

Death of former Chairman of RRA

The death has taken place of Jerry Ryan, former chairman. Our sympathies are extended to his wife and family. May he rest in peace.

Some Notes and Comments

A view from the Chairman

John McCarthy

Is there a problem with the Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017?

Under the current development plan, it is permissible to allow in Rathgar, an area of mostly Victorian/Edwardian buildings, modern developments of 12/16metres (4 storeys) . Elsewhere in parts of the inner city 50m+(12-16 storeys) are allowed. However it is heartening to see in two recent rulings of rejection (The proposed Mater and Liberty Hall) from An Bord Pleanála that height and the overbearing impact on the cityscape were key factors. The Association feel that Dublin City Council has a flawed plan for the city on this matter of height. Your local Councillors should be strenuously urged to have the development plan reviewed on this issue. In doing so they would help preserve the architectural integrity of all areas including Rathgar.

Budget 2012/3 Property Tax

The recent budget has imposed an extra financial burden on all of us. It is essential that we are very vigilant when the house valuations are set out to ensure these are realistic in the current market. The Association will be keeping a watching brief on this matter. This new tax will place a huge financial burden on all of us in what are already very tough financial times. But if we are now to pay a local tax then the very least we can expect is the proper delivery of local services. We must no longer tolerate deteriorating road conditions, footpaths, parks, and a lack of cleanliness in public areas.. The Association has been very disappointed in the Council's response to last autumn's 'leaf fall'. Those walking around the roads of Rathgar found that volume of leaves were left to rot for an unreasonable period of time. The heavy rainfall, followed by frost meant that the leaves turned our paths to ice rinks. To maintain our physical and mental well-being it is imperative to get out for regular walks, but this was nearly impossible given the state of the paths.

Finally a thought for 2013

In mid winter our lives and activities are very much influenced by the weather and daylight hours. As a community we should behave as a community; taking it upon ourselves to support each other in any way we can.. Please make that phone call, knock on that door, and make that offer of help. We may have family and friends but it is neighbours who are in the best position to make the winter shorter and more bearable.

"Don't lack a friend, be one"

Every good wish for 2013

AGM of the Association

The AGM of the Association takes place in late March each year. The numbers attending in recent years have been dropping off. Members are encouraged to come to this meeting so that your voices can be heard. The date of the next AGM will be notified to members in early March.

Annual Garden Competition.

Congratulations to our winners who were:

Bob Murphy-1st prize and Dixon cup

Roseanne Kenny and Anne Vella were runners up

Christmas Carols in Rathgar

Congratulations to all who made this event such a success on 7th December

The LET'S WALK AND TALK programme of city walks

These 'weekly walks' organised by Dublin City Council are simply leisurely walks in the community, not historical walking tours. However from time to time they do incorporate visits to places of historical interest etc. These walks are led by a dedicated team of volunteers from the community and demonstrate how collaboration between the community and Dublin City Council can produce such positive results.

For more information Contact: Phone: 2222233 (9-5pm)

Email: letswalkandtalk@dublincity.ie

Website: www.letswalkandtalk.ie

Programme Jan-March 2013

Sunday 2 pm: A walk in the Phoenix Park, Parkgate St.

Monday: 11am A walk by the Royal Canal: Ashtown, Navan Road

Tuesday 2pm A walk along the Grand Canal: The Barge, Charlemont Street

Wednesday: 2pm A walk in Inchicore: Kilmainham Gaol

Wednesday: 2pm A walk in the city: Kildare P, Kildare St.:Converse in Spanish
Thursday: 2pm: Sandymount Green: A stroll on Sandymount Strand
Friday 11am: Meeting House Sq. Temple bar: Converse 'as Gaelige'
Friday 2pm; 2pm A walk in the city: Kildare Pl., Kildare St.:Converse
'en Francais'

The Rathmines Ranelagh and Rathgar Historical Society.

The recent programme of talks and events for Auitumn 2012 covered such topics as:

A Tale of Two Cities? - 19th Century Dublin. :Séamas Ó Maitiú
Andrew Carnegie - The Library Man : Brendan Langley.
New York in Sections - Katy Doyle's Postcards, 1906- 1908 : Elizabeth Smith.

