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# Mission Statement

*To promote and support the sustainable and inclusive development of communities, both urban and rural, including Gaeltacht and island communities, thereby fostering better regional balance and alleviating disadvantage, and to advance the use of the Irish language.*

## Message from the Minister and Minister of State

During 2006, our Department continued to face the challenge of putting communities and their development at the heart of Government actions. We have met this challenge through the continuation of a wide range of programmes and schemes designed to support communities in achieving their full potential. We have sought to introduce new schemes and to make improvements in our existing schemes so that services are delivered in a simple and straightforward fashion. We have worked directly with communities and in particular we have sought to take a co-ordinated approach with other Government Departments and agencies both in terms of influencing the direction of Government policy generally and at an operational level in terms of service delivery. We have sought to ensure that our policies and actions have a significant ongoing beneficial impact on the individuals, neighbourhoods and communities that go to make up our nation.

Developments of particular note include:

- Approval by Government of the General Scheme for the Charities Regulation Bill;
- Full implementation of the recommendations arising from the Mid Term review of the National Drugs Strategy;
- Expansion of CLÁR and the Rural Social Scheme;
- Publication of Comhairle na Tuaithe National Countryside Recreation Strategy;
- Development of a new National Rural Development Strategy and Programme for 2007-2013, which will almost triple the amount of funding available under the current programme;
- A chapter of the new National Development Plan devoted specifically to the rural economy;
- The transfer of the Social Economy Programme to the Department and consequent re-orientation as the Community Services Programme;
- New volunteering and philanthropic initiatives in particular the Government decision to seek applications for flagship measures jointly funded with philanthropic or community funding; and
- Further significant progress with the simplification of local delivery structures.

We wish to thank the staff of the Department, the public bodies within our ambit and the many communities with whom we work for without their efforts we would not have been able to bring about these achievements in 2006.



**Éamon Ó Cuív T.D.**  
*Minister for Community,  
Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs*

**Noel Ahern T.D.**  
*Minister of State  
with special responsibility for  
Drugs Strategy and Community Affairs*

## Foreword by Secretary General

This is the fifth Annual Report of the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and it reports progress in the implementation of our Strategy Statement 2005-2007.

That Strategy Statement sets out a number of challenging goals along with the strategies to achieve these. In 2006 significant progress was made under each of these goals.

Areas of significant progress in 2006 include:

- Advancing new integrated structures comprising both LEADER and Partnership groups;
- Co-ordination of the National Drugs Strategy and addressing the findings of the Mid-term review;
- Publication of a Government Policy Statement on the Irish Language which will form the basis for a twenty year strategy for the language;
- Promotion of Gaeltacht and Islands development;
- Advances with the National Rural Development Programme 2007–2013; and
- Drafting of the Charities Regulation Bill.

These are significant milestones marking progress towards the Department's core objective of achieving a more coordinated engagement with *communities* across the range of policies and programmes for which we are responsible, as they pursue their own development.

Public acknowledgement of the importance of community, citizenship and volunteering was reflected in the establishment of the Taskforce on Active Citizenship. In tandem with this, the Department developed its supports for volunteering and secured the establishment of the Forum on Philanthropy in 2006. The findings of the Taskforce now chart a critical pathway forwards.

Under the Decentralisation programme, more than half of our Dublin operations relocated to Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo from July 2006. Similarly, between staff joining the Department to decentralise, and staff leaving to take up other posts in Dublin and elsewhere, we experienced a 50% turnover in headquarters staff in the period to mid-2006.

Against this background of major upheaval it is a tribute to the commitment of all the staff of the Department, those decentralising and those remaining in Dublin, that our business objectives were met. Indeed it is fine testament to the capability and commitment of our staff to have managed and delivered through such change. Finally, my sincere thanks to Minister Éamon Ó Cuív, T.D., and Minister of State Noel Ahern, T.D., for their leadership, support and unfailing good humour.

