



# A View from the Chairman

## The Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017 A major concern for the citizens of Dublin.

In the May 2010 issue of *Link*, I asked for strong representations to be made to stop our city councillors from agreeing a plan that would see major areas of high rise buildings being allowed throughout the city.

I also pointed out that the decision on the city development plan is one of the few rights that are reserved for the councillors-your elected representatives.

With regret I have to report that despite the best efforts of many residents and the combined representation of 48 residents' associations throughout the city –North and South, our elected representatives, voting along party lines, agreed to accept the city managers proposals.

The city development plan is now once again a charter for developers. Ironically as our elected councillors were voting for such a charter on the 24<sup>th</sup> November, elsewhere in the city officials were hastily putting together the final touches to the IMF /EU financial rescue package. A rescue which was brought upon us by the reckless behaviour of property developers and the banks.

It is difficult to understand the obduracy of our city councillors in pursuing and supporting the manager's proposals for high rise buildings in what is generally a low rise city, particularly at this time of crisis.The Labour and Fine Gael block vote achieved the result.

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Credit must be given to Fanna Fail, a number of independent councillors and one or two Fine Gael and Labour councillors(some from Rathmines/ Pembroke constituency) who stood out and opposed the proposals  
I recommend that the next occasion you get to speak to your councillors you ask the question which way they voted and why. Remind them that the agreement of the city plan is a right reserved to them.

In summary what our councillors have decided for your city is as follows

High Rise Developments of more than 160 feet Docklands, Georges Quay/Tara St., Connolly Station area and Heuston.

Nine further areas of at least 80 to 160 feet in Phibsboro, Grangegorman and in and around the Guinness brewery.

Elsewhere in the city: (What Dublin City Council now describes as “low rise”)

Within the Canals	up to 92 feet(28m)
Within 500 metres of Mainline Dart and Underground stations	up to 79feet(24m)
Outer city including Rathgar	up to 53 feet(16m).

May I wish all a prosperous 2010

Paddy Marron

Chairman

## The shape of things to come! (courtesy of our councillors)



This building is 28m.high

This is now “ low rise” in the inner city.

Two examples of what are now defined as “low rise buildings”



This building is 24m  
It may become common in areas close to the Dart stations.

## Some Notes and Comments

### The Rathmines Ranelagh and Rathgar Historical Society

Monthly talks continue from September through to June  
These are held in Rathmines Town Hall.  
Further information: Principal, Rathmines College,  
[rathmineshistoricalsociety@dublin.ie](mailto:rathmineshistoricalsociety@dublin.ie)

### Rathfarnham Historical Society

Regular talks on local history—recent talk on the History of Rathgar  
Enquiries: Vera Brannigan, tel: 4931840.

### National Museum and National Gallery.

Regular talks and discussions throughout the Winter at both venues  
Details available by contacting both

### Nature continues to be busy on the Dodder.

As noted previously, on the short walk from the footbridge at Orwell Park to Rathfarnham Bridge weir you can observe a pair of dippers busy within the weir, as they have been doing for the last 30 years. The kingfishers continue to show off their wonderful plumage and the heron observes the human passers by nonchalantly as it awaits an early morning fish catch. Further down the river in Dartry Park a pair of otters glide into the water effortlessly. The ducks dabble and the pied wagtails add to the wonder of nature on this short stretch of suburban river.

### New Arrivals in Rathgar

The Association is delighted to see new businesses come to Rathgar. We would like to welcome the following recent arrivals and wish them every success!

Superquinn. Rathgar village / Orwell Road.

Thai restaurant Orwell Road

The 69 Orwell Road.

The Rathgar (The old 108 rebuilt), Rathgar village

**Dublin Council cycling officer:** DCC have appointed for the first time a cycling officer. Your comments or views on cycling in the city may be addressed to Ciaran Fallon at tel. 2226268

### Repairs and maintenance around the home for elderly residents.

Age Action Ireland has a team of honest and trustworthy trades people who will do repair work. Call 1890369369

**Congratulations** to the Rathgar Traders Association for their organisation of a Christmas Fair in the village. It was a very welcome event, particularly in those dark, snowy, post budget days.

