

**COMMUNITY,
CULTURE &
ENTERPRISE
DIRECTORATE**

**STIÚRTHÓIREACHT
POBAIL, CULTÚIR
AGUS
FIONTAIR**

Prepared by/Ullmhaithe ag:

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Community, Culture & Enterprise /
Pobail, Cultúr agus Fiontair

**COMMUNITY, CULTURE & ENTERPRISE
POBAL, CULTÚR AGUS FIONTAIR**

Draft Budgeted Expenditure: €8,393,164

Draft Budgeted Income: €2,052,984

The following sets out the details for each Service Division

Division D

**DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
BAINISTIÚ FORBRAÍOCHTA**

Draft Budgeted Expenditure: €3,412,160

Draft Budgeted Income: €1,377,593

(Pages 18-20 of Blue Pages)

Division F

**RECREATION AND AMENITY
CAITHEAMH AIMSIRE AGUS TAITNEAMHACHT**

Draft Budgeted Expenditure: €4,981,004

Draft Budgeted Income: €675,391

(Pages 25-27 of Blue Pages)

INTRODUCTION

The Community, Culture and Enterprise Directorate has two divisions, namely the Community and Enterprise Division and the Cultural Services Division.

The Community and Enterprise Division has numerous roles including fund management (internal and external funds), County Development Board Management, Social Inclusion and assisting community and economic development.

The Cultural Services Division's responsibilities include management of library, arts, archives, heritage and museum services across the County.

RANNÓG POBAIL AGUS FIONTAIR

Le linn 2010 beidh an Rannóg Pobail agus Fiontair ag leanacht ar aghaidh le obair le forbairt eacnamúil, sóisialta agus chultúrtha an chontae a chuir chun cinn. Beifear ag diriú ar neithe mar Forbairt Pobal, Forbairt Acmhainní Aitiúla, Forbairt Shoisialta, Bainistiú Cisti Airigidis éagsúla. Deanfar bainistiú chomh maith ar Bord Forbartha Chontae Dhún na nGall agus coordnú ar cur í bhfeidhm An Stratéis - Stratéis Eacnamúil, Soisialta agus Chultúrtha Chontae Dhún na nGall.

Tá príomheachtaí forbartha aitheanta í gothéacs na strateise agus beidh siad seo á chuir chun cinn trí réimse de thionscnaimh eagsúla. Bainfidh na tionscnaimh seo le m.sh. Forbairt Turasoíreacht, Fiontar agus Forbairt Fuinneamh Inathnuaithe.

The table on the next page sets out the work objects/processes and identifies the Pay and Non Pay costs as well as the Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) numbers charged.

| Work Process | Pay | Non-Pay | Total | WTE |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| 22. To provide services on an agency basis for external bodies or individuals and recoup associated costs. | 2,314.76 | 52,665.00 | 54,979.76 | 0.04 |
| 34. To provide infrastructure and other supports for job creation / maintenance of employment. | 44,602.21 | 4,354.13 | 48,956.34 | 0.46 |
| 35. To support the development of tourism in the county. | 244,768.40 | 124,255.38 | 369,023.78 | 3.1 |
| 36. To promote the economic and social development of the county through the creation and support of networks at inter-agency and community levels. | 176,731.84 | 23,169.63 | 199,901.47 | 2.74 |
| 37. To support the work of the County Development Board. | 166,992.15 | 27,880 | 194,872.15 | 2.5 |
| 38. To initiate and deliver economic and community development projects under a range of funding programmes. | 100,007.95 | 756,880.69 | 856,888.64 | 1.8 |
| 39. To provide research support and strategic policy assistance. | 113,844.35 | 7,949.13 | 121,793.48 | 2.1 |
| 40. To manage and allocate funds under a range of programmes. | 381,213.45 | 1,003,960.46 | 1,385,173.91 | 6.6 |
| 41. To support the work of the Donegal Youth Council | 30,108.30 | 38,222.14 | 68,330.44 | 1.1 |
| 42. To devise and implement a range of social inclusion measures. | 92,311.20 | 7,489.88 | 99,801.08 | 1.6 |
| 46. To protect and enhance the heritage of the county, including the built environment. | 87,579.50 | 12,750 | 100,329.50 | 1.25 |
| 62. To provide, operate and improve library services. | 2,170,259 | 1,141,150 | 3,311,409.00 | 53.5 |
| 63. To provide and operate an archives service. | 64,631 | 104,300 | 168,931.00 | 1 |
| 64. To provide, operate, maintain and support the provision of sporting and community facilities. | 39,022.84 | 5,233.33 | 44,256.17 | 1.06 |
| 65. To provide, operate and maintain playgrounds. | 24,893.35 | 24,467.80 | 49,361.15 | 0.85 |
| 67. To support and facilitate the development of the Arts. | 75,369 | 449,999 | 525,368.00 | 1.2 |
| 68. To operate the Regional Cultural Centre. | 123,101 | 171,800 | 294,901.00 | 3 |
| 69. To deliver the Public Art Programme. | 101,852 | 8,050 | 109,902.00 | 2 |
| 70. To operate and develop museum services. | 199,728 | 160,600 | 360,328.00 | 4 |
| 94. To provide assistance to customers who visit our offices or telephone us. | 11,371.20 | 150 | 11,521.20 | 0.3 |
| 115. To provide accounts payable services. | 16,911.50 | 225 | 17,136.50 | 0.5 |
| Totals: | 4,267,613.00 | 4,125,551.57 | 8,393,164.57 | 90.7 |

COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE

The main functions of the Community and Enterprise Division can be summarised under the following headings:

- Fund Management (Internal and External)
- Cross Border Networks / EU Liaison
- County Development Board
- Social Inclusion Unit
- Community Development
- Development Support / Local Resource Development
- Play, Recreation and Amenity Development
- Research & Policy / Strategic Policy Development
- Tourism Development

FUND MANAGEMENT

The Division manages a range of internal and external support funds.

INTERNAL FUNDS

During 2009 internal funds as detailed below were managed by the Division

| | € | No. of Projects |
|---|---------|-----------------|
| Development Fund Initiative | 540,000 | 45 |
| Members Development Fund including balances carried forward from previous years | 323,350 | 401 |
| Council Bursaries | 16,300 | 39* |
| Tourism Development Fund | 133,000 | |

* Applications received in 2008 (accumulated balance to allocated in 2010)

DEVELOPMENT FUND INITIATIVE

A sum in the amount of €540,000 is again proposed in the 2010 Draft Revenue Budget with an equal allocation of €108,000 to each of the five Electoral Areas in the County. Each Electoral Area will determine its own developmental priorities taking account of any existing legal or multi-annual commitments.