A further series of talks and meetings will commence in the Spring. Information:
Rathmineshistoricalsociety@dublin.ie or Rathmines Historical Society, Rathmines
College, Dublin 6. All talks are in Rathmines Town Hall at 8:00 p.m unless otherwise
stated. Members:Free / Visitors:€3.00

Reading groups in Dublin City libraries

Reading groups are a popular way for book lovers to discuss books, both fiction and
non-fiction, in an informal friendly setting. Some groups meet in libraries or each
other's homes, some in pubs or restaurants.

Rathmines Library tel 4973539, hosts two groups.

Group 1 meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 3pm and group 2 meets on the
last Tuesday of each month at 7pm

Shakespeare Reading Group. This group of adults, focussing on the works of Shakespeare,
had its inaugural meeting on the 5th November 2012. This group will meet on the second
Monday of every month from 6.15pm to 7.45pm..

Terenure Library tel. 4907035, hosts two groups.

Group I meets on the first Monday of each month, 7pm; Group II meets on the first
Wednesday of each month, 7pm

New web site for older people in Ireland

'The vital years' at www.philosphere.com/.

Editor Brian Rothery br@rothery.com

Heritage

Try dublinheritage.ie. This is an interesting site. A lot of archival material lis available in
Pearse Street library

Rathfarnham Historical Society

Regular talks on local history. Enquiries: Vera Brannigan, tel: 4931840.

The Irish Architectural Archive

Provides access to the public to view our architectural heritage.45 Merrion Square,
e-email info@iarc.ie or phone 6633040.

Go and see what they have got on the Rathgar area

National Museum: 6777444 or www.museum.ie

National library: 603 0200 or www.nli.ie

Both have interesting programmes of exhibitions and talks

Dog Fouling:



“Bag the Poo, any Bin will do”

Dublin City Council City Council launched an anti-dog fouling
awareness campaign on the 10th July 2012

Dog owners are responsible for cleaning up after their pets in public
areas. Dog fouling can have negative health implications. If dog
owners do not clean up after their pets they may be **responsible for
passing a disease known as toxocariasis to humans and to
children in particular**. This disease can lead to illness and even
partial loss of sight. It is an entirely preventable health risk.

If dog owners do not clean up, a fine of €150 canbe imposed by a litter warden. If the fine
is not paid the courts can impose a penalty of €4,000.

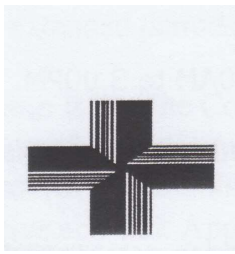
Palmerston Park Pond

Many were concerned that the pond in Palmerston Park which was drained and cleaned last
year to deal with its drainage problems, had not been reinstated Thankfully €30,000 has
been provided by DCC in this years budget for its reinstatement. Work should commence
early in 2013.

House /Property numbers

Dublin City Council is promoting a new initiative, proposed by Councillor Edie Wynne, to
encourage owners/occupiers of all premises in the city (where this is not already done) to
clearly display road/street numbers on the front of their property, in a way that is visible to
a passerby.

This will help the emergency services, taxis, tourists and others to find addresses more
easily. The proposal is supported by the Gardai.



Rathgar Late Night Pharmacy

Morgan and Kate O'Connell

5-7 Terenure Road East, Rathgar, Dublin 6

**Tel 014970046 Fax 01 4970009
Email: rathgarpharmacy@yahoo.com**

Bushy Park Allotments

Mary Forrest University College Dublin

Bushy Park is a 50 acre (20 ha) neighbourhood park managed by Dublin City Council, bounded on one side by the river Dodder and on another by the Templeogue Road. Today the Park is used not only for sports such as football and tennis but also by many people who enjoy the woodland walks or a stroll around the lake. However, the grounds at Bushy Park have been put to other uses.

Writing about her visit to the gardens in 1907, the Hon. Emily Lawless described them thus, 'vistas, oh unseemingly endless flower beds which led to a stone tank hidden in alpine plants and overhung with climbing and rambling roses'. The former owners, Sir Robert and Lady Shaw were keen gardeners. In 1917 Lady Shaw was member of the Board of Management of the Irish College of Gardening for Women which was then located at Meanee, Fortfield Road. Sir Robert won prizes for vegetables and shrubs from the gardens exhibited at flower shows organized by the Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland in 1915, 1916 and 1917. Also in 1917 some 100 allotment holders or ploholders as they were commonly known, grew vegetables and potatoes in the grounds of Bushy Park.

