

Down District Council

Annual Report 2009 - 2010



Our Mission Statement

Down District Council has confirmed its mission as follows:

Improving the quality of life
for all our people.

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Chairman



I applaud the many volunteers from across the district who give their time freely to help others, especially the dedication of community activists and workers.

My period as Chairman of Down District Council has been one of the most interesting and busy twelve months of my time as a Councillor. It has allowed me to meet many of the hard working people from across the district who are striving to improve the lives of our citizens.

It has been a privilege, pleasure and rewarding experience to have served as the first citizen of the district. I have witnessed first hand the excellent and diverse range of work carried out by people working on the ground within all sectors, age groups and mixed ability for the benefit of all citizens.

I applaud the many volunteers from across the district who give their time freely to help others, especially the dedication of community activists and workers. I have thoroughly enjoyed meeting all of them and learning about their activities.

It would be impossible for me to mention all the events, presentations and awards I have attended as Chairman, but a couple spring to mind.

During my first official engagement as Chairman, I was thrilled to be presented with the Best Kept Town Award for Newcastle, on behalf of our citizens. The town also had the pleasure of hosting the prestigious Pride of Place Awards 2009, for which two local community groups were nominated. I was delighted to extend a warm welcome to so many new visitors to the district and to Newcastle, Northern Ireland's premier seaside resort.

My time in office has also afforded me the opportunity to meet many international visitors, all of whom have expressed a deep gratitude for the warm reception they received from the people in Down district. I welcomed the 18th Annual Conference of the Rural Community Network to the district, which articulates the voice of rural communities on issues relating to poverty, disadvantage and equality. I also had the pleasure of welcoming Ballykinlar Army families to Downpatrick. As part of Local Democracy Week 2009, I was delighted to visit Year 12 pupils at Saintfield High School to underline the importance and value of local democracy and community involvement.

One of the last engagements of my term as Chairman was having the privilege to present awards to three employees who had completed 25 years service in the Council and to 108 employees who had attained 100% attendance at work during the past year.

I thank everyone who assisted in making my period as Chairman so successful and memorable, and I look forward to working with my fellow Councillors and Council staff in the future to ensure the continued success of Down District Council.

**Councillor William Dick
Chairman**

Chief Executive



Working in the face of the economic downturn, Down District Council continued to improve services to the citizens of Down district during 2009 and 2010.

A number of major announcements were made during this period which impacted on the Council including the Review of Public Administration and potential cuts in public spending. Despite the challenges and uncertainty facing the Council, our employees continued to provide the services required by the people of Down district. I will be working with all Council employees to ensure the continued provision of first class services in the face of the many challenges ahead. I have outlined below some of the good work achieved during the year and would encourage you to read this report which provides further detail regarding the Council's activities.

- Commencement of work on the £4.1 million Ballymote Sports and Wellbeing Centre.
- Securing funding from the Department for Social Development, Northern Ireland Tourist Board and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland in support of the Newcastle Tourism Gateway project. The £1 million project included an environmental improvement scheme at Castle Park and an entrance feature at the Newcastle Roundabout.
- Obtaining £1.3 million from the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to implement an environmental improvement scheme in Ardglass.
- The success of Down County Museum in partnership with the Somme Heritage Centre in obtaining £185,000 from Peace III European funding to develop a community history project for groups in Down, North Down and Ards.
- Newcastle awarded Ireland's Best Kept Town by Tidy Towns and Northern Ireland Amenity Council.
- Official opening of the new Downpatrick Cinema.
- Ardglass awarded Northern Ireland's Most Improved Village.
- Hosting the Pride of Place Awards 2009 in partnership with Co-operation Ireland.
- Development of a flood protocol in partnership with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Annsborough Community Group and the Rivers Agency.

John Dumigan
Clerk and Chief Executive

Honouring the People Who Work, Live and Contribute to Life in Down



Chairman's Excellence in the Community Awards and Garden Party

The outstanding achievements of the extraordinary people of Down district were celebrated in style at a garden party held on Saturday 5 June 2010 in the magnificent Victorian Gardens of Castle Ward.

Over 200 guests attended the garden party, officiated by award winning journalist and broadcaster, Siobhan McGarry. Guests were treated to a musical extravaganza courtesy of pupils from Saintfield High School, Assumption Grammar School, St Colman's High School, St Patrick's High School and Down High School.

