

The Association's Agenda for 2014

Following a number of meetings with DCC management, with councillors and some local TDs over the last number of months, the following agenda for the Rathgar area will now be pursued by the Association. It will be particularly important to follow this vigorously in the coming months in the run up to local and European elections. We would encourage our members individually to do so also!

The specific issues are:-

Residents now pay Local Property Taxes, so they have a right to know how DCC plans to spend that money and how much will be spent in the Rathgar area. The Association is looking for openness and accountability. from the city council and seeking greater interaction with local groups. There is an urgent need for Councillors and DCC, to begin to think on a forward rather than a reactionary basis. The Association is seeking to have a process set in place to advance this. Section 4.4.2.1-SC09 of the Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017 which recognises the importance of suburban villages –Rathgar being one of them- could provide the framework for such an approach.

Some immediate and pressing issues need to be addressed

1. An adequate safe pedestrian crossing between The Bijou and the 108. which will allow pedestrians to cross without risk to life and limb
2. Signage and street furniture in the village should be to a good standard and clutter avoided. The current position is mostly an eyesore. We would wish to see some iconic feature in the village such as a distinctive lamp standard or piece of outstanding sculpture in a prominent place in the village.
3. As a result of a major campaigns by a number of public and private bodies, many people now use the bicycle as their normal means of transport. Unfortunately the roads in Rathgar village do not allow safe passage for cyclists and pedestrians.
4. Maintenance of streets and roads. There is an inconsistent and variable approach to the upkeep of roads and pavements. For instance road surfaces are pot holed or broken and in the last two Autumns there has been no plan for leaf clearance from streets or pavements.
5. Flooding in the area(Rathmines/Pembroke/Swan River/gully cleaning) Residents need continuous feed back on how this problem is being tackled. They need to see a sense of urgency on the part of DCC

A view from the Chairman

John McCarthy

An association like ours, to be worthwhile, must draw its members together as a community. We must act as good neighbours and help each other: watch out for one another. We must be ready to help on issues or tasks that are too big for one person to manage alone. The Association would like to hear from members on how to expand this sense of community to the wider Rathgar area. I am sure there are many ideas and skills waiting to be tapped. Maybe some of these can be harnessed by the Association for the benefit of all.

This idea of community is especially important at this time of year. The dark evenings and unpleasant weather can affect older or vulnerable people in particular. Please be aware of your neighbours!

To encourage this sense of community, the Association will launch a new web site early in the New Year. Replacing the existing website, it will have additional features to facilitate better communication with members We hope that members and indeed non members will use it actively. Link magazine will still be published twice a year.

The Local Property Tax continues to be a major concern. Initially, according to the Minister for Local Government, 80% of the tax was to be used in the Council area where it was collected. However, like many Government promises, this is now in doubt if not abandoned. It now seems that all tax collected will go into one pot and the Minister will spend money from this pot wherever he deems it necessary.

In May/June 2014 local elections will take place. This will be an opportunity to elect councillors to represent us effectively. Remember that from 2016 the councillors will have the opportunity to decide whether to raise or lower the Local Property Tax by 15%. It is vital that we know where each candidate will stand on this issue..... Of course we have water charges to face in 2015.!

Best wishes for 2014

6. There is a significant lack of care and maintenance of local parks such as Orwell and Dartry Park and the Dodder River. These are important and much used local amenities

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Some Notes and Comments

AGM of the Association

The 2014 AGM of the Association will take place in St Patricks Hall, Leicester Avenue on **20th March 2014**. Members will be advised further, nearer to the date.

Public Meeting .

As local elections and European elections will take place in May/June of the coming year, it is planned to have a public meeting where members and the public will be invited to meet candidates running for election. This will be an ideal opportunity to address local concerns and elicit commitments from candidates. The date fixed for this is **20th February 2014**.

Annual Garden Competition.

Congratulations to Cynthia Wann winner of the Dixon cup and runners up Noreen Guiry and Angela Egan .

The next event will be early July 2014

No entry rules apply as all front gardens in the area are considered. Prizes are awarded to the best of these.

The Association encourages all residents to work on their front gardens. Not alone do their gardens give satisfaction to them but they give a great deal of pleasure to those passing by and also enhance our neighbourhoods

Rathgar Celebrates

On the evening of December 6th, Rathgar commenced Christmas celebrations with the arrival of Santa Claus followed by a carol service in Christ Church with seasonal treats afterwards.

Rathgar businesses organised a draw for €50 shopping voucher on each of the Saturdays in December as well as free parking at Christ Church

In June last Bloomsday was marked with a wonderful celebration in period dress with music and food. The local businesses did James Joyce's village proud.