In the early 20th century this country was dependent on imported food to feed urban dwellers in particular. During World War 1 the threat of food shortages became apparent and the Government introduced schemes to promote food production in Ireland. One of the measures promoted the development of allotments in urban areas. In January 1917 local authorities were given permission to acquire land for allotments. The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction provided grants for the purchase of tools and seeds and also provided instruction for allotment holders. Rathmines Urban District Council (UDC) acted promptly and the provision of allotments was discussed at their meeting of 19th January 1917. The UDC rented seven acres from Sir Robert Shaw at £5 (6.35 euro) per acre and they made 100 allotments available at a rent of ten shillings (39 cents) for each plot or allotment.

Cultivation was successful and by Autumn 1917 ploholders participated in horticultural shows in the city. Newspaper reports record their successes at the Autumn Show of the Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland, The Vacant Land Cultivation Produce Show (for ploholders across the city). The local Terenure and Districts Horticultural Society Show had 9 classes for ploholders and prizes were sponsored by the Rathmines UDC. The Chairman of the UDC presented a prize for potatoes which was confined to Bushy Park allotment holders.

In 1919 the Terenure Show was held in Bushy Park and attracted 180 competitors with 618 entries. They included those from the area and further afield, ploholders, local schools of horticulture for women and nurseries.

Reports of Bushy Park ploholders exhibiting at horticultural shows cease about 1920, however allotments continued at Bushy Park until at least 1949. Apart from a report in 1941 that 480 people were given a plot of one eighth of an acre at Bushy Park, no further information can be located in newspapers or the horticultural press. Local readers may be able to fill in the details of the allotments in the intervening years.

Dublin Corporation purchased the property from the Shaw family in 1951.

From *Links* of the past: March 1990

“Mews Development –Problem or Solution”

On November 24th, Mr Eugene Cribben, an architect and planner, gave a most interesting lecture in Christ Church, Rathgar, on the above subject. The topic had been selected because increasingly residents find themselves having to confront mews developments in the laneways.....

.....In summing up (at the end of his lecture), Mr Cribben pointed out that constructive intensification of the use of building land benefits everybody by increasing the housing stock. Precautions however must be taken to ensure a proper balance between the needs of good planning and the dangers inherent of allowing a free market full rein. Well regulated builders and planners .(must) work harmoniously, respecting high standards of visual and functional design, providing high quality construction, avoiding overshadowing, respecting privacy and giving sympathetic understanding to the environment,

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Schools in the area: Rathgar Junior School



On September 9th 1919, 15 children, between the ages of four and nine years, walked up the steps into No. 63 Grosvenor Road. Rathgar Junior School was now officially launched under the leadership of a young teacher named Isabel Douglas. The school now occupies two houses, 62 and 63 Grosvenor Road, and 160 children attend each day. The school is a member of the Association of Independent Junior Schools and is managed by the Headmistress, supported by a committee made up of members of the Religious Society of Friends and parents.

Rathgar Junior School believes that at its heart lie the children: they breathe life into the building every day. The staff strive to create an atmosphere of love and caring, where school is a happy experience for the children and where the basic principles of respect, honesty, forgiveness, and consideration for others and their property are central. It is a community where children’s physical and intellectual powers are developed, giving them a desire for knowledge through arousing their interest and helping them find pleasure in work itself.

The school curriculum is carefully planned, based on the National Curriculum. Lessons in Kindergarten lay the foundations of reading, spelling, writing and mathematics. These subjects gradually develop so that all children have a good grounding from which to progress to second level education. Other subjects in the curriculum include: Social Environmental and Scientific Studies, Irish, Music, Art and Handwork, French, Current Affairs and P.E. Religious education is of a non-denominational nature, though the ethos of the school follows Quaker principles. Rathgar Junior School recently achieved its fourth Green Flag as part of its ongoing commitment to environmental awareness. Pupils play hockey twice every week in the first two terms at Three Rock Rovers pitches.