Having spent most of his working life as a farmer, Chairman of Down District Council, Councillor William Dick said:

"I thought it both appropriate and fun to bring this event outdoors and it is an honour to host Down District Council's first ever Garden Party here at Castle Ward!

Castle Ward is a unique venue and 'The Excellence in the Community Awards' are, I believe, a unique way to celebrate

the achievements of some truly remarkable people who quietly go about making our community a better place to live with no thought of recognition."

Councillor Dick also said he was overwhelmed by the number of nominations received for Down District Council's Excellence in the Community Awards:

"We had more nominations in 2010 than any other year and I really hope these awards go some way to acknowledge the marvellous voluntary work, community spirit, unbelievable courage and the inspirational support that makes Down district a better place to live. All the nominees are worthy of recognition and that's why I am delighted to see so many of them here today."



Down District Council Chairman, Councillor William Dick presents some of the district's 'unsung heroes' with certificates of commendation in recognition of their outstanding work in the community.



Councillor Dick presents Aedin Geary, Principal of Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche with a special commendation for Teacher of the Year.



Pupils from St Patrick's Grammar School, Downpatrick entertain guests in the walled garden.



Regan Shaw, accompanied by Joanne McCallister, receives the award for Young Person of Courage from Councillor Dick and Siobhan McGarry.



Dianne McGivern and Norma Gilgunn receive the Chairman's Special Recognition Award.



Councillor William Dick and Siobhan McGarry make presentations to the winners of the Emergency Services award, South Down Coastguard Team, and highly commended in the category, Downpatrick Fire Station.



Pupils from Saintfield High School provide a delightful musical backdrop to the afternoon's proceedings.



Minister for Social Development, Margaret Ritchie with Down District Councillors and Senior Officials who attended the Pride of Place Awards Ceremony.

Pride of Place Awards

Down District Council hosted almost 500 distinguished guests from across the island of Ireland at a glittering awards ceremony officiated by Gerry Kelly, former UTV presenter in the Slieve Donard Resort and Spa, Newcastle on Saturday 21 November 2009.

Now in its seventh year, the Pride of Place Competition is run by Co-operation Ireland in partnership with the All-Island Local Authority Steering Forum, a forum which encourages strategic and sustainable approaches to cross-border co-operation by Local Authorities. The competition was established to recognise and celebrate the vital contributions that community partnerships make to society, with a focus on people coming together to shape, change and enjoy all that is good about their local area. It differs from other similar projects in that the awards specifically recognise the involvement of the local community in all aspects of rural and urban regeneration including, promoting social cohesion, involvement in planning, the promotion of heritage and environmental awareness.

Guests were warmly welcomed to the evening's celebrations by Down District Council Chairman, Councillor William Dick. In congratulating the participating organisations, Councillor Dick praised the long lasting and positive impacts that the pride initiatives, whether social, environmental or cultural related, had on society. Councillor Dick highlighted the success of two local groups, Ballyhorman and District Community Association and The Management Committee of The Lodge Cultural, Community and Business Centre, Castlewellan both of which were short-listed for the prestigious awards.

Peter Sheridan Chief Executive of Co-operation Ireland said: "The unique all-island Pride of Place competition has a positive effect on communities throughout the island of Ireland. It highlights local authorities' commitment to supporting groups who undertake initiatives to improve their communities. Although there can only be one winner in each category, tonight is an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the efforts of all groups."

The Minister for Social Development, Margaret Ritchie, MLA announced the winners at the gala ceremony. During the evening, the Minister paid tribute to all the participating groups who work tirelessly to create and promote pride in their cities, towns and villages. She said, "These awards are a unique opportunity to recognise and reward the efforts of hardworking members of the community who have made a difference; and are particularly important in celebrating the achievements of projects that strive to serve the needs of disadvantaged and marginalised communities."

The Lodge Management Committee emerged triumphant after scooping the runner-up position for one of the top awards on the theme of heritage.



pride of place 2009

Gala Dinner & Awards Ceremony



The Management Committee of The Lodge Cultural, Community and Business Centre, Castlewellan were delighted to be runner-up in the category of 'Heritage' in the all-Ireland competition.



Down District Council Chairman, Councillor William Dick addresses the Pride of Place audience.



DSD Minister Margaret Ritchie and Chairman of Down District Council, Councillor William Dick with Pride of Place officials.



