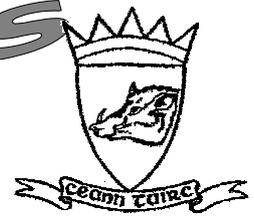


Kanturk & District Community Council



This newsletter of the Kanturk and District Community Council is issued 23 years after the foundation of the Council and at a time of rapid change for the town and district. It aims to inform people about the work of the Community Council because, as an elected body to represent the town, this is one of our ways of reporting back to the people about our activities.

The structure of the Community Council is first described in the newsletter, followed by an overview of work carried out to date. Some plans for 2008 are also outlined.

In addition to this information, it is hoped that the newsletter will create interest in the Community Council's work and encourage people to come forward and offer their support and expertise. At a time of major development and rapid change in Kanturk, it is important that the people have an independent voice through a publicly-elected organisation such as the Community Council. That voice will become stronger as more individuals contribute to the Council and become involved.

Kanturk and district has also seen many new arrivals over recent years. The Community Council extends a warm welcome and we hope this newsletter will provide information about our district and help them integrate into our community.

Nowy Kanurk?

New to Kanturk?

Jeżeli tak, Rada Wspólnoty wita was i ma nadzieję ten biuletyn informacyjny będzie pomagać wam łączyć się i integrować do naszej wspólnoty.

If so, the Community Council welcomes you and hopes this Newsletter will help you integrate into our community.

What is the Community Council and How does it Work?

The Kanturk and District Community Council is a representative body for the people of Kanturk and district. Its Constitution outlines 14 main aims that encompass a wide range of social, economic and community objectives.

The members of the Community Council are elected in a form of local election and the Council then has the additional power to co-opt members as it sees fit for various purposes. The next election is due in 2008/09.

The current Community Council is comprised of: Tom O'Sullivan (Chairman), Tom Daly (Vice-Chairman), Helen O'Connor (Secretary), Ann Hogan (Assistant Secretary), Áine O'Leary and Chris O'Reilly (Joint Treasurers), Tom Mullane (PRO), Siobhan O'Neill, Jerry Hickey, Michael O'Connell, Bill Cashin, Jerry Murphy, John Fuller and Ann Murphy.

The Trustees of the Council, since its foundation, are John Fuller and Bill Cashin. In 2006, Bill Cashin was made President in acknowledgement of his work for the Kanturk community and the Council.

Active sub-committees are the mainstay of the Council's work. Typically, subcommittees are chaired by a member of the Council and other members are co-opted as necessary. Some sub-committees may be temporary, for a specific task, while others have been in existence for many years.

The sub-committees for 2008, and their chairpersons, are:

- County Council Liaison (Chaired by Tom Daly)
- St. Patrick's Day Parade (Chaired by Gerry Hickey)
- Greenane Park Development (Chaired by Áine O'Leary)
- Temperance / Trade Union Hall (Chaired by Bill Cashin)
- Edel Quinn Community Hall (Chaired by John Fuller)
- Christmas Crib and Lights (Chaired by Bill Cashin)
- Rostrenen Twinning (Chaired by Bill Cashin)

It is envisaged that other sub-committees may be formed after a public Town Development Symposium to be hosted by the Council in March (see p. 4). This will give other bodies and individuals an opportunity to contribute to the community in a democratic way through the Council.



Some members of the visionary Steering Committee which set up the Community Council, with boxes containing nomination papers for the first Council election in 1985. From left: Mary Crowley, John O'Keeffe, Bill Cashin, Pat McCarthy, Biddy McMullen, Peter Leneghan, Dr. Jimmy Kealy, Timmy Ring, Angela McAuliffe.

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A Year's Work — 2007

What does the Community Council do? This section describes a typical year's work by giving a sample of activities undertaken during 2007. This work involves a significant effort from the people involved and the Community Council invites more volunteers to come forward and contribute to these kinds of activities.

Edel Quinn Community Hall: A wider range of activities are carried out in the hall. Wednesday-night bingo and Sunday-night dances are very popular and provide a valuable income for the hall and Council. Other uses included sporting activities, youth club, Irish dancing, and educational use such as the Back-to-Education Initiative. The Hall sub-committee is very active and forward-looking. No sooner had they paid off the debt outstanding from the original refurbishment in 1992, than the Committee set about upgrading the bar and other facilities.

Greenane Park: a major revamp of Greenane Park was undertaken in 2007 in conjunction with the County Council. Work included the removal of large amounts of rubbish, re-surfacing of walkways, fencing and the cutback of overhanging trees. Further proposals for the development of the park and being prepared by the Community Council in consultation with other bodies.



President Mary McAleese making a point to the Chairman of the Peace Park Committee, Bill Cashin, at its opening. The poem on the park monument was written by John Dillon, former Chairman (right).

Public Meetings on Planning: following representation from members of the public, the Community Council facilitated two public meetings regarding planning controversies in the town. There was great interest in these and they were good examples of local democracy — chaired by the Chairman of the Community Council, public representatives answered questions from the public and opinions were freely aired.