Summer Games consist of athletics, rounders, cricket and tennis. Swimming is enjoyed by our younger pupils every week throughout the year in the Swan Leisure Centre. Interactive whiteboards are used in all classes, enabling the teachers to enhance their lessons and maximise the potential of a huge range of resources and a variety of learning methods. Class sizes are limited to 22 pupils, allowing the teacher to give individual attention to each child. Close links with parents are valued and encouraged, with parent-teacher meetings held in both the Autumn and Spring terms.

The development of the whole child is seen as central. Therefore, in addition to the formal curriculum, the children are afforded a number of other opportunities and learning experiences involving the wider community. Outings to a wide range of locations take place – the Hugh Lane Gallery, the Natural History Museum, the Islamic Cultural Centre, the Irish Jewish Museum, the National Gallery, Leinster House, Dublin Zoo, Imaginosity, the Croke Park Museum, Kilmainham Gaol and Carlingford Adventure Centre.

Nature walks are undertaken to Bushy Park and Belgrave Square. Teddy Bears are taken on picnics, Maidin na Gaeilge is celebrated each March, Music Day is enjoyed in May, and an Art and Handwork Exhibition is presented every June. But the highlight of the year are the Class Plays, performed each Christmas for the whole school, parents and friends – this is the happiest and most rewarding period of the school year, where children grow in confidence and also have great fun!

The school has long-established links with a number of charities working at home and abroad. Various events are held each year to support Christian Aid, Team Hope, DSPCA, Child Fund Ireland, Peruvian Orphanages, the Irish Cancer Society, Guide Dogs for the Blind, Down Syndrome Ireland, the Rathmines Women’s Refuge and Operation Smile. Rathgar Junior School is a place where our children’s strengths and limitations are recognised, and where we strive to support each child and encourage them, always.

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Meals on Wheels -- Rathgar

The Rathgar Branch of Meals on Wheels was founded in 1967 and works out of the kitchen of Christ Church, Rathgar to whom we are greatly indebted for allowing us the use of their facilities. Our first Chairperson and driving force in getting it all started was Sheila Boylan in whose memory a clock with brass inscription was erected in the kitchen.

In the first year of our existence meals were collected from Mount Carmel Hospital and delivered in containers heated by charcoal. A far cry from the modern insulated boxes used today. Our old records relate that in 1969 we could deliver a dinner and dessert at a cost of two shillings and sixpence (16 cents!). Nowadays our clients pay €5 a week for three dinners and desserts. Still excellent value.

Between 60 and 70 meals are cooked in the kitchen and delivered every Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. In addition on each of those days we receive from the Health Service Hospital in Clonskeagh another 40 meals, so that every week we deliver a total of more than 300 meals, 15,000 per annum!

Out teams of helpers work one morning every fortnight and between cooks, drivers and deliverers we have a total of almost 200 volunteers. We deliver widely in the

Rathgar, Terenure and Churchtown areas to clients recommended to us by the District Health Nurses.

The equipment in the kitchen of Christ Church is quite extensive – two large industrial electric cookers, a bain-marie, food mixers, freezer and fridge -- all purchased and maintained by us.

During Christmas week a special dinner of turkey and plum pudding is cooked and delivered. In addition, having experienced the severe winter of 2010 when, for the first time, we were unable to make deliveries, we now provide to everyone a winter emergency pack consisting of tins of stews, soups and other necessities, which is much appreciated.

Nowadays we are subject to regular visits by the Health Inspectors and must comply with all food regulations. This involves strict hygiene in food handling and cooking. For instance food stored in the fridge or freezer is subject to temperature controls which must be recorded. The infrastructure of the kitchen must be kept clean and when necessary repaired, re-painted or even replaced. Doubtless, charcoal in the food containers would not be acceptable today!

As one might imagine the entire operation takes a considerable amount of organisation. Our Committee meets once a month. We have separate secretaries for each of the three days a week, whose main task it is to ensure that sufficient cooks, drivers and deliverers are available each day. When account is taken of holidays, domestic commitments or illness it can be a time consuming task for the secretaries, whose phones work overtime. Teams of 5 or 6 cooks come in each morning at 9.00am and in addition a small group of caterers do monthly rotas planning menus and purchasing supplies.