Almost 500 distinguished guests attended the glittering gala awards ceremony.



The wine waiter bursts into spontaneous song.



Entertaining the audience with a unique combination of surprise, comedy and opera.



Master of Ceremonies, Gerry Kelly.



Noel and Patricia Curran with Jennifer Davey from Ballyhornan and District Community Association.



Chairman, Councillor William Dick is joined by Santa to welcome children from Ballykinlar Army Base to Santa's Lapland Express Train, Downpatrick.



Councillor Dermot Curran is joined by John Toner, General Manager of the Slieve Donard Resort and Spa, Jamie Delargy, UTV's Business Editor and Council Chairman, Councillor William Dick to congratulate Judi Boyle of Northern Island Ltd on winning the Dermot Curran Young Achiever Award 2009.

Ballykinlar Families Visit Downpatrick Railway Museum

Down District Council Chairman, Councillor William Dick, welcomed families of 2nd Battalion The Rifles, stationed at Ballykinlar Army Base, to Downpatrick and County Down Railway. Approximately 90 children and 60 parents experienced the running of Santa's Lapland Express Steam Train. The visit was in acknowledgement of the difficulties experienced by the families who had undertaken a difficult and dangerous six month tour of duty in Afghanistan.

Best Initiative by a Local Councillor

Councillor Dermot Curran was awarded the accolade of 'Best Initiative by a Local Councillor' at the Northern Ireland Local Government Association Annual Awards for the Dermot Curran Young Achievers Awards scheme.

Dermot Curran Young Achiever Awards

The 2009 awards, hosted by UTV's Business Editor, Jamie Delargy, celebrated the enterprise of young people aged 16 - 35 years in Down district.

The winners were:

Dermot Curran Young Achiever Award for 2009

Presented to Judi Boyle of Northern Island Ltd, a language teaching and inward tourism business which provides an outstanding contribution to the economic development of the district. The award was presented by John Toner, General Manager of Slieve Donard Resort and Spa, and Chairman of the area's Workforce Development Forum.

Down Business Centre Graduate Award

Presented to Jonathan Quinn of Quinn Property Services for his development of a new property sales and rental business, by Owen O'Connor of Down Business Centre.

South Eastern Regional College (East Down Campus) Award For Best Overall Business Idea

Presented to Sherida Burns for a film festival concept, by Robert McLaughlin of SERC.

Dermot Curran Young Achiever Schools Award

Presented under two team categories, Culture and Citizenship was awarded to Down High School, Downpatrick with Assumption Grammar School, Ballynahinch. Science and Technology was awarded to Assumption Grammar School, Ballynahinch with Our Lady's School, Newry. Both awards were presented by Debbie Trainor of South Eastern Education and Library Board.

Revitalising the Area in Which We Live

£4.1 Million Ballymote Project Gets Underway

Work commenced on the new Ballymote project in July 2009 which included the provision of additional commercial and community facilities and a multi-use sports hall. The project is the result of a successful partnership between Down District Council, the Department for Social Development, Department of Health, Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure, Down Lisburn Trust, Sport NI, International Fund for Ireland, East Down Rural Community Network, Ballymote Community Project Ltd, the Flying Horse Community Forum and the Downpatrick Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership.

Newcastle Gateway Project

Down District Council secured funding from the Department for Social Development, Northern Ireland Tourist Board and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland to deliver an innovative tourism project in Newcastle. The £1 million project included an environmental improvement scheme at Castle Park and the provision of an entrance feature at the Newcastle roundabout, both of which complement the work already undertaken to the promenade and streetscape.

Ardglass Environmental Improvement Scheme

Down District Council obtained funding of £1.3 million from the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to implement an environmental improvement scheme in Ardglass. The scheme included new kerbs, provision of additional car parking, a planting scheme, feature lighting and new street furniture. An enhancement scheme was also undertaken at Castle Park and a new play park created at Quay Street.



Local members of ABC Pegasus Boxing Club join the Chairman of Down District Council, Councillor William Dick, DSD Minister Margaret Ritchie and Education Minister Catriona Ruane to launch the commencement of the £4.1m Ballymote Project in Downpatrick.



Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development, Michelle Gildernew and Council Chairman, Councillor William Dick launch the Ardglass Environmental Improvement Scheme.