MEMBERS DEVELOPMENT FUND

It is proposed to include a figure of €184,100 in the Draft Revenue Budget for 2010 for the Members Development Fund. This fund enables the provision of support to numerous groups/bodies across a wide range of activities.

COUNCIL BURSARIES

A figure of €16,300 is included in the Draft Revenue Budget for 2010 for Council Bursaries in 2010. It is proposed that this amount and any accumulated balance under the Bursary Programme be allocated in 2010.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FUND

A figure of €133,000 is included in the Draft Revenue Budget 2010 under this heading. This budget will be used to fund the Local Resource Officer's post, to provide an allocation to Donegal Tourism Ltd. and to provide a small fund for each Electoral Area to access external funding for initiatives through programmes such as the National Rural Development Programme, Interreg IVA, Failte Ireland and other NDP funded initiatives.

EXTERNAL FUNDS

DONEGAL PEACE 3 ACTION PLAN 2008 - 2010

Having secured €4.7m of Peace 3 Programme Funding the Social Inclusion Unit via a dedicated Peace 3 team delivered a range of actions in 2009 in accordance with the Peace 3 Action Plan 2008-2010:

- €1.7m allocated via the Small Grants Scheme to 40 groups throughout the County.
- Donegal County Development Board's Peace and Reconciliation Partnership has allocated €1.4m to four partner organisations, including Donegal County Council, to deliver specific elements of the Peace 3 Action Plan.
- Donegal County Council has also procured the services of suitably qualified organisations to deliver specific actions of the Peace 3 Action Plan.

Almost €4m was allocated in 2009 and the remainder of the funding will be allocated in 2010. In addition, 2010 will see the development of the second phase of the Peace 3 Action Plan 2011 - 2013 which will once again involve an extensive consultation process with all key stakeholders in the County. It is expected that this Plan will be submitted to the SEUPB by May 2010.

The Draft Revenue Budget 2010 includes an expenditure provision of €1,107,959.

INTERREG IVA/IVB/IVC AND OTHER EU PROGRAMMES

The Division has, in conjunction with a range of partner Councils both within the ICBAN, North West Region Cross Border Group and North East Partnership Region areas of Northern Ireland, developed a range of co-operative projects which have seen submissions made to Interreg IVA via the Special EU Programmes Body for funding. These initiatives which are currently nearing final stages of approval will involve Donegal County Council as lead or project partner in a number of areas, including:

- Sustainable Islands Tourism Initiative (Tourism/Environment Development)
- Renewable Energies including Wave and Tidal Project (RESOURCE project)
- Tourism Product Initiatives (e.g. Sliabh Liag, Interpretive Panels, Walking & Trails Development, Inch levels awareness)
- Tourism Marketing and Management
- Direct Economic interventions including a further Diaspora project and Estates Management & Infrastructure project
- Urban and Village Renewal Projects
- Interventions to support the creation of additional economic activity
- Interventions to support specific economic sectors and activities (in conjunction with the County Enterprise Board), including workforce enhancement, labour market interventions, clustering etc.
- Spatial Planning Information & Analysis
- Collaborative projects in the areas of health and healthy living, sports development & outreach

The Division will also pursue transnational activity with Scotland and other European countries under Interreg IVB, IVC and other relevant EU Programmes and continue to work with the Irish Regions Office in maximising external funding for the Council.

CROSS BORDER NETWORKS/EU LIAISON

During 2010 the Division will continue to consolidate and support Council participation in cross-border networks - the North West Region Cross Border Group (NWRCBG) and the Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN). It will also support the North West Gateway Initiative (NWGI).

2010 will also see a focus on the area of EU liaison with a view towards sourcing funds and forming partnerships for development.

COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD

The Community and Enterprise Division is responsible for the coordination and management of the County Development Board and its various sub structures. In 2009 a review of the County Strategy was carried out and arising from this the County Development Board agreed a detailed Action Plan for the period 2009 - 2012 with a focus on the following areas:

- To develop Donegal as a lead region for the Green Economy
- To promote enterprise and skills development in the region
- To develop a Donegal Brand across all sectors
- To ensure best access to services for the community of Donegal
- To fully develop the County's cultural resources
- To fully develop the County's natural resources

A range of activities to promote each of these areas will be undertaken by the Community and Enterprise Division and the County Development Board Partners in 2010.

COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD ECONOMIC SUB COMMITTEE

The County Development Board's Economic Sub Committee has been established to coordinate the activities of the bodies involved in economic development, job creation and training/education in the County. During 2010 this Committee will continue to ensure that a coordinated approach is adopted to economic development in the County and that relevant County Development Board priority goals are pursued. This committee will continue to meet with the Elected Members of Donegal County Council on a bi-annual basis.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATION

The Division on behalf of the Donegal CDB will continue to endorse the work programmes of Local Development Companies in the county - Donegal Local Development Company (DLDC), Meitheal Forbaetha Na Gaeltachta) MFG, Inishowen Development Partnership and Comhar na nOileain. The Division will continue to promote and facilitate a coordinated approach to local development companies to ensure the best use of resources through collaborative planning and implementation of projects. Expressions of

interest have been submitted by Donegal County Council to the four Local Development Companies outlining areas of common interest. In 2010, the Islands Local Area Team established under the County Development Board, will work to coordinate the delivery of externally funded programmes for the benefit of the Islands e.g. the National Rural Development Programme (NRDP), Local Development Social Inclusion Programme (LDSIP), Interreg IVA and various agency initiatives to the offshore islands. This collaborative approach to local development coordination is also being adopted across various sectors such as tourism (e.g. Malin Head), walking trails (Bealach na Gaeltachta) and community education (Tuath Centre for Learning).

Work will continue in 2010 on 3 pilot integrated Local Development Projects in Newtowncunningham, Castlefinn and Gleann Cholmchille on areas of particular importance to local communities in planning and developing their areas in a sustainable manner.