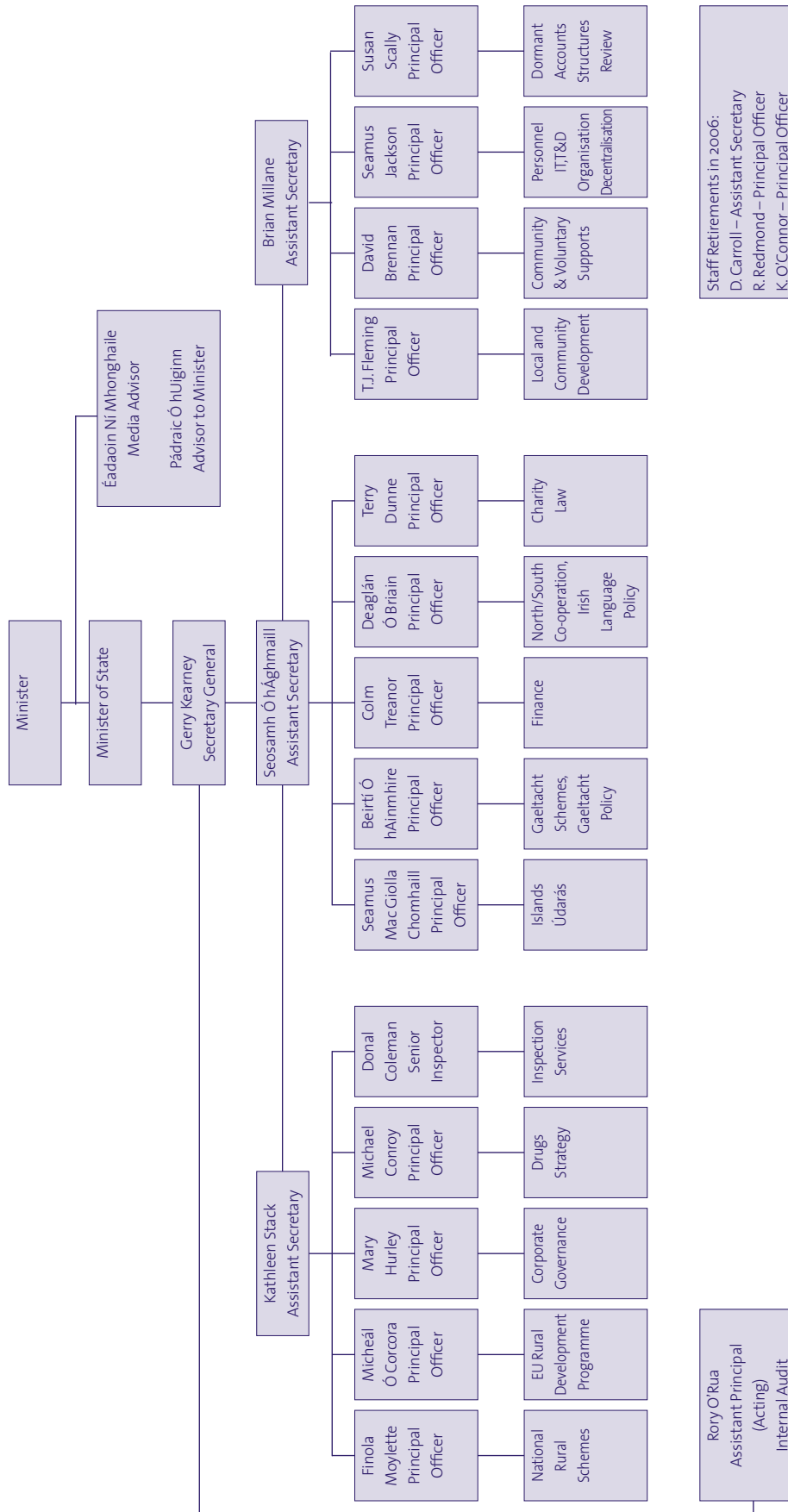


**Gerry Kearney**  
*Secretary General*



# Organisation Chart

An Roinn Gnóthai Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta / Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs (Jan 2007)





## Progress in 2006

In this section of the Report, in line with section 4 of the Public Service Management Act (PSMA) 1997, progress made in 2006 in respect of the high level goals set out in the Statement of Strategy 2005–2007 is reported on.

### Goal 1 – Community and Local Development:

To encourage and facilitate communities, with a special focus on areas of disadvantage, to pursue social and economic progress in their areas.

#### Strategy 1.1:

*Improve delivery of Local and Community Development services across the range of local and community development structures, processes and schemes.*

The objective of this strategy is the alignment of local, community and rural development organisations so that the delivery of community and rural development programmes and services is simplified and enhanced. The intention is that from 2007, there will be an integrated Partnership/ LEADER body delivering services in an area and fewer such service delivery bodies overall in the country. It is further intended that these new bodies will fully cover the State, so that Programmes such as the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme (LDSIP), which are only available in certain areas, will in future be accessible right across the State.

Almost €4.3m was allocated to County and City Development Boards (CDBs) during 2006 to further advance cohesion in the delivery of local, community and rural development schemes. In addition, over €500,000 was awarded to CDBs during the year in respect of initiatives to promote participation in volunteering at a local level.

In 2006, in a process co-ordinated by CDBs, community and local development groups in 20 local authority areas and na Gaeltachtaí brought forward further measures for improved alignment of structures in their respective areas in line with the one company one area principle, CDBs are now actively engaged in examining and endorsing plans prepared by community and local development agencies. This will help secure better co-ordination of services on the ground.

A review of the membership of local and community development bodies was undertaken in 2006, which will inform changes to the constitution and mandate of the new bodies to reflect their extended delivery role. The preparation of governance guidelines to secure the effective operation of the new structures got underway as did support mechanisms for transitional arrangements.



### Strategy 1.2:

*To assist disadvantaged communities to participate fully in society.*

## The Community Development Programme

The Community Development Programme (CDP) provides financial assistance to community development projects in disadvantaged areas. It also provides support for self-help work in specific target groups that experience disadvantage for example, lone parents, Travellers, people with disabilities and elderly people who live in isolation.