Working in Partnership

Down to Business

Down District Council has laid the foundations for building an indigenous business support infrastructure as a key element of its Local Economic Development Strategy. Two staff are dedicated to providing local businesses with business information, development of business networks, contact with local business and programme development. £340,000 of funding has been allocated to help develop the scheme over three years, 50% of which has been secured from the Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment European Union Sustainable Competitiveness Programme.

History Project

Down County Museum and the Somme Heritage Centre were awarded £185,000 from Peace III European funding, to develop a community history project for groups in Down, North Down and Ards. The project called 'Our History' is a community history project aimed at creating positive cross-community engagement through the facilitation of shared and diverse local history and heritage.

Down Diversity in Action Forum

Down District Council supported the launch of a new partnership 'Down Diversity in Action' forum to celebrate diversity in Down district. The purpose of the forum is to engage with minority ethnic communities and migrant workers, to provide support and assistance to them, raise awareness of them and encourage their involvement in the wider community.

Play For All Disability Inclusion Project

Down District Council's 'Play For All Disability Inclusion Project' was attended by 44 children and young people with disabilities under the age of 18 years. The scheme enabled the children to participate in local mainstream recreational activities with the support of trained staff when necessary. Down District Council's partners involved in this project included the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust, Eastern Health and Social Services Board, Eastern Child Care Partnership and lead partner Barnardo's Northern Ireland.

PEACE III Partnership

The PEACE III Partnership, which is a cluster comprising North Down, Ards and Down local authority areas, secured funding of £2.7 million from the Special European Union Programmes Body. This funding is being used to implement plans to reinforce progress towards a peaceful society and to promote reconciliation within the cluster areas. The programme has awarded funding to a number of community, voluntary and public sector organisations to undertake activities which demonstrate how they will tackle issues of sectarianism and racism.

Community and Voluntary Organisations Support

Down District Council continued to demonstrate its commitment throughout the district by awarding over £90,368 of funding to supporting local community development and community relations initiatives. 65 grants were awarded under the Council's Community Development Support (CDS) Grant Scheme to 42 groups, and a further 20 grants were awarded to 18 groups through the Community Relations (CR) Grant Scheme. The funding provided support for groups' annual running costs, floral displays, Christmas trees and lighting, community festivals, development and community/good relations events and activities.



Chairman, Councillor William Dick with Principal Vivien Watt and pupils Sophie Woods and Ross McKeag during a visit to Saintfield High School to highlight the value of local democracy and community involvement to Year 12 pupils.



Winner of Down District Council's Lets Get Down to Business competition, Maura McCay from Curtain and Covers, receives her prize from Down District Council Chairman, Councillor William Dick and FastTech's Barry Hughes. Also included in the photograph is Councillor John Doris.

'Us and Them' Workshop

As part of Community Relations week, Down District Council organised a workshop entitled 'Us and Them'. The workshop enabled participants to understand the view point of others, and to address issues of identity in a constructive manner by looking at labels and symbols and how these can signal pride or prejudice, inclusion or exclusion.

'East Meets West' Polish Event

To celebrate Polish Cultural week, Down District Council in partnership with East Down Rural Community Network and Down Diversity in Action Forum, supported an evening of music and craic at Denvir's Hotel, Downpatrick. The event included a diverse range of musical traditions including Ulster-Scots, Irish and Polish.

Annual Conference of the Rural Community Network

The 18th Annual Conference of the Rural Community Network was hosted in Ballynahinch. The Rural Community Network is a regional voluntary organisation established to articulate the voice of rural communities on issues relating to poverty, disadvantage and equality. The conference theme was 'A Changing Sector in Challenging Times'.

Cultural Weave Conference

Down District Council has been working in partnership with the PSNI and Equality Commission to support a 'Cultural Weave Conference', which was held in the Arts Centre, Downpatrick. The conference, the first of its kind in Northern Ireland, highlighted how community arts initiatives can help to encourage minority ethnic integration and how ethnic minority culture and art can be incorporated into the local community to bring people together from different cultures and backgrounds.



Down District Community Safety Partnership Award recipients (from left): Peter Gribben (Newcastle), Colin Herron (Rowallane), Brendan Burns (Downpatrick) and Peter Joe Tumelty (Ballynahinch) are pictured with Community Safety Partnership Chairman Robert Burgess, Down District Council Chairman William Dick, Dan Mulholland, Head of Partnership Development, NI Community Safety Unit and Community Safety Partnership Vice-Chairman Michael Coogan.