SOCIAL INCLUSION UNIT

Donegal County Council's Social Inclusion Unit is housed within the Community, Culture and Enterprise Directorate and delivers a range of programmes/services across the following 5 broad areas:

- Embedding social inclusion across the service areas of Donegal County Council
- Supporting interagency collaboration in the delivery of public services via the County Development Board framework
- Coordinating and supporting the work of Donegal Youth Council
- Supporting community development within the County
- Delivering the Donegal Peace 3 Action Plan 2008 -2010 (see Fund Management)

EMBEDDING SOCIAL INCLUSION IN THE WORK OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

In accordance with the Government's commitment to tackling poverty and promoting Social Inclusion at local level, the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government continued in 2009 to fund 50% of the staffing cost of the Social Inclusion Unit (i.e. two staff at Grade V and Grade VI). A number of key activities were delivered as follows:

- Setting up the internal Social Inclusion Forum (SIF)
- Development of a Profile on Poverty and Exclusion in Donegal
- Social Inclusion Awareness week (40+ events organised)
- Keeping Warm Community Initiative
- Liaison with FAI "Soccer in the Community" Development Officer
- Grant assistance to GAA towards their 'Moving Forward Together' development plan
- Work with the Sports Partnership

SUPPORTING INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION IN THE DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES VIA THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD FRAMEWORK

- Support for the County Development Board Social Inclusion Measures (SIM) Group
- Support for the work of the County Development Board Interagency Group on Traveller Issues (including 'Pilot Tenant Participation Project', 'Pavee Pathways, Opening Employment Opportunities for Travellers in Donegal' and 'Building Positive Relations').

DONEGAL YOUTH COUNCIL

2009 proved to be another busy year for the 36 Donegal Youth Councillors at both local Electoral Area level and County level, activities included the following:

- Area meetings
- 200 newsletters produced
- Working with Road Safety Working Group
- Involved in an advisory capacity with regard to with Sexual Health Promotion initiatives
- Dáil na nÓg
- Peace 3 funded Citizens Now project

An extensive programme of activities is planned for the Youth Council in 2010. The Draft Revenue Budget 2010 includes a provision of €39,535 under this heading.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Social Inclusion Unit through its dedicated Community Development Officer provided a range of supports to the community and voluntary sector in Donegal in 2009, including:

- Supporting the work of the Donegal County Community Forum
- Monthly Donegal Community Bulletin
- Production of a 'Toolkit' for community groups
- Dedicated community development web page on the Donegal County Council website
- Donegal County Pride of Place Award Scheme
- Community Smoke Alarm Scheme
- Junior Achievement Ireland Programme

In 2010, the Community Development Officer will continue to build on the success of this work over the last number of years and to support Community & Voluntary groups in the County in terms of responding to needs in a rapidly changing environment.

DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT/LOCAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

BUSINESS SUPPORT UNIT

2010 will see the consolidation of the Council's Business Support Unit to act as a resource for ensuring a co-ordinated approach to the provision of public services for businesses planning to locate or expand in the County.

FORBAIRT CULTÚRTHA

The Division will continue to promote the development of Culture as a resource for the economic development of the County. In this context work will continue to attract high profile events (e.g. Oireachtas na Gaelige) to the County. The hosting of Oireachtas na Gaelige and Oireachtas Rinci Uradh in Letterkenny in 2009 saw in excess of 30,000 people visit the town with an estimated economic benefit of €7million.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO EXTERNAL BODIES

The Council has made annual contributions for many years to a range of organisations and bodies to assist in various developmental programmes. Subject to the availability of funding within the respective budget heads it is proposed that this would be continued in 2010 to include the following:

- Junior Achievement
- Rehab of People of the Year Awards
- Cross Border Cooperation/Project Supports
- Donegal Tourism Ltd.

- Club Dhún na nGall
- Cumann Lúthchleas Gael Dhún na nGael (Developmental Plan - 'Moving Forward Together')

PROJECT SUPPORT

The Division provides hands on support for a range of community, sectoral and other projects throughout the county.

PLAY RECREATION & AMENITY DEVELOPMENT

The multi annual programme establishing play areas as prioritised by Members continued in 2009 and will see a range of projects continuing to be developed and finalised into early 2010 as detailed in the schedule below.

Priority lists have been established by each of the electoral areas. The Division will continue to develop these proposals in 2010 in conjunction with other relevant developmental organisations and funders.

PLAYGROUND DEVELOPMENT 2009

| Play Facility | Status | Funded By |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Ballymacool Letterkenny | Complete | Town Council |
| Ballyliffen | Officially Opened 08/04/09 | NCO, DCS |
| Tamney | Officially Opened 09/04/09 | Disability Funding, DCS, Local Group |
| Creelough | Private contractor installed playground as part of Housing estate and in process of being handed over to Housing section in DCC | |
| Kilcar | Tender has been awarded and gone to construction | MFG, Local Group |
| Clós Phadraig Carndonagh | Tender has been awarded and gone to construction | Disability Funding, Housing Capital Prog (DOEHLG) |
| Ard na Ri Letterkenny | Officially opened 26 th May 2009 | DOEHLG & Housing Capital |

This programme has been greeted exceptionally well by all communities and the challenge will be to maintain a revenue stream from internal and external sources to continue to meet demand for such facilities.

Cuireann an Chlár seo go mór le caighdeán maireachtála an chontae, go mór mór do phaistí agus daoine óga thrí chéile.

MINI PITCH DEVELOPMENT/FORBAIRT MIONPHÁIRCEANNA

The Council has during 2009 finalised the development of a range of pilot Mini Pitches, the seed funding for which was provided through the Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism and the Football Association of Ireland with the balance of the funding allocated by the County Council. Four locations as detailed in the table below were completed and opened in early 2009.

Bearing in mind the Council's responsibility for supporting the wider social inclusion agenda every effort will be made during 2010 to further progress this particular initiative. Limited internal funds indicate that the bulk of the capital funding required will have to be accessed externally and efforts will be made on an ongoing basis with regard to the National Rural Development Programme, Interreg Programme and other NDP supported Programmes through sporting organisations to progress potential opportunities in this area.

MINIPITCH DEVELOPMENT 2009

| Play Facility | Status | Funded By |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| Carndonagh Minipitch | Complete and opened by Packie Bonner FAI on 28 th April 2009 | DCS, FAI & Department of Sports & Tourism |
| Newtowncunnigham Minipitch | Complete and opened by Packie Bonner FAI on 28 th April 2009 | DCS, FAI & Department of Sports & Tourism |
| Ballyshannon Minipitch | Complete and opened by Packie Bonner FAI on 28 th April 2009 | DCS, FAI & Department of Sports & Tourism & Disability Access Funding |
| Letterkenny Minipitch | Complete and opened by Packie Bonner FAI on 25 th September 2009 | Town Council, FAI & Department of Sports & Tourism & Disability Access Funding |
| Meenanearry Minipitch | On hold but working on possibility of moving pitch to Dungloe. Awaiting confirmation of funding | FAI & Department of Sports & Tourism, Local Group |

RESEARCH & POLICY / STRATEGIC POLICY DEVELOPMENT

RESEARCH & POLICY

The Research & Policy unit has as its core objective the need to build up expertise in research, evaluation and policy development within Donegal County Council. In 2009 activities included:

- County Profiles
- Compilation of required statistical information/reports
- Administration of the CDB Project Management/Project Vision System
- Evaluation of the Road Safety Strategy

In 2010 the unit will continue to provide the above mentioned services as well as tendering to carry out commissioned pieces of research. The Draft Budget Revenue Budget 2010 includes a provision of €119,947 under this heading.