Computer Classes.

This is the third year of our organised computer classes for beginners. Classes are provided by transition year students of Stratford College. Our thanks to teachers and students, for providing this facility for mostly older people. Thanks also to Orla for organising them on behalf of the RRA

Having problems with your PC and don't want the hassle of bringing it into the repair shop to have it sorted out? Why not try a new on line service which can fix many of your problems remotely. Try *rescueit.ie*

The Walk and Talk programme of City walks continues.

Contact DCC **2222148** (between 9-5pm), email at letswalkandtalk@dublincity.ie

Address:: Community Development Section, Dublin City Council, Block 4, Floor 1, Dublin 8.

www.letswalkandtalk.ie

Passport for Leisure

Dublin City Council operates a discount card scheme specifically tailored to the leisure and recreational needs of persons over fifty five. The scheme entitles members to avail of a range of special discounts from -free access and use of DCCs sport ,leisure and recreational facilities, to a large range of specific discounts from the business sector.

Contact DCC: Tel 8450090

Email: info@passportforleisure

Community Development Section: DCC, Block 1.Dublin8

www.passportforleisure.ie

Trace your ancestors: Historical records available on line.

downsurvey.tcd.ie

A remarkable historical website has come on line.. This is the online digital map of the 17th century Down Survey of Ireland. The Survey was conducted between 1656 and 1658 and was the first national land survey conducted anywhere in the world. It was conducted by William Petty in the aftermath of the defeat of Charles I and the Catholic Confederacy. Its purpose was to record in detail every townland, parish and barony, the acreage of each the type of land and the ownership

Irish Architectural Archive: The Institute of Architects 45 Merrion Square. A recent exhibition, "The Baroque in Italy" illustrated this style as follows:

“The Baroque style, in stark contrast with the quiet symmetry and perfectly geometric proportion of the Renaissance, was characterized by the use of the curved line, by sinuous ellipses and spirals, by an exaltation of complex polycentric curves”

Honeyed Moments in Rathgar

The Honey Show was held in Christchurch Rathgar on Saturday 2nd November 2013. The show attracted 203 entries this year. This year's show saw more than double the number of entries than previously. It probably was the highest ever.



The Beekeepers entered many and varied products: honey, wax, candles, mead, cakes, biscuits, photographs— just about anything to do with beekeeping –

For those interested in becoming beekeepers, lectures are held throughout the Spring at the

Litton Hall, Wesley House, Leeson Park, Dublin 6. Contact Ann (01) 2888873086 3798303 or visit www.dublinbees.org

The Rathmines Ranelagh and Rathgar Historical Society

The recent Autumn programme covered such topics

- Woolworths and the Irish main street
- Rathmines Library Centenary Lecture - The Gaelic League in Dublin in 1913: 20 years a-growing?
- Another side of 1916. Rathmines love letters.

A new programme of lectures and talks commences in the New Year
Information: Rathmineshistoricalsociety.com or
email: rathmineshistoricalsociety.ie

Rathmines and Rathgar Musical Society.

The society celebrated its centenary in 2013. A series of events marking the occasion were laid on through the year culminating in December with a historical account of 100 years of the R&R written by Myles Dungan and published by Gill & McMillan

Rathmines and Terenure Libraries

There is always a lot going on in your local library, so keep a watching eye.

In January of this year a story telling event takes place, entitled:

“Dublin’s Little Jerusalem. Come and share your Little Jerusalem Stories”.

Anyone whose roots are in the Portobello area, living amidst the Jewish community, in the 1920s/30s/40s/50s/60s, might like to share happy memories of Jewish neighbours & friends. Or indeed those stories their parents may have passed on to them.

Do you like a good yarn or do you tell a good yarn?

Then the Teachers Club, Parnell Square, hosts the Yarn Spinner’s Club every Thursday

Waste Handling: Dublin City Council has brought in new bye laws on the handling of domestic and commercial waste. Details can be viewed on their website

Garda Siochana Information leaflets. There is a series of useful information leaflets obtainable from your local garda station. They cover such topics as **Personal Safety and Security for the Older Person, Home Security Check List and Bicycles Security.**

On home security the garda advice is try **The Home Security 3 minute** check “Burglars like easy opportunities. If they have to make a lot of noise, spend a lot of time or risk being seen, the chances are they won’t bother. If you can deny entry for more than 3 minutes—chances are the burglars will go elsewhere”

Be a good neighbour:

A harmonious, safe neighbourhood requires each of us to play our part.