Down District Community Safety Partnership

Down District Community Safety Partnership has been involved in a large number of activities over the course of the year including:

- Small Grants Programme, which distributed grants of up to £1,000 to local community groups to assist with the promotion of community safety initiatives in the Down district area.
- Provision of annual running costs to Community Safety Forums.
- Continued support for Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service's LIFE Scheme.
- Continued support for the 'Good Morning Down' project.
- Continued support for 'Handy Van Scheme' and the Down secured project.
- Management of the Town Centre CCTV system in Downpatrick, Newcastle and Ballynahinch.
- Schools' Bonfire Safety Poster Competitions in July and at Halloween.
- Implementation of action plans to tackle anti-social behaviour in Ballynahinch and in the Burrendale Estate in Newcastle
- The active encouragement of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes throughout the district.
- Acquisition of funding to develop a bonfire beacon scheme in Down district during July and at Halloween.
- Funded a research programme with young people in conjunction with the Down Youth Advisory Committee.
- Delivery of a summer and Halloween Splash programme which encouraged young people to take pride in their local communities.
- Worked in partnership with the District Policing Partnership to develop stronger links with the PSNI.
- Delivery of a Christmas anti-burglar campaign.
- Provision of alcohol test strips to enforcement teams for the detection of alcohol in soft drinks.

Down District Policing Partnership (DPP)

Throughout the year Down DPP continued to monitor police performance against the Local Policing Plan.

Down DPP held six public meetings throughout the district highlighting policing issues to local communities. One of the key issues identified was anti-social behaviour.

Down DPP were involved in:

- Youth Consultation at Greenhill YMCA
- Consultation with local publicans regarding the night-time economy.
- Peer action research project by the Down Youth Independent Advisory Group.
- PSNI youth event 'Dealing with Difference'.
- Underage drink test kit project.
- Training event for local businesses.
- Disability events including consultations with local Folds.
- PR campaigns covering issues such as burglary and bike safe.

Promoting the Area in Which We Live

St Patrick's Festival and Carnival Parade

The St Patrick's Festival delivered a range of activities and entertainment for the thousands of people who enjoyed the six day activity programme, including cross-community churches pilgrimage walk, street entertainment and cross-community carnival parade. Over 25,000 people supported the festival and created an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere as they lined the parade route to view the cavalcade of 56 entrants with floats, bands, dancers, entertainers and attractions comprising 996 participants. Special guests in the parade included elected representatives, Clergy from various Downpatrick Churches, members of Downpatrick Twinning Partnership and a number of international guests and delegates from France, Spain, Poland, Ireland, Hungary, Latvia, Romania, Portugal and Italy.

Celtic Fusion International Musical Arts Festival

A very successful international musical arts festival which attracted local, national and international visitors to Castlewellan and the surrounding area in July 2009. Headline artist, Tommy Fleming had a sell out concert in the Slieve Donard Resort and Spa and all other concerts were also sold out during the festival. The Celtic Fusion Award went to Kieran Goss for his contribution to the industry.

Newcastle Summer Season

Newcastle Summer Season, now in its seventh year, brought a host of entertainment to the seaside town, with acts such as Tumble Circus, Punch and Judy, Mr H and African Drumming on the promenade. Evening performances included several sell out shows by 'The Illegals', 'Mrs Whippy' by the Belvoir Players and an outdoor performance of 'Merlin the Magician' in Tollymore Forest Park, which attracted more than 400 people.

Hallowtides Festival

The week long festival in Newcastle was a great success with increased attendance for the spectacular fireworks display from the beach and central promenade. Entertainment included Cool FM's Pete Snodden, Finbarr Keaveney and his band alongside wonderful stilt performers and street entertainers.

Christkindl Festival

Downpatrick hosted a great Christmas event with UTV's Frank Mitchell and local band, The Screaming Ipods for the Christmas Lights Switch-On on 27 November. Large crowds enjoyed the festival with increased visitors on the evening.



Council Chairman, Councillor William Dick and UTV's Frank Mitchell help Santa to turn on Downpatrick's Christmas lights.



Cool FM's Pete Snodden with Halloween festival goers in Newcastle.