STRATEGIC POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The Strategic Policy Unit is responsible for providing the administrative and executive support to the Donegal County Development Board as mentioned above. The Unit is also responsible for the management of the County Development Board website located at www.dongalcdb.ie and also the Community and Enterprise section of the website.

The Unit has continued in 2009 to develop a central repository of information on external funding opportunities, with a particular focus on the Interreg IVA and IVB funded programmes. Links have been maintained and established on a cross border and regional basis (e.g. SEUPB, Irish Regions Office, NASC etc) to maximise funding opportunities for the entire Council. This has seen a strategic approach being taken to accessing funding across a range of European and National levels at a corporate, organisational level.

The Unit continues to develop linkages with key bodies and cross border networks to promote regional development and a coordinated approach to planning in a Council and County Development Board context. This will continue in 2010.

The unit produced six issues of the Donegal Community In Touch E-Zine in 2009, which is distributed to Diaspora contacts around the world, and also to many networks and associations. The E-Zine has been very well received by community, business, education and economic sectors and will continue to be published on a bi-monthly basis in 2010.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FUND

As mentioned in the funds section above a figure of €133,000 is included in the Draft Revenue Budget 2010 under this heading. This budget will be used to fund the Local Resource Officer's post, to provide an allocation to Donegal Tourism Ltd. and to provide a small fund for each Electoral Area to access external funding for initiatives through programmes such as the National Rural Development Programme, Interreg IVA, Failte Ireland and other NDP funded initiatives.

WALKING/TRAILS DEVELOPMENT

The Division will continue to develop walking and trails infrastructure in the County e.g. in the context of the Sliabh Liag project and the Cross Border Trails Development projects.

It will also manage the maintenance of strategic walks in the county e.g. the Bluestacks Way and Bealach na Gaeltachta. A figure of €8,000 is included in the Draft Revenue Budget 2010 for the ongoing maintenance of walking and cycle trails which the Council has developed across the County.

MARINE & WATER LEISURE

A final decision on an Interreg IVA application was made in November 2009 in relation to the Sail West Project resulting in the award of €7,025,046 in grant aid towards a project cost of €7.4m for the period 2010-2012. The Unit will manage this project on behalf of 23 partners across NW Ireland, Northern Ireland and West Scotland. Donegal County Council will receive 100% funding @ €1.6m to construct a combined sea angling centre/sailing safe haven at Bunagee harbour in Inishowen. It will also receive €713,000 @ 100% for administration of the trans-national project and will manage an €800,000 marketing drive to develop a brand image for marine leisure in the shared coastal zone between the 3 regions.

EU Interreg funding (IMCORE project) of €196,000 @ 50% to employ a project officer to work on climate change management and marine spatial planning was awarded for the period Oct 2008-Oct 2011, using Lough Swilly as a pilot site. Part of the officer's work is to develop a marine education centre at Buncrana. A feasibility study and implementation plan was completed for this during 2009.

CULTURAL SERVICES

ARTS PROMOTION SERVICE/SEIRBHÍS FORBARTHA EALAÍONA

Tá beim laidir a chuir ar fhorbairt na healaíonna mar achmhainn do phobal Dhún na nGall. Tá Oifigeach Ealaine an Chomhairle Chontae gníomhach ar fud an chontae ag obair le ealaíontoirí, eagraíochtaí ealaíne agus pobail ghrúpaí eagsúla, ag cuidiú le réimise de gníomhaíochtaí agus imeachtaí a chuir chun cinn.

Donegal County Council provides a range of supports for the development of the Arts in County Donegal. The Council's Arts Officer works closely with a wide range of artist, arts organisations and community groups in all parts of the County.

This work includes developing communities and local resources and building the capacities of local communities in cultural, social and economic terms.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP REVENUE FUNDING

PROGRAMME/URRAÍOCHT REATHA FÁ COINNE EAGRAÍOCHTAI STRAITÉISEACHA

The purpose of this programme is to support a strong independent arts sector throughout the County, complementing those services currently offered by the Regional Cultural Centre, the Public Art Programme, An Grianan Theatre and Earagail Arts Festival. It is the policy of Donegal County Council to create a sustainable support structure for a broad range of strategically important, independent arts initiatives and facilities, serving local and regional needs, throughout the whole County. In 2009, nine such independent arts organisations received funding support under the programme, from an overall budget of €72,000. Projects assisted in 2009 were: The Abbey Arts Centre, Ballyshannon; Artlink, Bunrana; The Balor Arts Centre, Ballybofey, Balor Developmental Community Arts, Ballybofey; An Gailearai/Ceardlann a Croisbhealach, An Fal Carrach; Saothar Ealaine, Gort a'Choirce; Simply Music, Bunrana; Summer Palace Press, Kilcar and Tullyarvan Mill, Bunrana.

A provision of €72,000 is included in the Draft Revenue Budget for 2010.

EARAGAIL ARTS FESTIVAL/FÉILE EALAÍNE AN EARAGAIL

Tá Feile Ealaíona an Earagail mar ceann de na feilte is mó le ra ins an tír I lathair na huairé. I 2009 bhí 185 imeacht I 38 ionad I 13 áit eagsuil ar siúl mar chuid den fheile.

The Earagail Arts Festival celebrated its 21st birthday in 2009 with a programme that featured 185 events in 38 venues across 13 towns and villages - including Oilean Thoraigh, Oilean Arainn Mhor, Dun Luiche, Ramelton, Ballybofey, Letterkenny, An Clochan Liath, Machaire Rabhartaigh, Gaoth Dobhair, Glenveagh, Ards, Dunfanaghy, An Falcarrach, Churchill, Rathmullan, Carndonagh, Bunrana and Culdaff, between July 4th and 19th.

It is estimated that over 37,000 people attended festival events - 62% (22,940) of whom were from Donegal, 19% (7,030) were visitors from Northern Ireland, 10% (3,700) travelled to Donegal from other parts of the Republic of Ireland and 9% (3,330) were UK and other overseas visitors. (Source: Audiences Northern Ireland Survey, EAF 2009).