St. Patrick's Day Parade: this was again organised by the Community Council, but there was a feeling that the organisation of this event needs to be examined.

Wild Boar Monument: the Community Council initiated discussion with a number of bodies regarding the possibility of having a sizable 'Wild Boar' statue erected.



Dangerous Driving in Kanturk: following approaches from members of the public, the Community Council made representation to the Gardaí regarding very dangerous driving by 'boy racers' around the centre of Kanturk. The Gardaí responded, saying the problem would receive attention.

Postal Service: arising from requests by traders and members of the public, the Council complained to An Post about late deliveries in the town due to understaffing. There was no initial response from An Post but the matter was pursued and received attention.

County Council Liaison: meetings were held with local County Councillors where a number of issues were raised. These included a range of problems with basic infrastructure, such as footpaths and street drainage, to major planning and development issues that were topical in the town.

Our Special Heroes: a heroes' welcome was organised for the town's three representatives at the Special Olympics in China. Returning to the town with Gold and Silver Medals and Ribbons, they were welcomed by a pipe band and presented with scrolls by the Community Council.

Sculpture of Thady Kelleher: the Community Council was centrally involved in the commissioning and erection of a statue to the legendary Kanturk ploughman, Thady Kelleher. This was erected on the Banteer road.

Annual Awards and Social: This event was held again, with awards made to individuals from Kanturk and district who had served the community or received distinctions. The 2007 Hall of Fame award was presented to Billy Mullane in recognition of his service to the community through his GAA activities as player, coach and administrator.

Chairmen of the Council to Date

Bill Cashin:	1985-1988
Pat McCarthy:	1988-1991
Tim Goulding:	1991-1992
Kieran Fitzgerald:	1993-1993
John Dillon:	1993-1996
Eddie Welsh:	1996-2000
Donal O'Sullivan:	2000-2003
Tom O'Sullivan:	2004-2008

From the Beginning

For those not familiar with the work of the Community Council, this section describes its origin and aims, and some of the main activities carried out over 23 years.

Kanturk had a long-standing Development Association but, in the early 1980s, there was a feeling amongst members that a fresh approach might be worthwhile. A public meeting was held to discuss the issue in 1984. Even though poorly attended, it was proposed that a Community Council be formed on a model and ethos borrowed from Muniter na Tíre. This was agreed and an ad hoc committee was formed to oversee the process. This was led by Fr. John Murphy, a curate in Kanturk at that time.

Much work had to be done to set up the election system and 1,700 people voted to elect the first Council. Bill Cashin was appointed Chairman, Pat McCarthy was secretary and John O'Keeffe treasurer

Sub-committees were set up and various projects were undertaken with the assistance of other co-opted members.

This system worked very well and some of the earlier projects included a Christmas lighting initiative and the resurrection of the St. Patrick's day parade. A town twinning with Rostrenen in France was also negotiated and the Wild Boar Festival was also re-started.

Swimming classes were also organised in Mallow and clean-ups of the town and rivers were organised. An annual awards ceremony was also initiated.

Over the years, a range of other projects were carried out. These included:

O'Brien St. Peace Park

This riverside property, once part of the Egmont Estate, was purchased from private ownership by the Community Council in the 1990s. A great amount of work was done to bring it back to its former glory, much of it being carried out on a voluntary basis by members of the Council, along with the help of a Fás programme.

This work included the clearing of overgrowth, the maintenance of mature trees, the building of walkways, bridges and re-seeding, and the erection of the peace monument. The park was officially opened by President Mary McAleese in 1998.

In consultation with the County Council and local residents and traders, O'Brien St. was also developed at this time and these combined works greatly enhanced that part of the town.

Edel Quinn Community Hall

The transfer of ownership of the Edel Quinn Hall from the Legion of Mary to the Community Council occurred during the early 1990s. The Council then embarked on an extensive refurbishment programme — former Chairman, Eddie Welsh, was a stalwart of this period of work.

This work began in 1992, overseen by a very hard-working Hall Committee. Their endeavour has not slackened and the hall is very heavily used for community activities. The Hall Committee paid off the initial refurbishment debt in 2007. However, as soon as this was done, they requested sanction from the Community Council to proceed with further renovations and developments costing €20,000.



The first Community Council at a function six months after the first election in 1985. Front Row: Donal Hanrahan, John Healy, Fr. Bertie Troy, Bill Cashin (Chairman), Fr. Michael Williams, Richard O'Brien, Tim Ring. Second Row: Pat Sullivan, Christy Browne, Pat McCarthy (Secretary), Eddie Clemon. Third Row: Jack Nagle, Dr. Jimmy Kealy, John Fuller, Gerry Lehane. Fourth Row: John O'Keeffe (Treasurer), Tim Cashin, Tim Lynch, John Kenneally (Fr. Troy wasn't on the first elected committee).

