an environmentally friendly way.



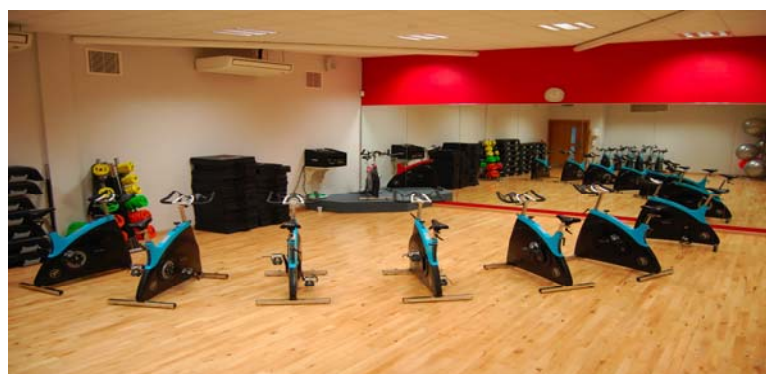
## Naas Town Council Annual Report 2009

### New Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre



The new state of the art swimming pool with a sauna/steam room, fitness suite and aerobic studio at Caragh Road was opened to the public in early 2009 and has received a glowing reception from all in terms of the building design and functionality. The official opening was performed by Minister Cullen, T.D. on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2009.

Naas Town Council contributed €2.5 million towards the provision of this new state of the art facility. Kildare Sports and Leisure Facilities Ltd. operates the pool on behalf of Kildare County Council.



### Graffiti Removal

Naas Town Council operates its own graffiti removal machine. In addition to removing graffiti this machine is also used to power wash public areas and remove gum. In 2009 Naas Town Council's priority was to tackle graffiti in public areas however the Town Council also worked with Resident Associations in tackling graffiti in private estates by providing graffiti removal kits to Residents Associations.

### Naas Citizens Information centre

Naas Town Council undertook improvement works to the Old Motor Tax Office on Basin Street in order to facilitate the lease of the ground floor to Naas Citizens Information centre. The works were completed in September 2009 and the Naas Citizens Information Centre is operating four days a week.

### Festival Fun

#### Family Fun Day

Naas Town Council hosted a fun filled Family Day on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> August with entertainment provided by a number of local groups including Jenny Brady School of Dance, Naas Panthers Gymnastic Displays and the Bui Bolg Puppets and Jousting Show. Tricky Tricksters, the pet corner, face painting, balloon making and bouncy castles proved hugely popular with younger children while the Harley Davison Bike Display and vehicles from the Defense Forces, Gardai and Fire Brigade were popular with parents. The event was organised by the Naas Town Council Festival's Committee with co-operation received from Kildare Civil Defence and Kildare County Council.



#### Easter Parade

One of Kildare's biggest annual events is the Naas Easter Parade. Proving its widespread appeal, thousands of people viewed the parade of around 50 entries that came from both local and visiting community and sporting groups as well as local businesses. The Parade is organised by Willie Callaghan with Naas Town Council supporting the event with operational and financial assistance.



## Naas Town Council Annual Report 2009

---

### Twinning in Naas

The twinning function in Naas is carried out by the Naas Twinning Group with support from Naas Town Council. Naas is twinned with five towns, Allaire in France, Dillingen in Germany, St. David's in Wales, Casalattico in Italy and Omaha in the United States.

It was a busy year for the Twinning Group with two visits from Dillingen during the year, one at Easter, led by their Mayor, Frank Kunz, when their band participated in our town's Easter parade and another visit in August when a group participated in a tennis tournament in the Naas Lawn Tennis Club. Another group, including a junior rugby team, from St. David's also visited Naas at Easter. A further group of Scouts from Omaha visited Naas in late October who were hosted by the Naas Scout Group.

A group travelled from Naas to Allaire and Redon for the Fête de Châtaignes Festival in October where the group were received by the Mayors of Allaire and Payac. The trip was a great success with the Nás na Ríogh Set Dancers performing at the Fête in Redon. The trip also included a brief visit to Nantes.

### Planning and Development for Naas

#### Review of the Naas Town Development Plan

## NAAS TOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2011-2017

---

In accordance with Sections 11 and 12 of the Planning & Development Act 2000, Naas Town Council commenced the review of the Naas Town Development Plan in May 2009. Work will continue on the preparation of the plan throughout 2010 until its final adoption in early 2011. The Development Plan sets out the Council's strategy for the planning and development of Naas and looks to develop the economic, cultural and environmental assets of the Town.

#### Pre Planning Meetings

Pre Planning meetings are mainly designed to deal with prospective applicants for large scale residential or commercial developments. Naas Town Council held 19 pre-planning meetings in



## Naas Town Council Annual Report 2009

---

2009 and it is the intention of the Council to continue this practice as it has both benefits for the organisation and the applicant in ensuring Naas is developed appropriately and in accordance with the Naas Development Plan 2005-2011.