The most successful events included the Donegal County Council Peace III Task Force funded Northern Lights carnival project and Festival Carnival Parade which took place in Letterkenny on July 12th and the Dancing at The Ballroom of Romance project which involved a large community cast and ran for five nights at Ramelton Town Hall.

Other notable events included Dominic MacGhiolla Bhríde and Cor Thaobh a Leithead's Glorthai Uladh traditional song presentation which took place at Ionad Cois Locha Dhun Luiche, the hugely successful performances by Quarterdeck and The Stunning in Bunrana and Letterkenny, Tom Crean Antarctic Explorer at An Grianan Theatre, the Loinnir Cosan Glas installations at Tra Machaire Rabhartaigh and the second Soilse Thorai programme on Tory Island.

The Festival received €58,500 from Donegal County Council in 2009. A provision of €58,500 is included in the Draft Revenue Budget for 2010.

DONEGAL BAY AND BLUE STACKS FESTIVAL/FÉILE CHUAN DHÚN NA NGALL AGUS NA CRUACHA GHORMA

Initiated by Donegal County Council in 2001, the highly successful Donegal Bay and Blue Stacks Festival will present its 10th programme in 2010. New performance commissions and a strong traditional music programme as well as arts educational, community, carnival, literary and visual art events, will be at the core of this South and South West Donegal festival which is funded jointly by Donegal County Council and The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon. The Draft Revenue Budget for 2010 includes a provision of €45,000 towards this festival.

Close to 8,000 people participated in and enjoyed festival events in 2009 - including an attendance of some 3,500 people at the Constellations Carnival Parade in Ballyshannon, over 1,200 young people enjoying festival events in their own schools, participating in the carnival workshop programme and visiting festival exhibitions and a further 3,000 attending festival theatre and comedy shows, exhibitions, music performances and literacy events.

Among the highlights of the festival was the success of the Council assisted, Northwest Opera production of *Hansel and Gretel* which enjoyed two sold-out nights at the Balor Arts Centre and the Balor Rep theatre company's two festival productions - *Stand By Me: The Tammy Wynette Story* and Brian Friel's *Lovers* - which played to large and enthusiastic audiences in Ballyshannon, Kilcar and Ardara.

Other highlights included the Cairdeas na bhFidléiri Donegal Fiddlers Gala Concert in Glenties and the performance by new Inishowen band Dalltach at The Folk Village in Glencolmcille, Donegal Drama Circle's production of Sean O'Casey's *The Shadow of a Gunman* at Leghowney Hall and the festival's very successful literary weekend programme at the Sand House Hotel, Rossnowlagh.

A provision of €45,000 is included in the Draft Revenue Budget for 2010.

AN GRIANÁN THEATRE/AMHARCLANN AN GHRIANÁIN

Donegal County Council will continue to support An Grianán Theatre in 2010. The Council continues to pay loan charges on the building, which amounted to €102,000 in 2009. Letterkenny Town Council contributes 50% to the cost of these loan charges and, in addition, makes a significant annual revenue contribution to the facility.

An Grianán celebrated its 10th birthday in 2009 with a programme of high profile events including a joint production with the Lyric Theatre, Belfast of Brian Friel's *The Home Place* - in celebration of the Greencastle-based playwright's 80th birthday, a commissioned photographic exhibition by Paul McGuckin on a Year in The Life of An Grianán and a return visit by Druid Theatre Company with their acclaimed production of Tom Murphy's *The Gigli Concert*.

The celebratory year closed with the An Grianán's own specially commissioned production of *The Snow Queen*, produced by Fidget Feet Performance Company (Ballybofey), which also toured to the Civic Theatre in Dublin.

The initial ten year agreement with Letterkenny Theatre Company is now coming to an end and a new agreement will be reached in early 2010.

REGIONAL CULTURAL CENTRE, LETTERKENNY/IONAD CULTÚRTHA REGIÚNACH, LEITIR CEANAINN

The Regional Cultural Centre exhibition programme in 2010 will include:

- *Noughties But Nice: 21st Century Irish Art* featuring some of the most exciting contemporary works of the first decade of this millennium, including seminal works by leading Irish artist.
- An Arts Council Touring Show, curated by Limerick City Gallery of Art.
- *Imaging Donegal*, which features local, national and international artists who have documented particular aspects of the County. It includes photographers Richard Wayman (UK), Simon Burch (IRE), Paul Rooney (IRE), Declan Doherty (IRE) and Chris Promrose (UK). Presented in partnership with Donegal County Council Public Art Office.
- The Centre will feature the first retrospective exhibition of Derry artist Locky Morris, who has exhibited widely for over 20 years and is well known for his public art work, particularly *Pole Star* in Letterkenny. Presented in association with the Golden Thread Gallery, Belfast.

The Centre presents a carefully selected yearlong programme of national and international classical, jazz, traditional and world music concerts.

It also presents a film programme in partnership with Access Cinema and Foyle Film Festival.

An extensive education and outreach programme in 2010 includes the 13th annual Bealtaine Festival for Older People and the 14th annual Wainfest for Children, both countywide festivals.

Cross border community film projects, in partnership with the Nerve Centre Derry, include the Peace III funded North West Youth Film Festival and the International Fund for Ireland funded *Sharing Stories*.

2010 will see new governance arrangements put in place for future management of the Centre.

PUBLIC ART OFFICE/OIFIG EALAÍON POIBLÍ

2010 will see the continued implementation of the Public Art Policy & Plan *Making Shapes Public Art in Donegal 2006-2010*. However a new Public Art Plan will be prepared in 2010 for launch in early 2011 along with preparations for the launch of The Public Art Agency and Happy 21st Birthday Public Art Celebrations which will see the Public Art Office commission the design of an eternal calendar. It is envisaged that the following projects will be continued in 2010:

1. Stranorlar Electoral Area; Frances Browne Children's Project and Frances Browne Chair
2. Donegal Electoral Area; Rory Gallagher Commission, Killybegs Playground and Re-locating Map Wall
3. Glenties Electoral Area; Manus Lunny artist in residence CD and Altan Music Residency
4. Inishowen Electoral Area; North 55 Project, Barrack Hill Part 2
5. Letterkenny Electoral Area; *Lovely Weather* and *Imaging Donegal*

Countywide projects will include the *Lovely Weather*, which will look at how artist can be part of the debate on Climate Change. For this project the Public Art Office is working with the Regional Cultural Centre and Leonardo/OLATS. The project will culminate in an International Conference in the Regional Cultural Centre in November 2010. For the Countywide photography commission '*Imaging Donegal*' the Public Art Office will present the work of each of the five photographers in each of the electoral areas and again partner with the Regional Cultural Centre. The Public Art Office is managing a Countywide Public Art Project celebrating the Fire Service in Donegal which will culminate during Earagail Arts Festival in 2010.