New names and faces are constantly required and we will gratefully accept offers of help from those who could spare just 1½ hours every second week. The work is not only rewarding -- it is most enjoyable.
Why not try it?

R. R.

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How to take the shock out of energy price hikes
Simon Moynihan of bonkers.ie

For the second year in a row, all the energy suppliers chose October to increase prices. The latest round of price hikes will see households pay an extra €67 for electricity and €85 for gas per year. And the rises have pushed standard annual bills up to well over €1,200 for customers with gas and electricity.

Energy suppliers expressed regret and cited a range of reasons for the latest price increases, but their statements offered little comfort to hard pressed households facing into a winter of record energy bills.

It seems unlikely that energy prices will ever return to affordable levels.

Some 80% of electricity generated in Ireland comes from imported fossil fuels like natural gas and coal.

To make matters worse, most of this fuel is bought from the UK and when the euro drops in value against sterling, prices go up. The reason for the falling euro was the main reason given by energy suppliers for increasing prices this month.
The result is that the cost of electricity and gas in Ireland is spiralling out of control.

In just over a year customers have seen gas bills go up by 32% and electricity bills by 20%. Price hikes in October 2011 and October 2012 have meant that households now either have to find an extra €427 to heat their homes and keep the lights on ... or they need to find ways to use less energy and pay less for it.

Reducing household energy consumption is not an overnight task, but small steps over a period of time can lead to substantial reductions in the gas and electricity needed to keep your home ticking over.
We know that savings can be made with better insulation, energy efficient appliances and low-energy light bulbs. We can also use gadgets like electricity monitors to help us identify which appliances in our homes are the biggest energy hogs and replace them or turn them off when they are not needed.

But the most important thing to do, of course, is to make sure that you're paying as little as possible for your gas and electricity.
The good news is that there are now five energy suppliers in Ireland competing for customers, so there are still good savings to be made off standard rates.
These standard rates are usually the highest prices suppliers charge to customers that don't ask for a discount or switch for better prices.

We have been able to switch suppliers for more than three years now, but only two in every five households have actually done it. Switching is still worthwhile though.
Households with gas and electricity that have never switched can reduce annual bills by as much as €254 or more that €20 per month by switching to the cheapest deals.
It won't offset the last couple of price increases, but it will take some of the sting out of them.

Customers that have already switched need to keep a watch on energy prices too.
That's because most discounts expire after 12 months. So unless customers switch again, or ask their existing supplier for a "retention" deal or a new discount – it's back to expensive standard rates. Although discounts are available from most suppliers, natural gas customers that are supplied by Bord Gáis Energy are all paying more than they need to.
That's because Bord Gáis's gas prices are regulated and they can't offer discounts.
In fact Bord Gáis's gas prices are used by other suppliers as a benchmark to discount from. A year's supply from Bord Gáis will cost an average household €961. The same amount of gas can be bought from Flogas for €837. That's a saving of €124.

In fact, by switching your gas from Bord Gáis Energy you may actually be helping the company out. The sooner they lose 40% of their gas customers, the sooner the regulator will give them permission to set their own prices.

Compare and switch at: <http://www.bonkers.ie/compare-gas-electricity-prices/>

An Accidental Coppice.

Mark Mc Dowell

Shortly after the metal railings were erected around Kenilworth Square, about 15 years ago, a whitethorn (hawthorn) hedge was planted against the railings all the way round the inside. The idea was great but the implementation was a bit lacking.

The secret to successful hedge planting is the aftercare, weed control, and these trees were left very much to themselves. The result was a few stretches of good hedge and then the odd tree survived here and there, about 200 trees all told survived out of thousands that were planted. One or two whitethorns were already present and these were cut and incorporated into the new hedge.

The hedge had been most successful on the north and west sides of the Square and had reached a degree of maturity, flowering riotously in May, (whitethorn is the Mayflower of literature and history) and producing a good crop of berries or haws in October. The haws do not easily germinate and a hedgerow left unmanaged does not naturally regenerate, the thorn trees die off as they age, being replaced mainly by ash and elder. Few, if any, of the thousands of berries will produce a new tree if left to their own devices

The correct time to manage hedges is in winter when the leaves have fallen and the trees are dormant. Ecologically the best time to manage or cut the hedge is after Christmas as birds will have eaten most of the berries by then. Legally, agricultural hedges can only be cut from Sept 1st to the last day of February to ensure that they are a safe habitat for nesting birds in Spring and Summer.