Opera Fringe

Opera Fringe catered to the classical music lovers in the district, providing two original staged operas 'Campanello' and 'Riders of the Sea,' with 20 young singers from across Ireland. The festival had an audience of 1,270 people over the three week period.

Arts Service Outreach

Activity of the Arts Service Outreach has included delivery of the refreshing and innovative, circus tent based, play 'The Family Hoffman'. More than 500 pupils in five local schools enjoyed this performance and more than 50 free tickets were provided to English and Drama students to attend Down Arts Centre theatre events throughout the year.

Exhibitions

Down Arts Centre hosted 18 exhibitions and presented the work of more than 100 local artists. Highlights of the year included the Northern Ireland Embroidery Guild exhibition, which emphasised the high standard of Northern Ireland textile work and local town land paintings, exhibited by artist Josephine Kelly, as well as displaying the haunting paintings of the mountains and seascapes of South Down, by award winning artist Ciaran Magill.

Workshops

A number of workshops were delivered across the district including; Batik Silk, jewellery making, outdoor sketching, baby dance and ceramics. All of the workshops resulted in a tremendous response from the public and a significant growth in participant numbers.

Access to the Countryside

A number of different projects were completed in 2009/10 including the re-branding of the Ulster Way and the Newcastle Way (formerly the Newcastle Challenge Trail). The Newcastle Way is now a 'Waymarked Way' with international marketing support being provided through the Countryside Access and Activities Network. The Lecale Way has also been extended out now beginning in Downpatrick.

The Mourne International Walking Festival was held in Newcastle with visitors from the USA, Germany, Belgium, Republic of Ireland, England and the Netherlands. A very successful St Patrick's Day walk took place with approximately 500 people attending.

Poetry

'Poems for a Sunday Afternoon' was launched in conjunction with 'Write', 30 local amateur writers who took part in an afternoon of poetry reading and music. Due to the success of this event it became a regular feature, which attracted local artists and recognised authors including Maria McManus, Malachi O'Doherty, Damien Smyth and Grainne Tobin.



Tommy Sands presents Kieran Goss, pictured with his wife Ann Kinsella, with the Celtic Fusion Award for Outstanding Contribution to Traditional Culture.

Tourism Event Sponsorship 2008 - 2009

Applicant	Grant £'s
FIM World Bike Trails	£15,000
Downpatrick Railway	£24,000
Strangford Lough Race Week	£5,000
Downpatrick Race Club	£5,000
Newcastle CCE	£5,000
Killyleagh Social Partnership / Magnus Barelegs Viking Association	£4,000
Dibney River Conservation Trust	£2,000
Castlewellan and District Agricultural Show	£2,000
Hillsborough District Motorcycle Club	£2,000
Downpatrick Blues / Roots Society	£2,000
Twinning Downpatrick / Bezons	£2,000
Twinning Ballynahinch / Lamorlaye	£2,000
Twinning Downpatrick / Listowel	£1,500
Castleward Opera	£1,000
Ballynahinch Carriage Driving Festival	£1,000
Mourne Mountain Marathon	£500
Vintage Motorcycle NI Section	£300

Protecting the Public

Food Premises Rating System

A food premises rating system was introduced to provide the public with a simple and clear summary of the outcomes of inspections of food premises. The system uses a star rating from zero to 5 stars, which are awarded depending on compliance with food legislation. Visit www.downdc.gov.uk to view scores for food premises in the Down area.

Roadside Air Samples

Following the monitoring of roadside air samples throughout the district, it became evident that nitrogen dioxide levels were exceeding the prescribed levels at a main junction in Downpatrick. To determine the required course of action, Council installed a 'real time' analyser, which samples air quality minute by minute. The information obtained will provide a more clear and accurate analysis of the situation.

Tobacco Control

Down District Council, in partnership with Castlereagh Borough Council received funding from the Public Health Agency to employ a Tobacco Control Officer to ensure compliance with the law on smoking in public places and regulations concerning the non sale of tobacco to people under 18 years of age.

Enforcement

Down District Council completed the recruitment of three full time Enforcement Officers and three Seasonal Enforcement Officers, who have been in place over the past three summers. A Community Safety Warden was also appointed. All of these officers work to enforce the bye-laws relating to tourist amenity car parks, on street drinking and illegal encampment on beaches, along with street trading, litter enforcement and anti-social behaviour across the Down district area.