The Public Art Office will also research and prepare a feasibility study on a major Cultural Tourism Flagship Project for Donegal - Sculpture Park Donegal, which will be presented in late 2010. This will be part of an increasing emphasis on public art as a tourism resource for the County.

DONEGAL COUNTY MUSEUM/MUSEUM AN CHONDAE

Donegal County Museum had a successful 2009 with highlights including a series of Secondary School *Living History* workshops on the theme of the Plantation, the launch of the *All Change* Railway exhibition on Culture Night and an international project in conjunction with museums in Norway and Iceland and the Letterkenny Guild of the ICA. The exhibition *Oatfields: A Short But Sweet History* which was part of a major Public Art project developed by the Public Art Programme, Regional Cultural Centre and Donegal County Museum was visited by over 700 school children and was very well received both locally and nationally.

In 2010 the Museum will continue to work on a number of Plantation themed projects including the launch of three specially commissioned booklets on the Plantation and the Planter and the Gael, a Peace III funded cross border, cross community project in conjunction with Derry City Council Heritage and Museum Service.

The Museum will organise a series of exhibitions and associated events throughout 2010 and will continue to act as a resource for schools and community groups throughout Donegal. The Museum will continue to work with other organisations and groups involved in preserving the heritage of Donegal and will build on its role as a cultural tourism resource for the County.

A provision of €360,328 is included in the Draft Revenue Budget for 2010 under this heading. Letterkenny Town Council contributes 50% towards this cost.

COUNTY ARCHIVES SERVICE/CARTLANN AN CHONTAE

In 2009 the County Archives, in conjunction with Derry City Archives, published a book, *Across the Atlantic - Emigrating from Merville and Derry*, consisting of articles on the history of emigration to America and Canada. It was launched in Merville in September. The project coincided with the launch of a Public Art sculpture in Merville by artist Locky Morris, *The Fid Merville Emigration Monument*.

The touring exhibition *The Past in the Present*, celebrating ten years of the Archives Service in 2009, travelled to the Public Service Centres in Dungloe, Donegal, Carndonagh, Letterkenny and Milford and back to the Archives Exhibition area in Lifford. It is planned to tour it in other parts of the County in 2010. The Local Authority Archivists Group's Exhibition *Local Elections* was exhibited in June at Letterkenny PSC.

The conservation and microfilming of the Donegal Grand Jury collection took place with the aid of a Heritage Council grant. Collections catalogued included school records and archives rescued from Ballyshannon workhouse. A complete conservation survey of the medical archives held by Donegal County Archives took place, with Wellcome Trust funding.

Outreach events included reminiscences at Day Centres, an information day for teachers, an open day for staff, and displays of archives. Work commenced on an education resource pack for the commemoration of the Ulster Plantation, this will be finalised in 2010.

In 2010 the Archives Service will take part in Bealtaine, Heritage Week and Culture Night. The GAA Donegal County Board collection will be listed and exhibited. Funding will be sought from the Wellcome Trust for conservation and cataloguing of the medical archives. Conservation microfilming of Donegal County Council's minute books will take place. An updated Guide to the Archives will be produced. There will be a number of exhibitions at the County Archives.

The Draft Revenue Budget 2010 includes a provision of €168,931 for expenditure under all headings within the Archives Service.

HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

This position will focus on the development of heritage as a resource for the community of Donegal. There will be a strong emphasis on the area of heritage tourism, which is a key resource for the county. A priority project in 2010 will be the carrying out of audits on heritage signage in each Electoral Area. The area of biodiversity will also be addressed. In 2010 the Heritage Development Officer plans the continued implementation of elements of the County Donegal Heritage Plan in conjunction with the County

Donegal Heritage Forum and The Heritage Council subject to availability of funding. In conjunction with the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society, the County Donegal Heritage Office will organise a traditional building skills' summer field school on Gola Island in June.

The Heritage Development Officer will oversee the preparation of a Village Design Statement for Glencolmcille in conjunction with The Heritage Council and Údarás na Gaeltachta. The Heritage Office will host seminars on vernacular architecture and the *Care & Conservation of Historic Graveyards*, explore the establishment of Civic Trusts in County Donegal and organise other events to raise awareness of the built, cultural and natural heritage.

The Draft Revenue Budget 2010 includes a provision of €143,287 for all expenditure in this heading.

OPERATION OF THE LIBRARY SERVICE

LIBRARIES

The Draft Revenue Budget for 2010 includes a provision of €2,963,842 for the operation of the Library Service, plus €400,000 for the Library Book Fund.

In line with government policy (*Branching Out - Future Directions*), the Council aims to provide a modern, socially inclusive library and information service. Public libraries play a very important community role as centres of knowledge, information and culture. They are open to everyone, whatever their age, education or nationality. They are a resource for the promotion of community development, for social integration and a focal point for people of all ethnic backgrounds.

Public libraries enable people and communities by providing free access to a world of ideas, information, imagination and culture. Libraries build on the traditional core skills in promoting reading, fostering intellectual development, and enabling independent and lifelong learning. Libraries preserve and promote the cultural heritage of our communities, to explain the past, illuminate the present and inform the future. The library service enables people to make sense of the vast array of information that is available through a wide variety of media, enabling everyone to learn new skills and make informed choices. The library service provides a community focus and support, and at any one time are meeting places, learning resources, and comfortable and relaxing public spaces. Library staff welcome individuals and communities and support their needs through the provision of resources for culture, learning, leisure, social and community development.

The Council recognises that libraries are needed by their communities more than ever at a time of recession.

The Council has established a countywide library network, with the Central Library at the core, 5 community libraries (Buncrana, Bundoran, Carndonagh, Milford, and Na Rosa) and 11 branch libraries (Ballybofey, Ballyshannon, Clonmany, Donegal Town, Gaoth Dobhair, Killybegs, Lifford, Moville, Ramelton and Raphoe) throughout the county. Glenties Library is currently closed. There are Taobh Tíre outreach points in Baile na Finne, an Fhal Carragh, Oileán Thoraigh, Arranmore Island, Míin an Aoire, Cill Chartha, Pettigo,

Mevagh, Ionad Lae Trialough, Fanavolty, St. Johnston, and Letterkenny (2 sites). A cross-border mobile library serves the east of the county (Manorcunningham, Drumoghill, Carrigans, Killea, Newtowncunningham, Burt, Burnfoot, Bridgend, Porthall, St. Johnston and Muff).