### What is going on in city hall? You may well ask.!

Dublin City Council has once again failed its citizens. During the snows of December they left the footpaths in the centre of Rathgar and many adjacent side streets and roads in a dangerous condition for old and young. For a month to six weeks, there were no bin collections on many side streets—neither black, brown nor green—and of course water, the most basic of service, was cut off for extended periods.

**Aidan Doyle, Jack Newman RIP:** The Committee of the Association notes with regret the passing of Aidan Doyle and Jack Newman. Both were for many years dedicated and active members of the Association—Aidan as Road Rep for Oatlands Drive and Oak Apple Green and Jack as a member of the Committee of the Association, filling the role of Planning Officer. Our sympathies are with their families. May they rest in peace.

Items of news or local interest and indeed your comments about *Link* would be appreciated.

PO Box 9574 Dublin 6 or [info@rathgarresidentsassociation.ie](mailto:info@rathgarresidentsassociation.ie)

## The schools in Rathgar

### Rathgar Avenue national school - the early days.

Known as Rathgar National Schools(Boys and Girls), the schools opened on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1896 It was built to accommodate 160 pupils. In the first week it was inspected by Mr Browne a district inspector. He recorded that the boy's school was of one classroom, a cloakroom, boarded floors and a fireplace. It had six desks with temporary forms as the permanent ones had not yet been supplied. Also there was a teachers table and bookcase fitted with a lock and key. On the day of inspection there were 65 boys present.



The girls school was similarly fitted out. It had twelve desks which were kindergarten style, instead of being to the Board of Works pattern but were described as suitable for their purpose. The attendance on the day of inspection was 41.

The school operated from 10.00AM to 3.00PM.

The teachers at this time were Mr Francis O'Kane and Miss Elizabeth Johnson both of whom had trained at Marlborough Street

A school house had originally been established at Brighton Road Methodist church in 1874 but had moved to the new premises in Rathgar Avenue.

The total cost of the building(built by Crichtons of Rathgar) was £733 with a grant of £489 being provided by the Commissioners of National Education. The teachers were paid an annual salary of £53 and £34.10s.

In 1896 two monitors(non trained assistants) were appointed and by 1906 there were four appointments of assistants.

The school catered for mostly middle class families who lived locally. Children of civil servants, clerks, journalists, commercial travellers

architects teachers clothiers printers accountants merchants were well represented on the roll records. Many of the children transferred from nearby schools such as Zion, Rathmines and Kildare street.

By 1899 the number of children on the rolls had increased enormously – there were in that year 121 in the boys school and 131 in the girls school

The religious denominations were represented as follows

EC 121, Methodist 63, RC 11, Presb.43 , Others 14

In 1900 two extra classrooms at a cost of £498 were added to provide for the additional curriculum subjects science laundry and cookery.

In 1906 attempts were made by the office of National Education to amalgamate the schools ;leading to greater efficiency. This was resisted strongly in particular by the principal of the girls school. The plan was eventually shelved until In 1971 the two schools amalgamated at the same time as Mount Jerome national school closed and its pupils transferred to Rathgar Avenue.

Today Rathgar Avenue national school remains a vibrant part of the Local community as it has been for the last 114 years.

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## *Recalling Rathgar*

Tommy Cronin of the Gourmet recalls places and people from forty years of doing business in Rathgar

“.....I worked with Leverett and Fry, the English based grocery chain, who had a number of outlets in Dublin and in a number of key rural towns throughout Ireland. I had worked in both their Grafton Street and Dundrum branches for a number of years. In 1968 they closed their shops in Ireland. I took over their Rathgar shop, named it the Gourmet and spent many happy and satisfactory years there. My brother Sean and family run the Gourmet now.

Thinking back over the years, there have been many changes in the village in those 40 years. There is a long roll call of shops and their owners, most of whom are no longer there.

Miss Doris Orr ran a fruit and vegetable shop across the road from the Gourmet. Close to her, Mr Davis had his well known newsagents which later became Rathgar Post Office. Then there was Fogarty's grocery shop. The Donovans have been in the Butchers shop across the road for many years as has T.J. Byrne and his father before him. Mr Kershaw had a pork butchers beyond Comans Pub. Shortly before Christmas one year, his shop was raided and all his hams and butchers knives were stolen. Comans, I think is the longest established existing business in Rathgar.. On that side of the road also were the Deveney's. They had a grocery shop and off license and nearby was Callally's electrical shop.

