

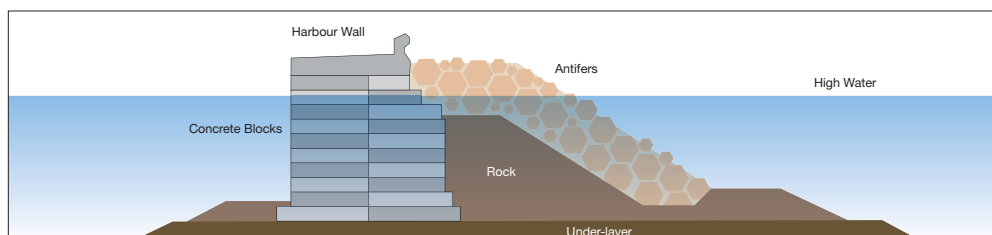


Greystones Harbour Update

The New Harbour project, which will create the best community harbour in Ireland, is progressing well. The harbour and buildings for the Sea Scouts, Rowers, Anglers, Sailors, Divers and Coastguard should be complete in 18 months. It will take a further 2 years to complete the public square, homes, shops, boardwalk and public park.

The Harbour is designed to:

- Be a recreation centre for an expanding population
- Put leisure use of the sea as a central feature of the town
- Produce a focal point and 'Icon' for the town
- Provide public access to the sea.



In the Autumn an Easterly Gale, together with a high spring tide, caused some damage to the partially completed walls. When the storm struck the blocks had been laid, but the outer rock and antifer protection had not been completed causing some blocks to shift. Lifting and relaying them has delayed progress by 4 weeks but it is hoped this time can be made up. A red barge has been brought in to speed up laying the blocks and protecting them with rocks. A small temporary pier has been constructed, adjoining the Kish base, to provide protection for the barge from medium force storms.



The Gap Bridge, which was damaged many years ago by erosion, has been cleared with the attractive granite stones being preserved for use elsewhere. This, together with purchasing some land, has allowed good pedestrian access to the North Beach.

World Marina Conference presentation.



I was very pleased to be asked to make a presentation about the Greystones Harbour Plan at the World Marina Conference which was held in Ostende, Belgium. It was attended by 464 delegates from 44 different countries and is the largest of its type. Although our harbour is small in international terms it is unusual because of the large amount of public facilities which are being provided. There was special interest from the Australian delegates, who felt that they could learn from our project's unique and innovative features.



Two New Schools

Educate Together and Gaelscoile

The population has expanded greatly over the last 5 years. In 2007 I did a study which showed that an extra 32 primary school classrooms and teachers would be needed by 2015. Much pressure was exerted on the Department of Education and the result is that an Educate Together and Gaelscoile have opened in September 2008 by Lidl. These have 8 classrooms each and can be expanded to 16 later. The Department built them in 3 months from the time they started digging which must be a record! We were very sceptical in May that it could possibly be ready in time. Congratulations to the 2 Voluntary groups which lobbied and raised funds to get the schools going. It was pleasing to be able to help them on some issues.



There is a 12 acre site next to them zoned for a Secondary School. This can be built as needed when the children are older, which will be some years away. Greystones has enough land zoned for Education for the next 20 years. The Councillors zoned this land for education and have made these schools available for our expanding population before a crisis developed.

Cycling in Greystones

We need to encourage more people to cycle and walk. Encouraging children to cycle to school is good for their health and independence. The cycle path from the N11, through Charlesland, to the station is good. We intend to develop a series of Green routes for walking and cycling and now have the funds to study how to do this in 2009. Following the design stage these will be implemented over time. The cycle rack at the station is always full and I have asked for more to be provided. In 2009 the Council will provide more spaces and will try to remove unused bikes that are clogging it up.



Cycling Around the World



Two Greystones men, Simon Evans and Fearghal O'Nuallain are doing the first Irish circumnavigation of the globe by bicycle. Their expedition will cover over 30,000km, passing through 30 countries and some of the highest, lowest, driest, coldest, warmest and loneliest places on earth. Follow their progress on www.revolutioncycle.ie

Greystones Arts Festival

This is to be run again in 2009 on the August Bank Holiday weekend and is great for adults and children. Cllr. Grainne McLoughlin has done a great job as Chairperson and chief organiser for some years but was busy last year. She will be taking up the reins again for 2009.

M50/N11 Traffic Jams

The junction of the two mororways is in danger of seizing up and nobody is paying any attention to it. The wellbeing and prosperity of East Wicklow is dependent on a good link to the M50. My top priority, in my year as Cathaoirleach, is to get attention on it and get a study started on how to solve it. The problems include:

- Traffic Jams most mornings and evenings
- 4 lanes reducing to 2
- The road is taking 1.75 times the traffic it was designed for.
- More cars will use it when the M50 upgrade to Sandyford is complete.
- The Government is telling Wicklow to accept 40% more people in the next 13 years.



Derek Mitchell leading the delegation to the National Roads Authority to argue for this study.

Coastal Walk from Greystones to Wicklow Town

This is a great walk but must be improved before it can be used by more people. My second priority as Cathaoirleach is to get a plan together. The rail track must be fenced off from the walking path and a path welded onto the side of 2 rail bridges for safety reasons. I have had a positive meeting with Irish Rail and The National Parks and Wildlife Service and hope progress can be made. Probably the stretch from Greystones to Kilcoole would be done first as it is the shortest and simplest.