Public Protection Initiatives

Working in partnership with the Health and Safety Executive (NI), the following initiatives were delivered:

- A 'Gas Wise' initiative on safety in the use of gas installations and appliances in catering premises.
- Safety in the use of woodworking equipment.
- Noise in entertainment premises and the protection of staff from noise.
- Risks and precautions to be taken in the case of deaths from swine flu was delivered to Funeral Directors in the district.
- 'Unsafe' campaign, where sun protection information was delivered to childminders throughout the district.



Promoting No Smoking Day, Miss Carys Magill attempts to 'break free' from The Big Cig, aka Down District Council's Tobacco Control Officer, Mr Richard Cardwell.



Julie McKinstry-Harvey, Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland (FSA in NI) and Dr David McCleery, safefood with Rachel Carr from Down District Council (centre) highlight the importance of good food hygiene in the home.

Flood Protocol

Emergencies affecting communities are handled via a joint response team comprising the local community, the emergency services, local authorities and utility companies. Down District Council and the Annsborough community have worked together to ensure there is a readily available and accessible supply of sandbags in the event of flooding. Down District Council, in partnership with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Rivers Agency, has also agreed on a joint protocol for the siting of a container of sandbags on its property, allowing decisive action to be taken in relation to:

- Identifying and contacting vulnerable people who may need assistance in the event of evacuation.
- Ensuring that sandbags are provided quickly to those most in need.
- Cascading information quickly from the agencies to the community.
- Reviewing local incidents to identify lessons learned.
- Identifying volunteers who can assist with simple evacuations.
- Appointing key holders who can access the sandbag containers.

Corporate Health and Safety

Down District Council employs a number of people in a variety of roles to engage with stakeholders. The Council has employed a Corporate Health and Safety Advisor to help managers plan and control the risks employees may face. These risks might be in relation to asbestos, biological hazards, chemicals, driving for work, electricity, fire, explosive gases, hygiene, lifting equipment, noise, power tools and water safety.

Births, Deaths and Marriages

The total number of marriage notices taken by the Down Registration Department was 353 of which 331 were solemnised. There were 908 births and one still birth registered in the period, along with 530 deaths.



Down District Council's Director of Environmental Services, Canice O'Rourke with members of the Council's ISO 14001 Project Team, Marie Ward, Damien Morgan, Tony McCrory and Colette O'Rourke.

Sustainability Strategy

In partnership with the Energy Saving Trust, Down District Council commenced the development of an Energy Management / Sustainability Strategy. The programme provides the Council with expert assistance in the identification of the best sustainable energy solutions. It also enables the Council to meet current and future targets set by the Government and to demonstrate leadership to the local community concerning use and conservation of energy.

ISO 14001 accreditation was achieved through the hard work and team efforts of Down District Council's Environmental Health, Environmental Services, Building Control, Grounds Maintenance and Estates departments. Through the implementation of an environmental management system, the amount of internal waste has been minimised thanks to measures introduced to ensure best practice and the responsible use of natural resources, including water, fuel and energy. Suppliers and contracted services have been encouraged to improve their environmental performance to reduce the environmental impact of goods purchased.