Under this Programme, support is provided on a renewable multi-annual contract basis to locally-based groups involved in tackling poverty and social exclusion in their own communities. The programme is administered under the Community Development and Family Support Measure of the National Development Plan 2000-2006.

In 2006, approximately €24m was allocated to the CDP. By the end of the year, some 182 projects/ areas were in receipt of funding from the programme.

In addition to multi-annual contract funding, the programme also provides a range of once-off grants to projects. During 2006, grants to the value of €1.4m were made available for programme activities, equipment purchase and refurbishment of premises.

The Traveller Placement Scheme, continued in 2006, whereby 27 members of the Travelling community gained work experience in projects. The scheme is designed to prepare, support and encourage Travellers to take up employment.

## Programme of Grants for Locally-Based Community & Voluntary Organisations

In addition to longer-term contract funding, the Department provides once-off grants to a wide range of locally-based community and voluntary groups addressing disadvantage in their areas. In 2006 a total of €4.8m was expended on grants in this area which were made available under the following headings:

- Equipment and Refurbishment Grants; and
- Education, Training and Research Grants.

In 2006, the scheme was modified to enable groups apply for re-furbishment grants throughout the year. The scheme was advertised in September 2006 and allocations will be made throughout 2007.

## Scheme of Community Support for Older People

The Scheme of Community Support for Older People (CSOP) encourages and assists local support for older people by means of a community based grant scheme to improve the security of its older members. Funding is provided by way of grant aid to voluntary groups and organisations which identify those elderly people in need of assistance under the scheme. Grants are provided towards the cost of personal alarms, home security locks, smoke alarms etc.

In 2006, a total of €1.9m was expended under this scheme and a total of 6,797 elderly people benefited under this scheme. The scheme is now open to applications at any time of the year.





## Community Services Programme

In 2006, the Department assumed responsibility for the Community Services Programme (formerly known as the Social Economy Programme). The transfer of this Programme from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment to this Department took effect from the 1st of January 2006. Pobal manage the programme on behalf of the Department.

The Community Services Programme aims to support the economic and social regeneration of local communities and to provide employment opportunities for the unemployed and other disadvantaged persons. Many are managed by the Local Partnership Company, CDP or LEADER company. The projects employees comprise people who have previously been unemployed, people with disabilities, Travellers and lone parents. During the year applications were sought for new projects under the programme via Partnerships and LEADER groups, and this process resulted in the Department renewing contracts with 264 established projects and commencing contracts with 126 new projects.



Vantastic Dial a Ride is one of several transport service providers supported by the Community Services Programme. Vantastic is based in Dublin city and provides door to door transport for people with disabilities. The transport service means their clients are able to lead active lives by providing them with an opportunity to attend work, educational facilities, meeting and appointments as well as social venues while remaining in their own homes.

### Strategy 1.3:

*Develop the State's relationship with the community and voluntary sector.*

## White Paper Grants Scheme

An amount of €3.1m was incurred in 2006 under this scheme and during the year consultants were engaged to examine and make recommendations in regard to the future operation of a grants scheme for national/ regional organisations.

The National Partnership Agreement "Towards 2016" makes provision for an additional €10m per annum for activity in this area and a new scheme will be advertised in 2007.





## Supports for Volunteering

In 2006, the Department provided a total of €1.2m with the purpose of supporting volunteering and voluntary activity. The number of Volunteer Bureaus funded by the Department increased from 6 to 12 in 2006. In addition, the Department provided funding to Volunteer Centres Ireland to support the development of further volunteer bureaus in the larger population centres. The National Partnership Agreement "Towards 2016" makes provision for an additional €5m per annum to support such activity.

## Supports for Philanthropy

The Department participated in the Forum on Philanthropy in 2006, which was established by Government to examine ways of facilitating greater levels of philanthropic activity within Ireland.

Annual funding of €100,000 was made available over three years, to support the development of Philanthropy Ireland. Provision was also made for the disbursement of €10m from the Dormant Accounts Fund in 2006 for flagship projects having the potential to release significant amounts of matching funding from philanthropic sources. The call for applications under this measure was made in October 2006.

### Strategy 1.4:

*To facilitate integrated development in areas of disadvantage.*

## Local Development Social Inclusion Programme

The Local Development Social Inclusion Programme (LDSIP) aims to counter disadvantage and to promote equality and social and economic inclusion. It provides funding and support to local Area-based Partnerships, Community Partnerships and Employment Pacts. These Partnerships work in the areas of greatest need. They bring together local communities, Government bodies, the Social Partners and elected representatives in partnership at local level. They develop actions to counter social exclusion on the basis of comprehensive, integrated local development plans.


The LDSIP is managed by Pobal on behalf of the Department. It is funded under the National Development Plan 2000-2006 as part of the Border, Midland and Western (BMW) and the Southern and Eastern Regional (SER) Operational Programmes. Pobal is a not-for-profit company that manages programmes on behalf of the Irish Government and the EU.