- Get to know your neighbourhood and neighbours. Walk around your roads and parks. You will soon appreciate what you have nearby and identify what is missing!
- Use your local shops, cafes and restaurants—use them or lose them!
- Take care of your own street or road – clean the path outside your house. Sweep up leaves or snow or anything else that causes an obstruction Help your older neighbours who may not be able to do so. Check your overhanging trees or shrubs in the front of your house. Are they causing difficulty to passers by?
- Ask your workmen to park their vans with consideration for your neighbours. . Your neighbours will be there long after the builders have gone and consideration for them will make for harmonious living.

- Bin collection day can cause difficulty for wheel chair users or parents with buggies – so do not put your bins out too early and take them in as soon as possible after they have been emptied. Do this for your neighbours too. **(DCC has introduced new Bye Laws on control of waste- see Dublincity.ie/waste bylaws)**
- 80% of dog owners clean up after their dogs. Make sure you are one of them and not one of the 20% who allow their dogs to foul our paths. It is not always possible to bin the poo. Be a good neighbour- and take it home, if you have to!
- Don't let your dog bark for prolonged periods in your garden.
- Try (it is difficult) to keep your cats from digging up your neighbour's flower beds!
- Drive and park with care and consideration and help to make your neighbourhood a safer place.
- Children who cycle or use scooters on footpaths should be taught to cycle or scoot slowly and carefully giving way at all times to pedestrians *Adult cyclists of course should never be on the footpaths but where this is an absolute necessity then the same rules apply to them. Footpaths are just that – for people on foot!*
- Know your neighbours. Older neighbours may need the offer of a hand. Offer yours! Crime prevention is something we should all be aware of. Keep a watchful eye in your own area and keep those useful telephone numbers close to your land line telephone and put them into your mobile phone. Time is often of the essence in the prevention of crime or in providing assistance in an emergency.

Oh its lovely to be living in Rathgar

(60 years ago Jimmy O'Dea sang the virtues of Rathgar)

There are some quite decent suburbs I am sure.
 Oh Rathmines is not so bad or Terenure.
 Oh we have heard of spots like Inchicore
 But really don't know where they are.
 For thank heaven, we are living in Rathgar.

Oh its lovely to be living in Rathgar.
 Rathmines and Terenure are not so bad, I'm sure
 But in Kimmage –goodness gracious,
 They play tennis in their braces.
 Oh its lovely to be living in Rathgar

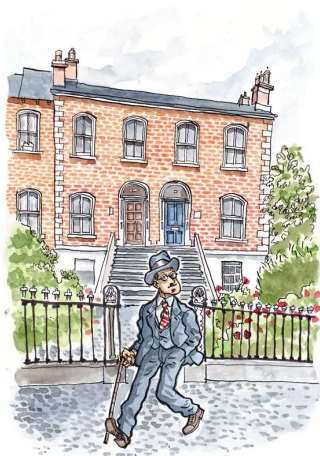
Bijou

**restaurant
 café bar
 delicatessen**

"Bijou has been turned into a Restaurant that those lucky Rathgar Residents can Thank Heavens for"

Catherine Cleary The Irish Times

www.bijourathgar



James Joyce and O'Brien Press – born in Rathgar!

James Joyce was born in Brighton Square, and his mother in Terenure Road East. So, when acclaimed artist Alfonso Zapico drew a wonderful picture of Joyce walking past our Rathgar HQ, I was thrilled. O'Brien Press is an international entity with over 450 of its authors' titles translated into forty languages – books created by Irish genius and perfected by our creative team of seventeen professionals in design, editing, sales,

marketing, production and more. In 2014, we celebrate forty years, producing 2,000 books in that time, with 700 of them still in print including Marita Conlon McKenna's Famine Trilogy, Brendan O'Carroll's Agnes Browne trilogy and Paul Howard's first four Ross O'Carroll-Kelly books, and acclaimed titles from authors like Olivia O'Leary, Feargal Quinn and Tomi Reichental, Eoin Colfer, Siobhan Parkinson and Aubrey Flegg.

Following our purchase of Brandon Books, we have entered the fiction world with quite a splash, garnering major media attention for Mary Morrissy's *The Rising of Bella Casey*, Sheila Bugler's crime debut *Hunting Shadows*, and the great Frank McGuinness' first novel *Arimathea*. We keep ahead technologically with O'Brien e-books now published simultaneously with print editions.

I take special pride in our editions of Joyce's *Dubliners* and the first Dublin Illustrated Edition of *Ulysses*. If only Joyce's mother could have known, as she pushed her clever son past 12 Terenure Road East, on her way to shop in Rathgar village. If O'Brien Press had been around back then, perhaps Joyce and Beckett would have dropped in, and Bernard Shaw too, after attending the High School. Perhaps it's time for a Rathgar literary festival?