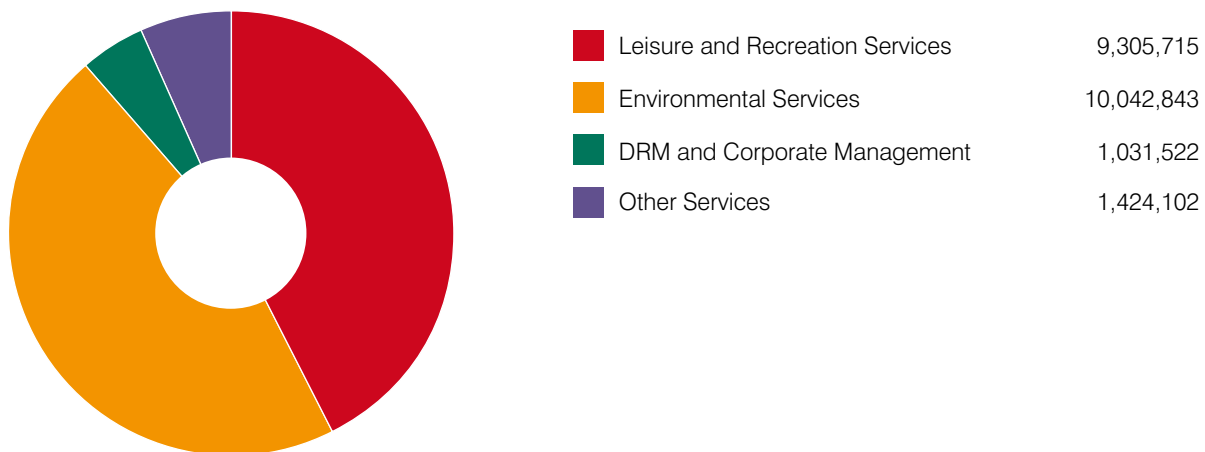
Construction Activity 2009 - 2010

Overall construction activity within the Down area exceeded £64M. Applications received and construction work starting on site were 11% lower than the previous year with a peak of 764 new dwellings in 2006 to 270 dwellings this year.

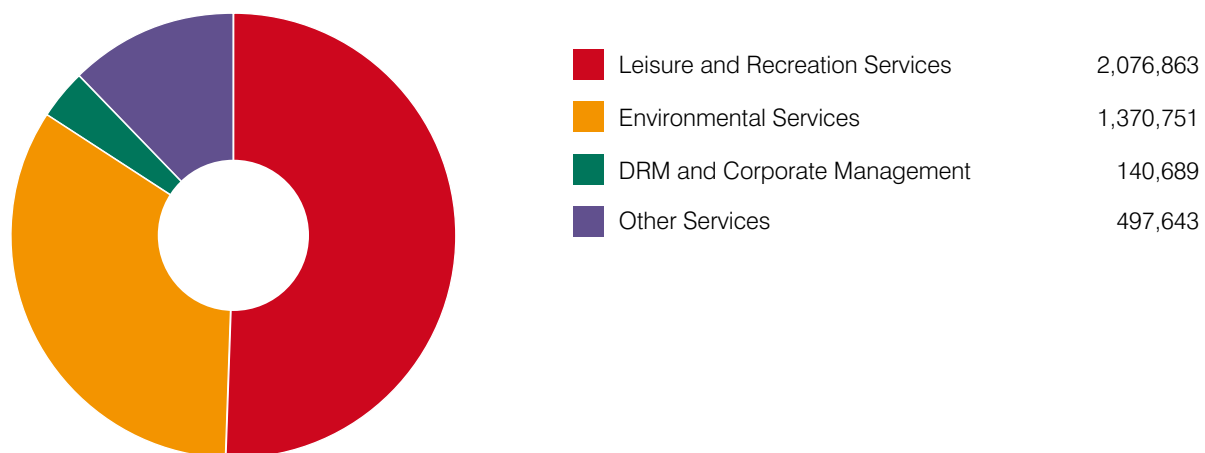
Where the Money Goes

	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure
Leisure and Recreational Services			
Culture and Heritage	1,415,780	130,673	1,285,107
Recreation and Sport	5,488,106	1,407,000	4,081,106
Tourism	1,660,517	177,456	1,483,061
Community Services	741,312	361,734	379,578
Sub Total	9,305,715	2,076,863	7,228,852
Environmental Services			
Cemetery, Cremation and Mortuary	176,628	11,126	165,502
Environmental Health	1,124,902	60,519	1,064,383
Public Conveniences	166,544	279	166,265
Licensing	32,812	26,422	6,390
Flood Defence and Land Drainage			
Other Cleaning	1,132,692	20,294	1,112,398
Waste Collection	2,785,352	498,348	2,287,004
Waste Disposal	3,855,599	331,328	3,524,271
Building Control	684,036	422,435	261,601
Minor Works	84,278		84,278
Sub Total	10,042,843	1,370,751	8,672,092
DRM and Corporate Management			
Democratic Representation and Management	924,892	139,824	785,068
Corporate Management	106,630	865	105,765
Sub Total	1,031,522	140,689	890,833
Other Services			
Trading Services	184,447	23,521	160,926
Economic Development	519,993	114,350	405,643
Non-Distributed Costs	3,999		3,999
Central Services to the Public	715,663	359,772	355,891
Sub Total	1,424,102	497,643	926,459
Net Cost of Services	21,804,182	4,085,946	17,718,236

Gross Expenditure £000's



Income £000's





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