Close by to us in the Gourmet, Paddy Quigley had a hardware shop which was well known to all the D.I.Y. enthusiasts and builders in and around the village.

Beyond the Gourmet and just on Highfield Road were Car Showrooms run by Mr Brochelbank

Around the corner from the Gourmet, Hayes Conyngham had a branch of their chemist shops. Mr Gardiner ran his chemist shop just across the road. Next door to Gardner's was Mrs Bodkin's Kiddicraft. She was succeeded in the business by her son. Down the road were Clancy Brothers -Kevin,

Domnick and Gerry who ran a grocery shop for many years. Penelope's Cake Shop run by the Sheridan family was a well known land mark.. Keeleys of course where the Spar Shop is, was owned and run by Mrs Horton It was where everyone went for their stationery and their children's toys. Their card department had a large selection of cards for every occasion. George's Garage will be well remembered . It was a convenient place to fill up with petrol.

The Gourmet has always and continues to stock high quality gourmet foods and wines. Our Muscatel raisins are well known and over the years we formed close friendships with some of our suppliers. Their relations came to work in the shop from time to time and some of your readers will remember the Spanish girl Mercedes who came from Malaga, the home of the Muscatels!

In the early days some customers would ring in their orders and then collect it later or some even sent their drivers.! Many interesting and well known people were customers. Some like Siobhan McKenna and her husband Denis O'Dea lived locally. Douglas Gageby was a frequent customer and visitor. He never tired of talking about his passion for oak trees. Some like Lady Ross lived further afield and sent her chauffeur to collect her order. Sir Anthony de Hoghton (he always stipulated Hoghton without the u) was larger than life. On one occasion he hired his usual taxi driver to take him to Germany for a dental appointment. A favourite of his was to have the Gourmet caviar for breakfast, right at the counter.. No list of visitors to our shop would be complete without mentioning Michael. Many of the older residents of Rathgar will remember Michael who frequently stopped customers on their way in to sing them a song and if a lady, to kiss their hand!.....”

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**The Association is urgently seeking  
a number of members who are prepared  
to take an active role in the affairs of  
the Association. Please contact the  
Chairman (tel49725290) or Secretary(tel  
08682336550).**

## Wintertime and the garden.

Another gardening year has come to a close, but as you know when it comes to gardening the door is always ajar. Armchair gardening comes into its own at this time of year. Make a list of plants you might like for next spring and draw up a list of plants you might like along with a plan with where you might like to plant them in your garden.

This is the time to clean and disinfect your green house, all those nasty little bugs lurking in corners must be banished so as to avoid disease next year. If you have plans to build eg conservatory, walls, paths, raised beds pergolas etc now is the ideal time, while growth is dormant. We tend to leave these jobs until the longer brighter days ,this can be a big mistake as new growth will be destroyed in the process. Act now and you'll not regret.

A winter container outside your door will brighten your garden and cheer you up, some suitable plants for this purpose will be : Winter flowering pansies, polyanthus, cyclamen, heathers, phormium, variegated ivy. Don't cut back all tall herbaceous plants as they can make an attractive display covered in frost and snow.

### Roses and Trees:

Now is the ideal time to plant trees and may I suggest some ideal trees for the town garden; Sorbus Vilimornii, Prunus Sargentii, Acer Pallnatum, Bloodgood, Acer Brilliantissum, Continus, Cercis Candensis, Forest Pansy, Balula, Pendula, Asculus Pavia, Rhus, Holly ....the list is endless.

Roses can be planted now. Roses go back many centuries, yet they are a valuable element in any modern garden. Grown in a sunny spot with their roots well fed and watered, they will repay you with wonderful flowers and scents throughout the Summer. The rule applies to all varieties be they miniature floribunda, shrub or climbing. Avoid planting roses in soil they have been in before as they may be affected by soil sickness. And a final word on trees, if one already exists in your garden, do not remove in haste. Equally do not hesitate to remove an ugly or diseased specimen. But remember that a good tree takes up to fifteen years to grow , so therefore it is hard to replace.