The trees around Kenilworth Square had grown to be around the same height as the railings and, to my mind anyway, they added considerably to its appearance, mitigating the metallic bleakness of the railings while contributing considerably to the natural resources of the area.

At the end of last July I was shocked to see the groundsman cutting down the whitethorns with a chainsaw. I stopped and spoke with him and apparently the school who own the Square had identified the trees as contributing to antisocial behaviour in the Square and decided to remove them.

I contacted the school and they agreed to stop the cutting and retain what remained for the moment. This left about 130 neatly cut stumps a couple of inches high and almost 70 uncut trees (at least one with a nest clearly visible now) around the Square.

Dormant buds on the cut stumps immediately reacted and about seven or eight new shoots have grown off each stump. Some of these are already nearly two feet tall after just a couple of months of growing.

This has become a good example of the ancient woodland management technique of coppicing, albeit accidental and done at the wrong time of year for maximum effect. It is also the process that is used to restore gappy old agricultural hedgerows. Where there were 130 single stems there are now many times that number.

There is an opportunity here for academic study of the regeneration either at secondary school or third level, or the process can simply be observed by those who are interested as one of the natural phenomena that still exist all around us. I for one am already watching.



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Environment

When you read this the worst part of the winter will be over and we will be looking forward, hopefully, to a nice spring, and after that perhaps- a great summer. We are, after all, due one!

Home security:

In the times we are living in, we need to put extra thought into keeping ourselves safe and our homes free from any threat of an intruder. Simple precautions are often the best. It is essential to have a chubb lock on the front door and that it is used on leaving home. Most people will have a standard yale lock as well, but in some recent break-ins intruders entered using the front door because the chubb was not activated. It just required a piece of plastic similar to a credit/debit card to undo the yale latch. A door chain is very useful when answering the door. It allows you to see who is at the door and the chain prevents the door being pushed in. They are reasonably priced and easy to fit. Ask a friend or neighbour to install one if you don't have one. Many home owners have burglar alarms. Indeed insurance companies often insist on one being installed. Your alarm is valuable both when away and when you are in your home. Most people are diligent in activating the alarm when leaving the house but the use of the alarm while at home gives great comfort, particularly, to people living alone.

Litter:

Following Dublin City Councils removal of a number of street bins, it is becoming increasingly more difficult to keep public areas clean. Also bins that are in situ are not emptied as often as they should be. Consequently rubbish gets scattered around. Please report this to D.C.C.: Please also report abandoned bicycles or trolleys, abandoned vehicles, bonfire material, illegal dumping, overflowing skips, lack of public litter bin maintenance, graffiti, litter offences, unswept streets. Website www.dublincity.ie click on Environment and top of page "Report litter or pollution to us"

Water:

Soon we will be paying for the water that we use (along with other taxes arising from the budget).

Sometips on conserving water in the house:

Keep a jug of water in the fridge. Instead of letting the tap run when waiting for cold water, fill a jug of water and keep it in the fridge.
Use a basin to rinse/clean your fruit and vegetables: You can use your leftover water to water the plants.
Use a bucket of water not a hose: A hose uses more water in one hour than the average family uses in a day. The car will be just as clean using a bucket of water.
Don't flush it all away: A third of all the water used in the house is flushed down the toilet. Some larger toilet cisterns can continue to work effectively with a smaller flush. Place a displacement device such as a hippo bag or a bottle filled with water into the cistern.
Be leak free: Check for running overflows and fix any dripping taps, cisterns, or pipes. If you see leaks in a public place report it to D.C.C.

Only run your washing machine and dishwasher when full: A washing machine on full cycle uses 65 litres of water, a dishwasher 20 litres. You will conserve water and reduce your energy bill.
Don't leave tap running while brushing your teeth: Turning the tap off when brushing your teeth can save over 7,000 litres of water per year.
In the shower: Reduce the time you spend in the shower A regular shower will use about 35 litres of water in 5 minutes. Beware a power shower will use over 125 litres in the same time.
Know how to turn off your water supply: This could save thousands of litres of water and can prevent damage to your home in the event of a pipe burst.
Hot drinks: Fill your kettle with enough water for your needs. You will save energy too.