Michael O'Brien
Publisher, The O'Brien Press

A Natural Balance

By

Mark McDowell

(busheslane@yahoo.com)

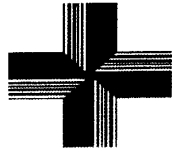
Sparrows have discovered our birdfeeders. I hope this is indicative of a rise in sparrow numbers as their city populations declined in recent decades. It started with the phasing out of horse-drawn transport in the cities, the manure was full of seeds and was a year round food source and now a lack of nest sites has become a problem. Whatever, a flock of sparrows is regularly visiting our feeders.

So, last Saturday while sitting at the table, talking on the phone to the brother and gazing out the window(my version of multi-tasking!), a sparrow hawk flew straight onto the feeders scattering sparrows left and right but when it landed for a moment on top of the old patio heater (knew that would come in handy sometime) it was empty-taloned, our flock had escaped to feed another day, but exciting stuff.

We had our first Rathgar sparrow hawk encounter one morning about 15 years ago when we lived in a flat on Kenilworth Square. A very agitated flock of pigeons swerved round the big cypress trees on the south-east corner just as we came down our steps setting out on the cycle to school. A sparrow hawk caught a pigeon in mid-air and the pair tumbled to the garden path in front of us.

The hawk lost its grip on the pigeon which made good its escape, the ambitious hawk fluttered onto the railings, pausing for a second or two before flying off, only a few floating feathers marked the altercation. The whole incident probably lasted less than ten seconds but it has lasted years in our memories.

Since then I regularly see birds of prey around Rathgar, mostly sparrow hawks in the parks along the Dodder, sometimes a kestrel hovering, though not in the last couple of years, and memorably a buzzard over the house, wheeling and soaring and circling out of sight. But none was in our garden. The presence of predators like the sparrowhawk does not represent a threat to garden birds in general; in fact it reflects healthy populations of prey species. Even during the nesting season when these hawks may be taking fifteen or more birds a day to feed their young it is timed to coincide with the fledging of sparrows, blue tits, finches etc and has no overall effect on their populations. Natural predation provides the natural balance in a dynamic system.



Rathgar Late Night Pharmacy

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Kate & Morgan O'Connell

1-7 Terenure Road East, Rathgar, Dublin 6

Tel 014970046 Fax 01 4970009

Email: rathgarpharmacy@yahoo.com

It may be that the re-incarnation of the Celtic Tiger is imminent but if it is, then the form of the new beast will be a much quieter and tamer species than that which has previously stalked the land, savaging all before it. It appears as well that the new beast will be very selective as to where it should lay its head but it can be expected that Rathgar would probably be one of its chosen pads.

Recent times have seen a gradual but not dramatic increase in house prices and likewise in the number of planning applications for developments of one sort or another.

However the activities of the Association have tended to remain low key during the period with a predominance of small developments while the larger ones remain in the low single figures.

Some off-street parking applications were submitted on Garville Ave, Grosvenor Road and Upper Rathmines, but the policy of the City Council under the current development plan is to refuse such applications and this has been the case throughout. 1st party appeals to An Bord Pleanala have served only to confirm the refusal of the Local Authority to-date.

Developments to the rear of a house in Brighton Road gave rise to a call for assistance from the Association which was forthcoming, culminating in the refusal of the application by the Local Authority. A revised application for the retention of a smaller version of the development was also commented on by the Association and this likewise was refused. This matter is awaiting further developments.

A development on Templemore Road to the rear of one of the houses on Highfield Road was granted on appeal after a refusal by the Local Authority.

Two appeals were made in An Bord Pleanala during the period. One was in respect of a further and modified development at the Orwell Nursing Home on the basis that it constituted overdevelopment of the site with inadequate parking provisions. The Bord saw fit to require the proposer to submit an alternative proposal to counteract the deficiencies in that which was applied for and this information was submitted within the deadline. A decision is awaited early in the New Year. A second appeal was submitted in respect of a 20th century house at no 1 Garville Ave. on the basis of the use of

inappropriate materials and designs which would seriously and adversely impact the character of the surrounding area. A decision on this is also expected in the New Year.

During the year the Association commented on developments in immediately adjoining areas. Matters in respect of the development of 4 additional cinema auditoria at the Swan Centre, Rathmines was commented on, with a view to trying to achieve an improved design. However the planners did not see fit to take on board our constructive and appropriate suggestions. The application as proposed was allowed to go ahead unaltered.