### **Planning Applications**

Naas Town Council received ninety-eight valid planning applications in 2009. Permission was granted for eighty-six applications and permission was refused for ten applications. Seventeen appeals were determined by An Bord Pleanála with eleven being confirmed and six being reversed.

### **Planning Enforcement and Prosecutions**

Naas Town Council received twenty complaints of unauthorised development in 2009 an increase of 25% on the 2008 figure. Eighteen warning letters were issued with one enforcement notice served for unauthorised development.

### **Development Contribution Scheme**

The current scheme was adopted by Naas Town Council in March 2004. Its purpose is to clearly identify the manner in which development contributions are levied and how the amounts collected are spent. The scheme operated for a seven year period and will be reviewed in 2011.

### **Derelict Sites 2009**

Naas currently is investigating fifty sites under Derelict Sites Legislation. Naas has two properties listed on the Derelict Sites Register at the end of 2009 having removed one following improvement works.

### **Development Control**

Considerable progress is being made in the area of Taking in Charge. The Town Council took eleven estates in charge in 2009 with progress being made on an additional twenty seven.

## **The Environment & Waste Management**

### **Litter Management Plan**

The Litter Management Plan adopted in 2008 sets out Naas Town Council's objectives to prevent and control litter as well as measures to encourage public awareness of the litter



## Naas Town Council Annual Report 2009

---

problem, with particular emphasis on educational and information strategies aimed at young people. The plan includes information on;

- existing litter prevention and control measures being carried out by the Council
- the policies and objectives of the Council in relation to the prevention and control of litter
- litter prevention and control activities being carried out by agencies other than the Council
- recycling and recovery facilities provided for public use
- the Council's enforcement of the Litter Pollution Act 1997.

### Waste Disposal

The refuse collection service in Naas is provided by private operators who are licensed by Kildare County Council. Naas Town Council is responsible for 4 recycling centres at the following locations.

- Fairgreen
- Ballycane Church Car Park
- Áras Chill Dara
- Tesco Shopping centre

### Anti Litter Committee

Naas has a proactive Anti Litter Committee who is committed to improving the appearance of Naas, creating greater awareness and tackling areas of the town prone to litter. Street sweeping in the town continues to take place 7 days a week and public areas such as the Monread District Park and the Lakes area are swept and cleaned 3 times a week.

The Council also continues to actively work with the Tidy Towns Group and Residents Associations in tackling litter in the town and in presenting the town in its best appearance. Naas Town Council in collaboration with Naas Tidy Towns Committee held its "Spring Clean-Up Week" from 4<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> April. "The Big Clean Up" also took place from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> of November 2009. The Council supported both campaigns through the provision of bags, gloves and litter-pickers and also assisted in the collection and disposing of organised litter collections. Residents Associations interested in Graffiti Removal Kits were provided with them in late 2009



## Naas Town Council Annual Report 2009

---

and Pooper Bag Dispensing Units will be given out in early 2010. Both of these initiatives were funded by NTC and were provided free of charge to the interested parties. Naas received a bronze medal in the National Tidy Towns Competition for the level of improvements shown in the Town.

### **Enforcement & Fines**

Our Environment Department operate an environmental complaints database whereby all complaints are logged for report and an appropriate action assigned. In 2009 we received 251 complaints and all 251 cases were investigated. Following investigation appropriate action whether through statutory notices or warning letters was taken. Naas Town Council took in approx €8.200 in Litter Fines in 2009. The Council also now operate a “Name and Shame” Campaign where convicted offenders are publicly named in the local press.

### **Education and Awareness**

Naas has four Community Wardens who champion the Council's fight against Litter. Naas Community Wardens operate a Litter Education and Awareness Programme in the schools that has been very successful.

The Community Wardens also provide an essential link between the Town Council and the Community. While one of their key roles is the enforcement of the Town's pay parking system and the Litter Pollution Act, they also liaise with Residents Associations, the Tidy Towns Group, the local Gardai and businesses.

### **Parks, Playing Facilities & Playgrounds**

To date Naas Town Council has provided two playgrounds in Naas located at Monread and Ballycane. The range of play equipment caters for children of different age groups. Naas Town Council has also made available playing pitches at Monread Park and Ballycane.

### **Housing**

The Housing function of Local Authorities has developed over the years. While we are often considered accommodation providers, the Council now has a greater role in developing the life of housing estates. Naas Town Council at the end of 2009 had a housing stock of 321 houses that include a mix of single and family type accommodation. Naas has a total number of 409 on



## Naas Town Council Annual Report 2009

---

its Social Housing List as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2009. The breakdown of applicants according to need is as follows:

4 bedroom accommodation –	28
3 bedroom accommodation –	104
2 bedroom accommodation –	142
1 bedroom accommodation –	135

### **Future Developments/ Affordable Housing / Part V**

Under Part V, developers are obliged to set aside 20% of their development for the purposes of social and affordable housing. This 20% can be determined in terms of land, units or in monetary terms. The downturn in the economic environment has had an adverse affect on planning applications in Naas. Naas Town Council has however continued to enter into discussions with developers on a number of Planning Applications to which Part V Social and Affordable Housing applies.