The total expenditure for the LDSIP in 2006 was €47.6m. This expenditure can be broken down as follows: €16.5m in the BMW Region and €31.1m in the SER Region. During 2006, 12,378 people were supported under the services for the unemployed measure in the BMW Region and 19,514 in the South & East Region making a total of 31,892. In 2006, 5,446 adults participated in education and training programmes in the BMW Region and 6,390 in the South & East Region making a total of 11,836.

## RAPID Programme

The RAPID Programme, which was launched in February 2001, aims to ensure that priority attention is given to tackling the spatial concentration of poverty and social exclusion within the 46 designated RAPID areas. The Government extended RAPID status to Ballyfermot in June 2006 on the basis of proposals made by the Department.





Through the RAPID Leverage Fund initiated in 2004, the Department directly funds schemes to provide playgrounds and CCTV, improve traffic measures and improve health facilities, support sporting organisations as well as improve local authority housing estates and flat complexes. All funds are matched by funding from other Departments and Agencies. The schemes are aimed at small-scale capital works identified locally by the community – works that require relatively small amounts of funding but can produce real and concrete benefits to communities.

Since the introduction of these schemes, the Department has increased the amount allocated annually from €6.5m in 2004 to €11m in 2006. Drawdown of the funds takes place when works are completed and not necessarily in the year of allocation. The outturn for 2006 was €5.87m.

Following the enactment of the Dormant Accounts (Amendment) Act 2005, further funding was ring-fenced to support priority projects in RAPID areas. Under the 2006 round of funding €11.35 million was allocated in support of 188 projects.

A national evaluation of the RAPID Programme was completed and launched in June 2006. It indicated that the experience of the RAPID Programme has been positive, that the programme has made substantial progress in identifying the needs of disadvantaged communities, while also highlighting areas for improvement.

In the light of this evaluation the Department is seeking to further strengthen the programme under the new NDP. Seven strategic themes have been identified:

- Crime and Safety,
- Family,
- Youth,
- Physical Environment,
- Education,
- Health, and
- Employment/Training.

Funding allocations and reporting on spend and outcomes will be based on these seven themes. The role of the community representatives on the Area Implementation Team (AIT) is being renewed and enhanced in addition to improvement in the monitoring and reporting systems.

From mid 2007 each AIT will bring forward project plans for their local areas which will be for a 5 year term. These will constitute a rich source of data on needs within and across the designated RAPID areas in the State. Departments and Public Bodies will work with AITs to ensure that each area plan will incorporate a proofing checklist not only in relation to the programme objectives but also in relation to quality control requirements.





RAPID playground – Longford Town

### Strategy 1.5:

*To enact a comprehensive reform of the law relating to charities in order to secure accountability and to protect against abuse of charitable status and fraud.*

In March 2006, Government announced approval of the General Scheme for the Charities Regulation Bill 2006. The purpose of the measure is to enact a reform of the law relating to charities in order to ensure greater accountability and to protect against abuse of charitable status and fraud. It will also enhance public trust and confidence in charities and increase transparency in the sector.

Following Government approval, the Bill was published in April 2007.

### Strategy 1.6:

*To administer the Dormant Accounts Fund.*

Disbursements from the Dormant Accounts Fund support three broad categories of persons:

- those affected by economic and social disadvantage;
- those affected by educational disadvantage; and
- persons with a disability.

In 2006 the Government approved the allocation of €60m from the Fund for the purpose of supporting a series of funding programmes and measures under the above three categories of disadvantage. Funding was allocated for the following purposes:

#### Economic and Social Disadvantage (€24m)

- supports for priority projects in RAPID areas;
- measures supporting youth, older people and other priority themes (including suicide prevention; alcohol misuse; immigrant families; offenders/ex-offenders); and
- support for jointly funded flagship projects.



### Educational Disadvantage (€18m)

- additional capital funding for schools in disadvantaged areas;
- projects aimed at providing access to education/recreation for the broader community; and
- support for jointly funded flagship projects.

### Persons with a Disability (€18m)

- additional capital and equipment funding to assist persons with a disability;
- supports for sport and leisure activities and to address challenging behaviour; and
- support for jointly funded flagship projects.

By the end of the year measures under the three funding categories had been rolled out with the exception of some measures in the educational disadvantage category, which are due for advancement in early 2007. Progress under the economic and social disadvantage category advanced to the stage where Government approved 342 projects for funding totalling €17.5m. Further Government announcements are anticipated in 2007 across all three funding categories in respect of the balance of funding.



Minister of State Noel Ahern T.D. with Gary O'Connor (17) and Jonathan Sadlier (17) at Clanna Gael Fontenoy GAA Club, Ringsend, at the announcement of €1.78m additional funding for drugs prevention from the Young Person's Facilities and Services Fund.

Funding was announced for projects in the following areas: South Inner City, North Inner City, Tallaght, Bray, Ballyfermot, Dublin North East and Clondalkin.



## Goal 2 – Tackling Drug Misuse:

To facilitate a more integrated and co-ordinated response by State Agencies to tackle drug misuse with the aim of significantly reducing the harm caused to individuals and society.