Computer classes:

Once again we wish to thank Stratford College, Linda Finnegan and the transition year students for bringing their computer skills to the benefit of elderly people in our community. It is the third year running and has been a great success to date.

Orla Devane

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Planning report Autumn 2012

Philip O'Reilly

While planning activities have continued at a low level in our area, there have been many smaller threads ongoing, ensuring the planning side of the activities of the Association is always kept busy.

The main issue going into the summer was the application by Aldi to build a supermarket on the site of the old tram sheds opposite the church in Terenure on Terenure Road East. An Bord Pleanala had required the complete reappraisal of the entire scheme requiring the re-submission of advertisements and notices on the site and in the newspapers and inviting submissions afresh in that regard. Very few submissions or observations were forthcoming however in respect of the required and proposed modifications. In the late summer Bord Pleanala granted permission for the revised scheme that it had required the developer to come up with. No work has yet started on the site and one can only surmise the chaos that will ensue when a supermarket with 80 underground parking spaces materializes at this extremely busy and congested part of Terenure. Meanwhile, across the road, behind the church Lidl has had an application in for a similar sized store with access from Rathfarnham Road. Having regard to the outcome of the Aldi application, it could only be on a technicality that this application would be refused. Lidl's application is currently with An Bord Pleanla after the consent of the Local Authority earlier in the year.

Both these developments will have a serious knock-on effect for the Rathgar area and it is for this reason that the Association became actively involved in both schemes. Whether any of these developments proceed will be a moot point, although the Tesco Metro is proceeding at Quinlan's old pub on Terenure Road North at the other end of Terenure village.

Other developments in the area have been on a smaller scale
 79 Rathgar Road: Retention of a non-conforming development in respect of off street parking and front garden development has been sought.
 34 Templemore Ave: Extension to a 1930's house currently with An Bord Pleanala with the Association as observers supporting the concerns of local residents.
 27 Terenure Road East: Relating to the non –compliance with the conditions in respect of a planning consent issued some years past by An Bord Pleanala and not yet complied with. In recent times the Jewish Community has submitted an application in respect of their premises at Leicester Ave. The Association has made observations and recommendations. The matter is on-going at this time.

On the Planning Enforcement front, while some results have been noted, the battle, of the uphill variety, continues with the Association recently submitting an updated list to the Council of new or on-going violations of the planning regulations. Councillors have been copied with this information. Many deadlines have been passed or will soon be passed in respect of many of these non-conforming developments. The Association will not relent in any way in respect of any of these issues. In some cases, the Association has pursued the Council for six years and beyond and intends to continue until satisfactory resolutions are forthcoming.

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The Grand Canal runs dry

Some may have noticed recently that the Grand Canal between Portobello and Harold's Cross Bridge had run dry. It is the work of Waterways Ireland who are dredging the canal from Portobello up to Davitt Rd. This work will make it easier for boats to navigate the canal. The Portobello/Harold's Cross area was scheduled to be completed by end of 2012 and water restored to normal levels. The canal bed will be cleared of debris deposited over the years.

An interesting feature of the dredging plan was to confine the dredging to the central channel and maintain the reed fringe and side margins of the canal intact. This ensures nesting habitat, fish and other species habitats along the margins are maintained to allow species numbers restore almost immediately after works are completed. In fact, during previous dredging works near Baggot Bridge, due to this mitigation, water fowl chicks hatched from nests alongside the dredge site only days after the works were completed.

Have a look at grandcanaldublin.com for more information

The Association continues to work with a group formed after the floods of October 2011. This group is seeking to expedite work promised by DCC to find short and long term solutions for those households affected by flooding in the area. A meeting has been sought with the Minister of Environment to ensure that the proposals for renewing the Rathmines/Pembroke drainage system is expedited. Anyone affected by flooding can contact Colette at RathminesRathgarswanfloodingactiongroup@gmail.com

Rathgar Residents' Association, PO Box 9574, Dublin 6
www.rathgarresidentsassociation.ie : email info@rathgarresidentsassociation.ie

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