### **Dealing with Anti Social Behaviour**

Managing Local Authority Housing has become more challenging from a range of perspectives, in particular problems arising from anti-social behaviour. Naas Town Council is proactive in their approach to anti social behaviour and proceedings are pending on one case at the end of 2009. It is expected that this case will be before the courts early in 2010. Naas Town Council's Tenant Liaison Officer deals with tenant complaints on reports of anti-social behaviour. The Housing Staff are also involved in pre-tenancy training for new tenants.

Under the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 the definition of anti-social behaviour has been extended to cover graffiti and damage to property. The Council are taking the opportunity to review the Anti Social Behaviour Policy.

### **Rental Accommodation Scheme**

The Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) is a new initiative introduced to cater for the accommodation needs of persons who are in receipt of rent supplement, normally for more than 18 months, and who have a long-term housing need. The scheme does not apply to asylum seekers or other non-nationals who do not have leave to remain in the State permanently, students and persons in receipt of rent supplement as a "back to work" incentive. The RAS Unit in Kildare County Council is implementing the scheme for Kildare County Council, Naas Town Council and Athy Town Council. The scheme was introduced to the Naas area in



## Naas Town Council Annual Report 2009

conjunction with Kildare County Council on 15 January 2007 and has provided eleven units in that time. There are an additional twenty-two properties pending inspection.

### Private Rented Dwellings

New minimum standards for private rented dwelling were introduced through the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2009. The most significant changes to the legislation are the introduction of strengthened sanctions and a new definition of what constitutes a 'proper state of structural repair' for the purpose of the Housing (Standards for rented Houses) Regulations 2008. Complaints received by the Council will be referred to the Environmental Health Officer's (EHO) offices for investigation and subsequent action can be taken on foot of the findings of the EHO.

## Roads

### Improvement Works

A number of improvement works were carried out on the Naas roads and footpaths in 2009 at a cost of €510,261

Location	Works Description
Monread Pump Station	Wall
Hazelmere Estate	Remove some overgrown trees and replace damaged footpaths
Kingsfurze Avenue	Footpath outside no. 71
Ballymore Road	Continue footpath as far as roundabout on eastern side of road
Ballykane Hill	Patch repair works.
Fishery Lane	Patch repair works followed by regulation and re-surfacing.
Canal Road	Patch repair works from Abbey bridge to Thandy's Bridge
St. Michael's Terrace	Construct one-way and widen footpath
Tipper Road	Replace existing sub-standard footpath from Blessington Road to Roselawn
Monread Avenue	Continue footpath from Kerdiff to Don na Riogh



## Naas Town Council Annual Report 2009

Harbour Area	Boundary fencing at rear of Gogartys
Sallins Road	Drainage improvement works fronting Hollywood Park
<b>Special Block Grant</b>	
Tipper Road	Patch repair works followed by regulation and re-surfacing. Plus install kerbed footpath alongside.
Monread Road	New footpath adjacent Woodies, and replace footpath fronting the Ambulance Centre
St. Conleths Place	Remove trees and replace damaged footpaths
Ashgrove Estate	Remove some overgrown trees and replace damaged footpaths
Hillside Drive	Re-surfacing fronting 9, 23, 22, 20
<b>Footpath Programme</b>	
Monread Heights	Diagonal footpath across Monread Park
St. Conleths Place	Install dedicated parking on existing green area
Lakelands Estate	Remove overgrown trees and replace footpaths in two sections of the estate
Mountain View Estate	Remove some overgrown trees and replace damaged footpaths
New Row	replace footpath at rear of flower beds
Sarto Road	replace section of footpath between 36 - 37
Ashgrove Estate	Replace kerbing parallel to Monread Avenue at Ashgrove Avenue
Craddockstown Road	Remove existing parking area fronting hospital and provide footpath in place. Just south of Hospital entrance.
Lakes Area	Provide Railings on Pedestrian Bridge
St. Corbans Cemetery	Provide new footpath adjacent Old Church
Woodlands Estate	Remove some overgrown trees and replace damaged footpaths



## Naas Town Council Annual Report 2009

Regional Roads	
Dublin Road	Footpath fronting Heallys
Dublin Road	Remove existing pull-in area fronting The Gallops and replace with footpath
Main Street South	Re-place footpath outside Kalu
Main Street South	Replace the existing footpath from Court Hotel to Murthagh's Corner
Traffic Safety Measures	
Dublin Road	Re-align Maudlins Avenue junction so as to prevent right turns onto Dublin Road

### Pay Parking

The Council undertook a review of the Pay Parking Byelaws at the end of 2009. The draft byelaws went on public display during the period Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2009 to Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2010 with submissions invited up to the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2010.

### St. Michael's Terrace One-Way System

Naas Town Council approved the one way system at St. Michael's Terrace at the November monthly meeting after the proposals were on public display from 6<sup>th</sup> August 2009 to 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2009 and submissions were invited up to the 17<sup>th</sup> September 2009.