### Strategy 2.1:

*To co-ordinate an overall strategy to tackle drug misuse in Ireland.*

### National Drug Strategy 2001-2008

The implementation of the National Drug Strategy 2001-2008 continued in 2006 with progress being monitored through regular meetings of the Inter-Departmental Group on Drugs (IDG) and with updates on key issues being provided during the year to the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Social Inclusion.

### Working Group on Drugs Rehabilitation

By the end of 2006 the Working Group on Drugs Rehabilitation had almost finalised its report. The Working Group comprised representatives of Departments and Agencies involved in the delivery of rehabilitation services, as well as the National Drugs Strategy Team, the National Advisory Committee on Drugs and the community and voluntary sectors.

The Group took a holistic view of rehabilitation and, while recognising the importance of clients being activated and prepared to fulfil their role in the effort towards rehabilitation, saw the empowering of recovering problem drug users so that they can re-engage with society in a manner consistent with their needs and expectations as a key aim of the process.

Some key recommendations of the Group are likely to focus on effective inter-agency co-ordination of the rehabilitation effort, improved treatment facilities and on providing a continuum of care for clients through planned progression paths for each problem drug user. The report will also deal with wider supports needed by recovering problem drug users in areas such as participation on community employment schemes, educational supports as well as accommodation, family and childcare issues.

### Cocaine Briefing Paper

At the request of Minister of State, Mr Noel Ahern T.D., the National Advisory Committee on Drugs and the National Drugs Strategy Team prepared a joint Briefing Paper on Cocaine and this was presented to the IDG. The recommendations in the Paper were being considered by the IDG towards the end of 2006 with a view to their implementation within the framework of the National Drugs Strategy.

### National Drug Strategy Team

The National Drug Strategy Team (NDST) comprises representatives from Departments and Agencies in the drugs field, as well as community and voluntary sector representatives. In 2006, it continued to work towards the effective co-ordination of the implementation of the National Drug Strategy through its interactions with Local and Regional Drug Task Forces and through contributing to the development of drugs policy. Significant steps forward were also made by the Regional Drugs Task Forces in 2006.

### National Advisory Committee on Drugs

The National Advisory Committee on Drugs (NACD) advises the Government in relation to the prevalence, prevention, treatment and consequences of drug misuse.

Among the reports published by the NACD in 2006 were:

- “Drug Use in Ireland and Northern Ireland – 2002/2003 Drug Prevalence Survey” Cocaine Results – Bulletin 4.
- “Research Outcome Study In Ireland” (ROSIE): Findings 1 Summary of 1-year Outcomes.
- “A Community Drugs Study: Developing Community Indicators for Problem Drug Use.”
- “An overview of the nature and extent of illicit drug use amongst the Traveller community: an exploratory study.”

The Research Outcome Study in Ireland (ROSIE), under Action 99 of the National Drug Strategy, found that the treatment of problem opiate users is having significantly positive effects. The key messages from the outcomes at the end of the first year were that significant reductions in heroin and other drug use were achieved with extensive reductions in drug injecting, improvements in physical and mental health, increased contact with health and social care services and extensive reductions in criminal activity.

#### **Strategy 2.2:**

*To target the provision of services and facilities in areas of high drug misuse.*

### Local Drugs Task Forces

A further €16m in current funding was allocated to support about 440 projects contained in the two rounds of plans of the 14 Local Drugs Task Forces (LDTF) in the areas of treatment, rehabilitation, education, prevention, awareness and curbing local supply. These projects employ over 300 people. Meanwhile, the recommendations of an Expenditure Review of LDTF projects were followed up and being implemented during 2006.

### Emerging Needs Fund

The Emerging Needs Fund provides a flexible response to emerging needs in LDTF areas. Funding of €3.1m was approved in 2006 bringing the total amount allocated to just under €4m for 67 projects. Many of these projects began operation in 2006.

### Premises Initiative

In 2006, over €600,000 of capital funding was allocated to LDTF community-based drug projects under the Premises Initiative. A major advance in 2006 saw the Fund being extended to Regional Drugs Task Force areas, thus covering the whole country.

### Regional Drugs Task Forces

Ten Regional Drugs Task Forces (RDTFs) have been established for all areas that are not covered by LDTFs. Thus all parts of the country are now serviced by a Drugs Task Force. Co-ordinators were recruited for all RDTFs by the end of 2006 and approximately €4.2m was expended on the implementation of their Strategic Plans. These plans will continue to be rolled out further on a phased basis over the next few years.

### Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund

The Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund (YPSFS) seeks to develop youth facilities (including sport and recreational facilities) and services in disadvantaged areas where a significant drug problem exists, or has the potential to develop. Its primary focus is on LDTF areas, as well as Galway, Limerick and Waterford cities and Carlow town. In 2006, approximately €6m capital and €9.5m current was expended on YPSFS initiatives. The various projects funded now employ around 350 people.