The Association has recently objected to the demolition of Denmark Hill, Leinster Road West to the North of Kenilworth Sq. This is a 19th century house in a key landmarked and predominant location on this narrow road of varied 19th and early 20th century period buildings. The Association opposes the unjustified and unnecessary demolition of perfectly sound houses. The objectives of the City Development Plan states that precedence be given to retention and conservation over that of demolition. The matter is with the Local Authority.

The Association has continued to strive in the matter of planning enforcements with mixed results. While some illegal developments were dealt with, they tended to be of the smaller variety. The larger ones including 47 Rathgar Road (which has recently changed hands) have not been resolved however.

Of particular note during the period, has been the number of applications, previously granted and about to expire which sought extensions of permission. Invariably these were granted although in a number of cases additional information was sought. This reflected possible environmental changes which might have taken place in the intervening period.

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Members your Email addresses Please!

Please let us have your email address with your sub renewal. It makes it easier to keep in touch with you.

We treat all such information confidentially

Anthea's Spring and Summer tips for the hard pressed gardener

Spring leading to Summer is just around the corner. So here are a few tips to get your thoughts back to your garden.

Dealing with mildew

Mildew can appear on all kinds of plants-everything from roses to vegetables and fruit. A simple quick fix, which is easy to make and apply, can not only save money but is also safe to use. It is simple to make: a 50/50 solution of water and full fat milk, and spray it on affected plants out of direct sunlight. This can be done once every ten days and it helps prevent mildew or if it is already present, can help control it. It is effective, safe and simple to use.

Control of slugs/snails

In early summer it is important to be vigilant with young vegetables and small bedding plants that are especially vulnerable to snails and slugs. Most garden centres stock slug pellets and if you feel that the problem is overwhelming, it is worth trying *nemaslug* which is an organic biological control that must be ordered in advance. Another method is to go around with a pot and handpick any culprits that are obvious. Finally, a totally organic method is to use a beer trap. This is simply a saucer with some beer which the slugs are attracted to and where they then drown.

Turning to a more positive gardening note

Every year buy a packet of night scented stock seed. In late Spring sprinkle it on some prepared soil close to your kitchen door, lightly water to make sure it doesn't dry out. Always keep a close eye on it to ensure that when it comes up it doesn't come to any harm from slugs or snails. It usually starts to flower from midsummer, and although the flowers are not showy the scent is amazing. On a Summer's evening open the kitchen door and allow its lovely sweet fragrance to waft inside.. Plant out begonia tubers. If growing begonia tubers for Summer display, they should be at the stage in mid May for potting on. Make sure the plants are developed to a reasonable size and gradually harden them off before planting out. Begonia foliage is very tender and all it would take is a light frost to cause serious damage. In minding your plants, make sure there is plenty of air circulating around them, it helps to prepare them for planting out. If you have not already planted up begonia tubers by mid May, it is possible to purchase growing plants from some garden centres into June.

Creating your own patio and raised beds.

When laying a patio in your home, ensure that the sub base is level so as to avoid an uneven finish.

To avoid the colour of your slabs fading over time, invest in good quality paving.

Ensure that you position your patio lighting so that it reflects of a feature element in your garden as opposed to lighting up the sky.

When building raised beds try to choose colouring that will blend in with the walls of your house so that they complement each other.

Ensure that drainage is installed at the base of your raised bed for the Winter period and that irrigation or water supply is close to hand during the Summer months as raised beds dry out easily.

When it comes to soil, incorporate a mix of top soil and organic matter. A top up may be required when the soil is settled.

Ensure your raised bed is a minimum of 60cm to allow for plant development.

Plant size must be taken into account when choosing what you will grow in your raised bed, as some plants are too large and will not grow in smaller spaces.

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Problems then as now for pedestrians in Rathgar village

From *Links* of the past: February 1991 LB

Why not a pedestrian island?

Any one who has raised a family in particular, and indeed the less nimble in our area, have as long as I can remember been complaining and on occasion agitating that something positive be done to alleviate the hazard to pedestrians trying to negotiate the five roadway convergence in Rathgar village..... The Corporation when approached through our local councillors have repeatedly used cost as a reason against synchronising the lights system to set up a pedestrian crossing. My suggestion: why not a pedestrian island on this crossing.

I suggest very strongly to the readers of Link that they become active in this matter. Write to your TDs and local councillors..... Be assured of one thing, progress will never be made by merely talking about it!

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Traditional Family Butchers

107 Rathgar Road

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Over 40 years of serving the People of Rathgar and surrounding areas

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Can't call in? We deliver!