Trade Union Hall / Temperance Hall

This building in Strand Street has a very long and interesting history. Its former trustees approached the Community Council with a view to it being restored to community use. Ownership was transferred and the building was beautifully restored by members of the Community Council and other helpers during 2005-06. It was formally opened during the year at a pleasant function at which Padraig O'Sullivan gave an very interesting presentation on the hall's role in the history of Kanturk. It is now in community use yet again.

Kanturk Castle

The Community Council was involved in setting up a committee to establish the McCarthy Clann Society. Part of its work was to highlight the potential of Kanturk Castle as a tourist attraction. Arising from this, ownership of the castle was transferred from the British National Monuments Trust to the people of Kanturk and Ireland — An Taisce is now its formal guardian.

Twinning and 'Kanturk Park' in France

A town twinning scheme with Rostrenen in Brittany was one of the Community Council's earlier projects. There have been many exchange visits over the years and, arising from this, there is now a 'Kanturk Park' in Rostrenen!

Sheltered Housing

Under the Chairmanship of John Dillon, a sheltered housing scheme was initiated. Arising from this, twelve houses are now being built under a separate committee.

Canon's Wood

In conjunction with the County Council, the Community Council co-ordinated the building of a shelter in Canon's Wood, and in the layout of that general area which is opposite the Church St. car park.

Greenane Park

The Community Council liaises regularly with the County Council on the development of Greenane Park.

Some Plans for 2008

Along with its usual activities, the Community Council is undertaking a range of initiatives during 2008, including:

- **Information Centre / Museum** — the feasibility of setting up of this facility in a heritage building in the town will be examined.
- **Arts Week** — in consultation with the County Council Arts Office, the Community Council will liaise with various arts groups in the district with the intention of holding an Arts Week in Kanturk in 2008.
- **Social Action** — a meeting of all groups involved in social and care work in the town will be convened. These will be invited to elect a representative who will be given a seat on the current Community Council. In this way, social action in the town can be more effectively supported by the Community Council.
- **N72 Junction** — given that Kanturk is the biggest town in Duhallow and set to grow, the Community Council will begin lobbying for the development of one of the junctions on the Mallow — Killarney road. From this, it is hoped that the town will have an obvious presence on the N72 and that the junction will be safe, lit, attractive and in keeping with the status of the town.
- **Public Symposium on Planning for Development** — the Community Council will host a Public Symposium on Planning for Development in Kanturk; further details below.

Public Symposium: Planning for Development in Kanturk

This public symposium will examine planning for development in Kanturk and community involvement in this process. This includes both physical and social development. Everybody is welcome. Invited speakers will address three themes and related issues. These are set out as a range of questions for the speakers, who will also answer questions from the public. The symposium takes place in the Edel Quinn Community Hall, on March 11th at 8.00 PM. sharp. The themes and speakers are as follows:

Identity and Development

Marie Keane: Fáilte Ireland Regional Tourism Development Officer, Cork County

- How can the town benefit from having a unique identity?
- Can Kanturk project an identity to brand and market itself?
- Can 'heritage' have a role in this?
- What are the local features worth protecting and highlighting in this regard?
- In what way can future developments take this into account and build on it?

Local Planning for Development and Maintenance

Frank Donaldson: Donaldson Tourism and Heritage Consultancy

Maura Walsh: Manager, IRD Duhallow

- How can amenities and the environment be enhanced for the benefit of the people?
- How can a plan be developed for this?
- What kind of local funding and supports are available?
- How can Tidy Towns be promoted as part of this?
- How can the community be mobilised and organised for local development?
- How can social action be best organised and supported?
- What kinds of local funding and supports are available?

Formal Planning and Sustainable Development

Tricia Treacy: Senior County Council Planner with responsibility for Development Management in North Cork

- What major developments are on the way for the town and what are the implications?
- How can the centre of the town be kept vibrant, with family-owned businesses, along with multi-national development at the town's edges?
- How can late-night entertainment be reconciled with retaining residents in the centre of the town?
- How can we learn from the experience of other towns?
- How should the community be involved in having a say in development?

Acknowledgements

The Community Council wishes to acknowledge that all of the work outlined in this newsletter has been carried out in partnership with a wider variety of individuals and organisations.

While not possible to list all of these, the Community Council especially wishes to thank the County Council and its local personnel. IRD Duhallow has equally been very accommodating to the Community Council.

Other bodies, too numerous to list, are continually supporting the Council's work, including various Government agencies and Departments.

Numerous local voluntary bodies have also been involved in projects and local businesses have equally been helpful over the years. A wider variety of individuals — too numerous to mention — have also generously contributed their time, expertise and resources.

The contribution of all to the community is gratefully acknowledged.

How Can You Become Involved?

If you would like to contribute to the Community Council through working on its sub-committees (page 1), or in any other way, please contact Helen O'Connor (0876122057), Tom Daly (087 2931422) or John Fuller (086 8221387).

Elections to the Community Council will be held in 2008/09 and details of these will be published later in the year.

A special "thank you" to all those who assisted in the production of this edition of the Community Council's Newsletter
(Tom Daly, Newsletter Editor)