## Goal 3 – Rural Development:

To promote and maintain living and working populations in rural areas by helping to foster sustainable and culturally vibrant communities.

### Strategy 3.1:

*To co-ordinate the implementation of actions for the development of rural communities arising from both national and EU policies.*

### EU Rural Development Programme

A National Rural Development Strategy for the period 2007-2013 has been prepared jointly with the Department of Agriculture and Food. Leading on from this, and following widespread public consultation, a detailed Rural Development Programme was submitted for approval to the EU Commission in December 2006. Under this programme, €425m in public funds, including €234m EU funding, will be allocated towards the provision of services in the wider rural economy.

Funding will be channelled through the LEADER approach towards rural development. In effect, this will result in a threefold increase in the level of funding to LEADER type programming over and above that allocated within the current 7 year period. This will enable the development of a fuller range of projects to be supported, leading to the creation of new enterprise and employment opportunities thus contributing significantly to the Government's objective of balanced regional development.



Seamus Jordan, Head Chef at The Tullamore Court Hotel, Darina Allen, Éamon Ó Cuív T.D., Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and Derek Davis at the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs Small Food Producers Forum in the Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore, Co. Offaly on Thursday the 14th of September.





Galway Golden Mile.





## White Paper on Rural Development

The National Development Plan (NDP) is the principal vehicle through which the objectives of the White Paper are achieved. In 2006, the Department chaired the NDP Rural Development Co-ordinating Committee and worked with a wide range of Government Departments and agencies to secure implementation of the Government's commitment to the protection and development of rural communities.

The Rural Development Fund, provided for in the White Paper, supports research, evaluations and pilot actions

## LEADER

LEADER is an EU Community Initiative for Rural Development that provides approved local action groups with public funding (EU and national) to implement multi-sectoral business plans for the development of their own areas. This Department is the Managing Authority for the LEADER Programmes in Ireland. LEADER funding is available in all rural areas of the country and approximately €35m was expended under the LEADER Programmes in 2006. By the end of 2006 all funding available under the programme had been committed to projects and initial work on the preparations for the closure of the programme had been undertaken.

## Irish LEADER Support Unit

The Irish LEADER Support Unit (ILSU) published 4 copies of its Rural Development Review plus 26 issues of its E-bulletin in 2006. The purpose of the communications is to heighten awareness of the funding opportunities available under LEADER and disseminate information in relation to developments in LEADER and rural development. An important part of the remit of the ILSU is to ensure best practice in relation to the management of LEADER. To this end, seminars were held on:

- Financial Control – focussing particularly on winding up the current programme and preparing for a new programme;
- Generating Your Plan for the Next Programme – aimed at supporting LEADER managers in compiling plans for the next programme; and
- Governance for LEADER Boards – was a regional workshop organised for board members of LEADER companies to build their capacity with regard to governance issues.

## Additional support provided in 2006

In response to demand from project promoters, €2.05m was made available to fund additional project activity through the LEADER Groups:

Significant projects funded through this allocation included:

- Drumshambo Food Hub – €74,750
- Castlecomer Visitor Centre – €90,908
- Carlow, Cocoa Shell Bean Recycling – Phase 2 – €41,386
- Laois, Cosby Hall Equestrian Centre – €45,000
- South Kerry Indoor Activity Centre – €40,000
- Wexford, St. Michaels Community Centre – €65,000



Wider Visions Project: the conversion of an old outhouse into a state-of-the-art video and editing facility in Cooraclare, West Clare

### North/South Co-operation

There was significant progress in relation to joint North/South co-operation projects. Nine projects were approved with funding from the South amounting to €935,000.

#### Strategy 3.2:

*To implement various measures designed to improve the economic, social, cultural and physical conditions in rural areas.*

### Western Development Commission

The Western Development Commission (WDC) fosters and supports the economic and social development of the Western Region (Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway and Clare). The Commission is also responsible for the operation of the Western Investment Fund which contributes to the development of the region by investing, through equity or loans (but not grants), in business start-up, growth oriented small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and in community-based measures to encourage enterprise development. In 2006, the WDC provided investment funds by way of loan finance and/or venture capital, totalling €5.92m to 18 projects across a range of sectors and business types. Further details of the Commission's activities are available on its website at [www.wdc.ie](http://www.wdc.ie)

### CLÁR Programme

CLÁR Programme is a targeted investment programme for rural areas that suffered more than an average 50% drop in population between 1926 and 2002. CLÁR provides funding and co-funding to Government Departments, State Agencies and Local Authorities in accelerating investment in selected priority developments. These investments support physical, economic and social infrastructure across a wide range of measures (see table) and reflect the priorities identified by the communities in the selected areas. This funding helps rural communities overcome local difficulties and achieve access to a range of essential services such as water supply, sewerage disposal, road access, community and economic infrastructure, etc. Expenditure under the CLÁR programme amounted to approx €23m in 2006, which, it is estimated, leveraged a further €13m approximately in related public and private expenditure.