In addition to lending quality reading materials a range of other services are provided through the library system, including:

- Children's services
- Internet/E-library services
- Reference and Information services
- Audio-visual resources
- An annual programme of events across the county
- Donegal Studies/Genealogy.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Library Service continues to develop service points and expand the range of services provided. Programmes during Library Ireland Week, Seachtain na Gaeilge, Bealtaine, Wainfest, Science Week and Heritage Week continue to be developed, along with Summer Reading Programmes.

The annual schedule of events and activities is an important element of the work programme, and gives Library Services additional opportunities to showcase its strengths, which include the provision of high quality reading material for children and adults, access to information of all types in a range of formats, and access to local history resources.

WAINFEST

Over 150 events took place in October in libraries, Taobh Tíre Centres, the Regional Cultural Centre, and other venues throughout Donegal during Wainfest 2009. The Leas-Mhéara launched the 13th Wainfest programme, which incorporates the national Children's Book Festival, and included storytelling, science and history shows, author visits, creative writing, theatre, film, magic, puppetry, music and art. The main programme took place in libraries and Taobh Tíre Centres throughout Donegal between the 12th and the 23rd October.

Wainfest 2009 saw the return of the ever-popular storytellers: Niall de Burca, Joe Brennan, Stephen Hall and Chris Thompson as well as Michael Moylan with his educational and entertaining interactive history shows. The festival also featured visits by authors Kenneth Stevens, Barbara Bollwahn

and Paul Tubb. It was a festival of fun, art, literature and culture. The line-up of creative local talent includes Donal Kearney, Emmanuella O'Kane, Joe Lynch, Sharon Aiken, Billy Teare, Martin Moloney, Bríd Anna Ni Bhaoill, May Molloy, Paula McMullan and Joleen Kuyper.

The Wainfest programme expanded to further Taobh Tíre Centres in 2009 which meant that more children than ever in rural areas could avail of the wide and varied range of cultural activities provided. As usual, the festival entertained children and young people all over Donegal during October 2009 and it is planned to maintain Wainfest as one of the Library Service highlights for 2010.

TAOBH TÍRE

The final report of the Taobh Tíre library research project (providing services to rural and isolated communities) was launched by Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Mary Coughlan, on the 31st of July 2009. One of the recommendations of the report is that Donegal County Council continue to support Taobh Tíre and that it be formally mainstreamed within the Donegal Library Service. It also proposed that the Taobh Tíre model of library service delivery be recommended to other local authorities as a means of addressing the needs of isolated communities. Considerable progress has been made in the pilot, however there is much more to be done in 2010 to consolidate and build on achievements to date.

In 2010 a review of existing sites will also be undertaken. Partnerships between Donegal County Council and the community partners will also be formalised in the form of service level agreements. Issues to be considered by Donegal County Council on a continuous basis include assessment of community needs, demand for new service points, staffing of service points and staffing implications for Donegal County Council, improved communication between stakeholders and the monitoring, evaluation and promotion of Taobh Tíre Services.

A new method of recording items borrowed in the Taobh Tíre sites will be implemented in 2010, providing a more accurate picture of activity at each site.

Other programmes and activities to be implemented in 2010 include a cross generational project, storytelling training for young parents and family literacy programmes. Work will also continue on Taobh Tíre reader development programmes and on building the capacity of community partners and members through various training activities.

The enthusiastic response of local communities to the Taobh Tíre service and the positive feedback from the evaluation surveys clearly demonstrates that the service has had a significant measure of success in meeting the needs of rural and isolated communities in County Donegal. Continued funding for staffing and programmes will afford the opportunity to maintain and build upon this success.

ONLINE SERVICES

Work on the redevelopment of the Library website www.donegallibrary.ie continued throughout 2009 following a survey inviting public and staff suggestions and comments. The new website will be launched during Library Ireland Week in March 2010. The new site promises a more interactive experience for the end user with Top 10 reads, information on Bookclubs, a *what's on* section and dedicated areas for children and teenagers. The online catalogue HIP has also been enhanced with the addition of book image covers. Further enhancements and additions will be made in 2010. Library members can order items from HIP at home and have them delivered to their nearest library or Taobh Tíre site.

Donegal County Council will continue to subscribe to a range of online databases and these will be promoted widely in 2010 alongside the promotion of the new website. The *Ask A Librarian Service*, also available on the library website, will be redeveloped to reflect the public's changing needs.

Donegal County Library continues to participate in the *Changing Libraries Programme* and has provided information on the recently updated www.askaboutireland.ie website.

As part of library ICT development in 2010 additional information will be included in the catalogue; work on improving services to Taobh Tíre users and their support staff; investigate the use of online social networking

techniques such as *Twitter & Facebook* to promote services; and provision of innovative new services such as delivery of notices by text message. In addition, Visitor Counters will be installed to allow measurement of the use of each library more effectively.

NEW LIBRARY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM - HORIZON

Following an intense period of activity in advance of the changeover, Donegal County Library went live on Horizon, a new software system for library management on the 15th of June 2009, one day ahead of schedule. Having selected Horizon to replace the Genesis system, Donegal County Library set an ambitious schedule to complete the project. From the initial project kick-off to the system going live only took 10 weeks. This included a full data conversion of the catalogue, borrower records and circulation information and a MARC21 conversion.

Library staff defined new parameters and oversaw the conversion. The Information Systems Division rolled out the new servers at County House and new software to all branches while simultaneously dealing with Local and European elections. The library staff and customers already see the benefits of a more modern, easier to use and flexible system for managing library activities. Horizon has allowed for improved management information on all aspects of the service, which in turn will contribute to better tailoring of future services.

To make services more accessible to library users, the following items have also been installed - HIP, an enhanced new online catalogue for library users which is more user-friendly than the previous catalogue and allows users access to book cover information for the first time; PC Reservation - a system for reserving public access PCs in Central, Bundoran, Buncrana, Carndonagh & Milford Libraries; Bookstream & Singlesource training for library staff - a method of getting catalogue records onto Horizon as quickly as possible to avoid delays in satisfying customer requests and getting books on the shelves; and WebReporter - a facility for additional management reports. Self-issue technology was installed in Central and Ballybofey libraries in 2009 - these services will be promoted in 2010, and extension of this technology considered for other libraries should funding permit.