This would complement the Cliff Walk to Bray and one could get a train to one end and walk one way. Few walks would be so accessible to public transport.

I have also pushed to get a footpath from Kilcoole to the station included as part of the Kilcoole Plan.

BUDGET CRISIS

The Fianna Fail/ Green Government is making major cuts in the Education, Health and Council services. For example Wicklow County Councils grant has been cut by 7%.

Fine Gael's alternative Policy was to freeze Public Sector wages, over _50,000 a year, which would have saved enough money to lessen the cuts in services. Instead FF has protected those who 'have' as against those who 'have not'.

MORE TRAINS NEEDED

More trains are needed to Greystones, Kilcoole and Wicklow Town and the area would benefit greatly from this.

After spending 22 years campaigning with Cllr. George Jones to get the DART to Greystones, I asked the Council in 2003 to produce an outline report on how to upgrade the line but the Government ignored this report. Ours is the only line out of Dublin not to get a significant upgrade so I intend to keep pushing this.

Best Station of the Year

Greystones Train Station won the Best Station of the Year prize awarded by Irish Rail. Congratulations to the voluntary group that maintains the plants and to the station staff.

Greystones Theatre NOW OPEN

Greystones Theatre, which opened in the summer has music, drama and comedy in a very attractive venue beside the Meridian Centre. Also music and dance classes. This increases the cultural offering of the town. Check out the programme on www.greystonestheatre.com

Delgany By-Pass

This road is to connect the road by Delgany National School with Convent Road. It also serves St. Lawrence National School and will make it more convenient to get there. This has been on the plans for 25 years but nothing was happening. It took some pushing but it has now started and should be completed in mid 2009. It will have good footpaths and cycle lanes. There is a need to connect this through to Lidl and while this is planned it will be some time coming. The 2 new schools on the road increase the need for the road.

Swimming Pool and Community Centre

I was delighted to officially open the complex. Being Cathaoirleach of the County Council is an honour and a privilege at any time, but this was the highlight for me. The 25metre swimming pool, Learner & Baby Pool, Aqua Fit Classes, aerobics studios and largest gym in Wicklow are great. The very flexible layout of the Community hall can have up to 8 Badminton Courts or other combinations of basketball courts or indoor soccer pitches & tiered seating. The music rehearsal room will be a great facility for all. Eight fully trained staff are there to help you. Details on www.shorelineleisure.ie. Drop in, have a Latté coffee and talk to the staff about using it. There is no excuse not to be fit!



It cost €17m and is the result of great deal of work from the Community Centre Group and

Wicklow County Council	€8.5 million
Central Government	€4.5 million
Builders of Charlesland	€3.5 million
Community Fundraising	€0.8 Million

Greystones Swimming Club over more than 15 years, and also the full backing of all Greystones Town Councillors and T.Ds. It shows what can be done when the united force of the community is applied to a problem. The funding came from many sources:



Study I spoke to a pool lobby group in Swords and they were very impressed with the support which Wicklow Council was giving as they could not get the same from their Council. We are lucky we got the funds before the 2008 cutbacks!

In 1999, when researching how to set about getting a pool and assisting with the Preliminary Feasibility



Greystones wins Major UN World award for Liveable Communities!!

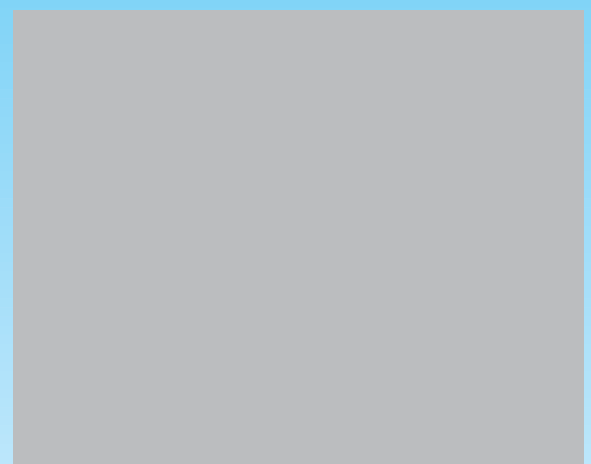
Greystones won the award for the **Best Community** under 20,000 population in the **whole world**. The competition judges: Enhancement of the Landscape, Planning for the Future, Healthy Lifestyles, Heritage management, Community Sustainability and Environmentally Sustainable Practices. Held in Dongguan China, a previous overall winner, it was said to be the biggest event in China this year after the Olympic Games.

The judges said that 'the number of initiatives this community has come up with was impressive for a community of this size and that the number of partnerships and activities it is supporting is phenomenal'. The excellent sports facilities and the harbour project played a major role in this win.

Congratulations to Cllr Grainne McLoughlin who initiated and led the bid for the award and to the Mayor George Jones who also made presentations. The Chamber of Commerce assisted with the video, which was a key part of winning.

Further information on www.livcomawards.com

Fine Gael Candidates for Greystones Town Council



Cllrs Derek Mitchell, George Jones, Grainne McLoughlin and Simon Harris.



Cllr Derek Mitchell CATHAOIRLEACH, WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL,

Kiltoorish, Manor Avenue, Greystones, Co. Wicklow. email mitchelldd@eircom.net Telephone: 01-2874115.