Finally why not build a stumpery in your garden. It will become home to all sorts of insects and little wild animals. Simply choose a neglected quiet shady corner and stack old logs in a sort of wigwam shape so leaving spaces for the wild life . This is a fun thing to do with children. In time your stumpery will become covered in moss and ferns and look very attractive.

Mary Healy 01 4906552

## They haven't gone away, you know

Mark McDowell

In the second half of the last century we came face-to-face with an ecological disaster of sorts. Dutch elm disease arrived here. An incurable fungus spread by a beetle. The fungus blocks the tree's "arteries" that provide water to its foliage, nearly all of our mature elms died. The skeletal trees were visible the length and breadth of the island and were then cut or blown down, our beautiful elms were a thing of the past.

However if you walk along the Dodder between Dartry Dye Works and Bushy Park today you will encounter many elms, not the remarkable specimens that were so familiar but some quite respectably sized trees reaching to fifteen meters in height and many smaller ones. The rough surfaces of the native wych elm leaves can still be felt, it was this memorable texture that made it one of the few trees I knew as a child. Having done quite a bit of work with trees since then it is my experience, though I find it hard to find any documentation to support this, that elm trees killed by Dutch elm disease frequently leave behind a functioning root system. Why this should be I do not know as there is plenty of evidence showing the disease can spread from tree to tree underground where their roots have joined.

Anyway I plough on speaking only from experience; from these apparently healthy root systems suckers have sprung up and grown into young trees. None of the trees I mentioned above appear to be more than about thirty years old. It seems that trees of thirty years and less are not attractive to the disease-spreading beetle. Whether it is a girth issue or whatever, once trees get to this age/size they do seem to become susceptible to the disease.

It is with this in mind that I would like to do a couple of things: Firstly, to warn the regular users of the Dodder and probably other parks that the elm trees would once again appear to be about to die off (there are a few dead trees evident at the moment) but, with a bit of luck, it does not mean the end of them and new suckers/saplings may well sprout from the roots although the effect over the next few years may be quite dramatic.

Secondly, I wonder if it would be worth pre-empting the disease, perhaps over a long period ? When elms reach a certain age or size should the parks management coppice them thus ensuring a healthy root system and good growth from around the stump, effectively preserving the tree? If this were widely practiced would the disease eventually become a thing of the past and the return of magnificent elms become a thing of the future?

Maybe there's a student out there looking for a thesis topic. I'd love to know the answers to some of these questions.



Garden Competition Prize Winners 2010.



The winner and family at the presentation

The annual judging of gardens took place in late June/early July and the winner was announced at the Annual Rathgar Horticulture show in mid July.

The winner and recipient of the Dixon cup was Gerry Duffy “Avondale” 13 Brighton Road.

Thanks to all who maintain their gardens to a high standard and give much pleasure to passersby

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From *Links* of the past    **Rathgar Road names**

No 3 Highfield Road

The eastern part of the road from Upper Rathmines Road to Terenure had no name until 1846 when it was misleadingly termed “Old Rathgar Road”. The present “Highfield Road” was adopted in 1863 but Highfield appeared on maps as early as 1846 as the name of the Terrace , now Nos 32 to 36 .It is remarkable that the numbering of Highfield road dates from 1880, 50 years before Terenure Road east. It is likely that the name Highfield originated as the name of one of the fields of the original mediaeval farm.

Fred Dixon July 1983

Environment

It’s that time of year again when we are doing our best to stay positive and we are looking forward to the brighter evenings and an increase in temperatures ahead. However, in the meantime, it is especially important that we make an effort to get out and about in the evenings when all we feel like doing is curling up on the couch.

In the past number of months **Rathmines Square** has opened. It comprises of a swimming pool apartments and a community complex. It is on our door step and we should make full use of the facilities.

The pool, gym and other leisure facilities are under the management of Clodagh Kilmurray, who can be contacted at (01) 4967908 or (01) 4967909. Facilities include a 25m pool, a gym, two fitness studios and a sports hall. Annual membership is €360, but you canavail of a **“pay as you go”** option too. Use of the pool costs €6 and “gym and swim” costs €7. Swimming classes and personal training services are also offered.