EUROPE DIRECT INFORMATION CENTRE

The Europe Direct Information Centre (EDIC) in the Central Library, Letterkenny continues to promote services and answer queries on EU matters. An application to continue funding the network of EDIC's in libraries was submitted to the EU Commission by An Chomhairle Leabharlanna. The application was successful and the centre secured funding for a further 4 years. To mark the new programme funding, on the 1st of May, MEP Marian Harkin relaunched the centre.

Events in 2009 included the following: The 2nd Lisbon Treaty debate in September; 20th Anniversary celebrations of the Fall of the Berlin Wall Evening & Exhibition in November; Astronomy Ireland & Climate change talk for secondary schools in December & to round up the year a Christmas Carol celebration & Face Painting in December, all with a strong European theme. One of the highlights included European Literary and Musical Masters event during Culture Night on Friday 25th September. Members of the Donegal Chamber Orchestra performed excerpts from works by a section of Europe's finest composers, accompanied by readings from the classic works of European literary masters by local playwright and storyteller, Joe Brennan. An extensive exhibition programme included a travelling exhibition celebrating the year of Culture & Creativity to various Donegal libraries.

There was also a programme of EU related events including class visits, storytelling and workshops as part of regular library programmes including Bealtaine, Heritage Week and Wainfest. The highlight of the programme included a 5-week European themed crafts project for pre-schoolers in partnership with community art based group Artlink held in Milford Library & Central Library, Letterkenny. Throughout the year there was regular publicity in newspapers & local radio. The centre paid special emphasis on advertising the centre at seminars and information days such as the MacGill Summer School and the Social Inclusion Information Day for the newly unemployed.

BOOK GROUPS

Library book groups continue to go from strength to strength with numbers of members and groups continuing to rise. At present there are 20 books clubs meeting in libraries with around 230 members, including Donegal County Council staff book club, which meets in Lifford Library. At present 17 external clubs with around 130 members are also supported by library staff; the senior book group the Bundoran Afternoon Club continued to meet

throughout 2009. Multiple copies of over 145 titles are available to book club readers ranging from award winners such as *The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga to *Dreams of My Father* by Barack Obama. Titles are being added regularly as required. Groups usually meet monthly. These meetings are important social events for members and sometimes take the form of a visit to the local cinema to see the film of the book e.g. two Milford book clubs rated *Slumdog Millionaire*, nearly as good as the book. A dedicated section for Book Groups will be set up on the new library website during 2010.

FÁS ELEARNING @ THE LIBRARY PROJECT

Donegal County Library in association with FÁS is offering an eLearning project to adults across the library and Taobh Tíre network. The project provides a range of online courses, accessible in the library or from home, supported by a facilitator in participating libraries and Taobh Tíre Centres. The project went live in Donegal in September and within a short time, over 120 people signed up to access these courses.

13 libraries and 4 Taobh Tíre locations across the county are taking part, offering training opportunities in the heart of the community. In addition, libraries' user-friendly opening hours enable people to learn at their own time and pace.

The programme is free and open to everyone over 18. It will benefit those new to computers and those who wish to update their skills through workshops and the use of online courseware. Facilitators provide support and guidance at the learner's own pace and participants can use library facilities for coursework during library opening hours.

Extensive courses include Introduction to Computers, Internet and E-mail, ECDL, Microsoft Office Word, Excel and PowerPoint. Participants can also access additional online courses including Introduction to Project Management, Effective Administration Skills, Book-keeping, Digital Media, Practical Budgeting Skills for Business, Finance Fundamentals and many more.

Participating libraries and Taobh Tíre Centres include Ballybofey, Ballyshannon, Bunrana, Bundoran, Carndonagh, Donegal Town, Killybegs, Letterkenny, Lifford, Milford, Moville, Na Rosa, Ramelton, Kilcar, Pettigo, Baile na Finne and Downings.

It is planned to further promote and extend this project during 2010.

PURCHASE OF BOOKS, CD'S ETC.

A sum of €400,000 is provided for the Library Bookfund 2010. This equates to a sum of €2.72 per head of population, somewhat short of the €3.77 recommended national target. It is the Council's aim to continuously work towards meeting this target. However, due to budgetary restrictions, the 2010 bookfund in Donegal has now dropped below 2003 levels.

In addition to this bookfund reduction, the Department of Education abolished the grant to local authorities for the provision of library services to primary schools. This resulted in a loss of €83,000 in 2009 with no indications of this grant being reinstated.

Despite the enormous changes in library services in recent years, the provision of reading material remains a core activity, with 62% library visitors coming to borrow a book. All the research shows how important it is to develop reading skills at an early age and the library service remains committed to supporting reading and access to quality reading materials. Library staff work closely with schools, the VEC and other relevant organisations.

Budgetary cuts make it all the more critical that the bookfund is properly managed. One of the activities in 2010 will be to adopt a revised Collection Development Policy. This policy sets out how fiction and nonfiction for adults and children is selected, while also providing for Irish and other language materials, music/film, online resources, and local studies material (the Library Service aims to collect all printed material relating to Donegal or by Donegal authors). In recent years the library service has made great strides in the *timely* provision of new publications to readers, particularly for popular authors. In 2010 the timescale for getting ordered items to readers will be reviewed and shortened further if at all possible.

The Library Service invites authors to libraries to give readings and to interact with their readers. These *Meet the author* events are very popular, and several are arranged during Wainfest, Poetry Day and throughout the year. Book groups are going from strength to strength. Book launches are also supported, particularly where there is a Donegal connection. Partnerships with publishers, or publisher's organisations, in the organisation

of book - related events are common. One of the most successful in 2009 was in association with Disney, where readings from Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* were held to coincide with the launch of the film. Children were invited to come to Bundoran library in their night attire, which they did (as did some adults), and some children came to both the afternoon and evening event as they enjoyed it so much.

In order to develop a love of reading and books in others, it is important that library staff be provided with opportunities to develop their own interests and skills and to keep up to date with writers and publishing. Several staff members are currently following the online reader development course *Frontline*. It is planned to facilitate a number of staff members, particularly those managing book groups, to attend the Ennis Book Club Festival in March 2010 (organised in association with Clare County Library).

Donegal participates in the national inter-lending initiative, www.borrowbooks.ie, whereby a Donegal reader can request a book from Cork or any other authority, if the book is not available locally. Within the county itself, at the library or online at www.donegallibrary.ie, should a reader request a book from another library, it will be brought to the nearest library for them. In other words, hundreds of thousands of books are available to Donegal readers at their local library or TaobhTíre centre.