Indeed, it is nice to be able to go inside and get our exercise when the weather is not as we would like it to be, but it is difficult to beat the open air with a walk around the park, observing the different trees, wildlife and growth.

Parks Opening and Closing Times

The official opening time is 10.00 am. A bell will sound half an hour before official closing.

Month		Time	
December – January	5.00pm	June – July	10.00pm
February	5.30pm	August	9.30pm
March	6.30pm	September	8.30pm
April	7.30pm	October	7.30pm
May	8.30pm		

Dublin City Council have launched a **“Report it!”** program **Just a click, gets it fixed.**

What is it? An online reporting service to report issues that you come across on the streets of Dublin.

What can I report? You can report issues like abandoned vehicles, graffiti, illegal dumping and much more.

How does it work? Just log on to [www.dublincity.ie](http://www.dublincity.ie) and click on 'Report it'. Select what you want to do and follow the 3 steps.

What next? You will get a reference number that you can track the progress of your request.

But I don't have a Personal computer or Laptop? That's ok too. Just call Customer Service Centre on (01) 222 2222 and one of the customer services agents will log the request for you.

Your views matter.

### **Computer Classes** "Log on To Learning"

Computer classes organised by R.R.A. in conjunction with Stratford College have been a huge success. The classes, running over a period of 8 weeks, started on October 8<sup>th</sup> 2010. Twenty adults were catered for and we are delighted to report that there was full attendance every week.

The transition year pupils along with their teacher Linda Finnegan did an excellent job and covered areas relevant to each individual's interests.

Areas of interest were: Safety on the internet, setting up email address and how to email, shopping online, booking flights online, researching different topics using search engines – Google, downloading and using Skype, setting up and using internet banking, viewing electronic newspapers and books, downloading and listening to podcasts, storing and saving files and uploading photos from a camera/mobile phone.

A special word of thanks to the Principal of Stratford College, Patricia Gordon, for taking this project onboard.

Orla Devane Env. Officer.

### **Planning report Summer/Autumn 2010**

This year has seen a drop in the number of planning applications being made.

The two major developments which the area has seen were developments at Marianella, Orwell Road and St. Louis Convent, Rathmines.

In October, after looking for modifications to the original proposals submitted for Marianella, An Bord Pleanala gave permission for the revised scheme which reduced the height of the proposal and removed one of the blocks.

Another application for Marianella for a new monastery development to the north of the site proposed for the residential development also got the approval of An Bord Pleanala in but the proposed 30 metre communications mast was refused.

Some 70 residents lodged objections to a proposal of the St. Louis Order in Rathmines to build on virtually the entirety of their open green space for a proposal of 86 residential units plus 25 others in various blocks ranging from 4 to 5 storeys in height. The application was granted by Dublin City Council subject to conditions and the issue is currently on appeal to An Bord Pleanala. There have been some 16 appeals lodged involving over 40 residents.

Other issues during the year related to a doctors surgery at 39 Brighton Road which having been appealed by the local residents and supported by us, was granted with significant restrictive conditions.

Various complaints were raised in respect of issues relating to the non-conformance of the planning laws with the Local Authority. Matters relating to 47 Rathgar Road were raised again but are progressing only extremely slowly, if at all. Complaints about the absence of documentation relating to 108 Rathgar Road did not get satisfactory responses while the development continued to completion. Responses were received in respect of 18 Highfield Road where it was reported remedial work was carried out but matters relating to 60 Kenilworth Sq. remain outstanding. Matters relating to other illegal developments in the area are being pursued and followed up on.

The period in question has seen the adoption of the new City Development Plan 2011- 2017. Many and various submissions were made at different stages relating to many of the undesirable aspects of the plan from many associations from the north and south sides of the city. Extensive lobbying of public representatives took place. However in spite of this, some of the proposals of the residents' groups were not adopted and proposals towards a more densely higher rise city centre were adopted.

It is expected that activity for the coming year will remain at a low level but illegal developments and the dereliction of protected structures will continue to be a challenge.

Philip O'Reilly Planning Officer

**This is a very difficult time for business.**

**Your local shops and businesses are an important part of the Rathgar Community. Without them, we would lose an important element of that Community.  
Please make a major effort to support them**



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