Following analysis of the 2002 Population Census data, the programme was extended in April 2006 to include areas with an average population loss of 35% per county between 1926 and 2002. Parts of five new counties were added, increasing the population benefiting from the programme to nearly 727,000. The programme now covers parts of 22 counties and all of Co. Leitrim. On foot of the extension of the programme numerous public meetings were held around the country to promote the programme. In addition, meetings were held with other Government Departments and Local



Authorities to explore current measures and discuss the introduction of possible new measures.

Of particular note in 2006 was the number of applications processed under the Primary Schools Outdoor Play Facilities Enhancement measure as these increased dramatically. Indeed funding approved under this measure increased from €112,000 in 2005 to €1.6m in 2006 (funded in the ratio of 50/50 with Department of Education and Science). Also significant in 2006 was the new Western Rail Corridor measure which was introduced and under which €5m was approved to preserve the line from Collooney to Claremorris.

### CLÁR Measures

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Non-National Roads – Forestry Access   | Bi-lingual Signage Scheme                                     |
| Class II and Class III Local Roads/<br>Flashing Amber Safety Lights/Bridges            | Primary Schools Outdoor Play Facilities<br>Enhancement Scheme |
| Local Improvement Scheme Roads   | Top-up Sports Capital Grants                                  |
| 100% funded Flashing Amber Safety<br>Lights at Schools                                 | Top-up Gaeltacht Sports and<br>Community Grants               |
| Small Public Water and Sewerage Schemes  | Minor Capital Health Projects                                 |
| Group Water Schemes  | Electricity Conversions                                       |
| Group Sewerage Schemes   | Community Initiatives   |
| Small Sewerage Schemes in Tax Incentive<br>Areas on the Upper Shannon                  | Marine Development  |
| Village and Countryside Enhancement Scheme   | Regional Airport Development                                  |
| Local Authority Housing Estate<br>Enhancement Scheme                                   | *Water Conservation Measure                                   |
| *Western Rail Corridor: Preservation of Permanent<br>way from Collooney to Claremorris |   |

*\*New in 2006*



Landscaping and development of an amenity area at Kildysart Harbour, Co. Clare under the Village and Countryside Enhancement Scheme.

Funding, for the enhancement of villages and settlements in CLÁR areas through small-scale infrastructure, is provided as follows:

- 33.33% up to a maximum of €10,000 to be funded by CLÁR
- 16.66% up to a maximum of €5,000 to be funded by the LEADER Group
- 16.66% up to a maximum of €5,000 matching local contribution.
- 33.33% to be funded by the County Council and supplementary funding if the project costs over €30,000

## The Rural Social Scheme

The aims of the Rural Social Scheme (RSS) are to provide income support for farmers and fisherpersons who are currently in receipt of certain long-term social welfare payments, and to provide certain services of benefit to rural communities. During 2006, an additional 100 places were made available on the scheme, which brought the total number of available participant places up to 2,600, and all of these places were fully utilised by year end.

During the year, a number of changes were made to the scheme, including eligibility. New eligible categories included:

- Recipients of One-Parent Family Payments;
- Recipients of Widow(ers) Pension – Contributory and Non-Contributory;
- Qualified Adult Dependants of Non-Contributory Old Age Pensioners, who themselves are under 66; and
- Persons in receipt of Unemployment Benefit as a direct result of previously participating on the RSS or on a Community Employment Scheme (CE), where their term on the Scheme ceased within the last 12 months.

In June 2006, Pobal and the Department hosted an RSS Seminar in Co. Tipperary. The purpose of the seminar was to bring together all of the major players involved in implementing the RSS to discuss updates and changes taking place within the scheme and to identify the challenges being encountered at a local level. The sharing of experiences proved to be very beneficial to all parties, and on foot of the positive feedback received, it is intended to arrange such seminars in the future as the need arises.

The total funding provided to the RSS in 2006 amounted to €43.32m (which included €16m from the Dormant Accounts Fund and Capital funding of €3m).



Charlie O'Riordan and Gerry O'Sullivan, RSS participants, erecting a stile on the Duhallow Way Walking Route.





## Comhairle na Tuaithe

Comhairle na Tuaithe was established in February 2004 to address the three priority issues of access to the countryside, the development of a countryside code and the development of a countryside recreation strategy. It comprises representatives of the farming organisations, recreational users of the countryside and State bodies with an interest in the countryside. Significant progress was made during 2006, including the publication of the Comhairle na Tuaithe National Countryside Recreation Strategy. Following consideration of the National Countryside Recreation Strategy a number of initiatives were taken:

- An amount of €1.5m was allocated for the purpose of identifying looped walks and waymarked ways for development. This was carried out following consultation with the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism, Fáilte Ireland, Comhar LEADER na hÉireann and the National Waymarked Ways Advisory Committee. Of this, €600,000 was committed in 2006 for this purpose and a total of 15 looped walks were developed. In general, this work involved erecting and maintaining walkway furniture such as footpaths, stiles, footbridges, drainage channels, signs, benches and facilities for the disposal of litter etc and the carrying out of path repairs and upgrading. An additional €1.5m has been allocated in 2007 for this purpose.
- €90,000 (€30,000 per annum over the next three years) was allocated to Wicklow Uplands Council and Wicklow Rural Partnership to provide a network of access routes over private lands in areas of high scenic and amenity value in County Wicklow.
- €30,000 was allocated to Leave No Trace Ireland towards the employment of a Strategic Co-ordinator. The Co-ordinator will be involved in actively promoting the Leave No Trace message among the many countryside recreation groups around the country.
- Following consultation, an expert group comprising a Senior Council, along with officials from the Office of the Attorney General, the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and the Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs was established in February 2007 to advise on each of the legal issues raised by Comhairle na Tuaithe in relation to access.
- Agreement was reached with Fáilte Ireland for the employment of up to 10 Walk Managers to promote walking tourism in areas where there are clusters of suitable, accessible walks.







Dún Aonghusa, Inis Mór, Co. Galway.





## Goal 4 – Gaeltacht and Islands Development:

To support the maintenance and strengthening of Irish as the principal language of both household and community in the Gaeltacht and to promote the development of the islands.

### Strategy 4.1:

*To improve the social and economic life of the Gaeltacht for the purpose of consolidating Irish as its principal community language.*

### Strategy 4.2:

*To foster the Irish language and the culture of the Gaeltacht – particularly in terms of passing the language from one generation to the next – and to strengthen the development of the Gaeltacht as a distinctive linguistic region.*

Irish is a vital part of the State's heritage and the Gaeltacht is the primary source of the living language. One of the key objectives of the Department is to promote the maintenance of the Irish language in the Gaeltacht as its most important community resource and its principal means of communication. It has long been recognised that its transmission from one generation to the next is critical for the survival of the Irish language as the predominant household and community language in the Gaeltacht. With this in mind the Department operates a number of schemes and programmes aimed at the maintenance, promotion and strengthening of the language in the Gaeltacht.

In addition the Department also has a number of schemes and programmes in place that seek to address critical structural deficiencies in the Gaeltacht.

### Gaeltacht Policy

The Department's Strategy Statement sets out the initiatives and actions that are key in terms of delivering on the Report of Coimisiún na Gaeltachta. Considerable progress has been made in this regard during 2006 and this progress is reflected below.

### New Initiatives

A comprehensive linguistic study of the Irish language in the Gaeltacht has now been completed by the National University of Ireland, Galway in association with the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis, the National University of Ireland, Maynooth. The results of this study are currently being examined by this Department and will be used as the basis for the strengthening and promotion of the usage of the Irish language in the Gaeltacht and the reviewing of the official Gaeltacht boundaries.

In 2006 the Department also carried out a number of language awareness campaigns aimed at encouraging Gaeltacht parents to choose Irish as their principal language and persuading young people in the Gaeltacht of the advantages of being competent in Irish. It also continued the progressive implementation of a language planning initiative in Gaeltacht areas in conjunction with locally-based community organisations.

## Scéim Labhairt na Gaeilge

Under this scheme the Department pays a grant to Gaeltacht families with children attending primary or secondary school that use Irish as their everyday family language. In 2006 the Department provided funding totalling €760,500 under this scheme and received applications from 3,398 individuals. The Department awarded funding in respect of 3,153 of these applications.

## Scéim na bhFoghlaimoírí Gaeilge

In 2006 grants of €4.8m were paid to Gaeltacht families who are accredited by the Department to keep young people in their homes while they attend Irish courses in recognised Irish summer colleges. This scheme gives young people the opportunity to attain a fluency in the Irish language by experiencing life in the Gaeltacht. The grants supported 622 families, who kept 26,645 young people attending courses in 45 colleges.

In addition, the Department also supported 1,181 adult learners with a total expenditure of some €24,500 in 2006.

## Improvement Schemes in the Gaeltacht

The Department operates a number of Gaeltacht Improvement Schemes, the purpose of which is to improve the social, cultural and economic life of the Gaeltacht. These schemes provide funding to develop marine works, to improve roads and provide or improve other community facilities such as community centres and other recreation amenities in Gaeltacht areas.

In 2006 the following amounts were spent under the various Improvement Schemes operated by the Department:

- €1.5m under the Access Roads Scheme;
- €17.6m under the Strategic Roads Scheme;
- Over €958,300 for small piers co-funded with the County Council;
- Over €1.6m to improve strategic piers co-funded with County Councils; and
- Over €2.3m for public and recreational facilities, including Irish Colleges.

## Gaeltacht Housing Grant Scheme

Under this scheme the Department pays grants to qualified applicants for the building of new houses in the Gaeltacht or to renovate their existing houses. The grants are usually limited to applicants who normally reside in the Gaeltacht and use Irish as their everyday family language.

In 2006, the Department expended €1.2m on grants in respect of new houses in the Gaeltacht, and €2.3m on housing improvement grants.

## Cultural Activities (Miscellaneous Services)

In 2006, the Department provided funding totalling €655,000 to the following organisations Cumas Teo., Gael Uladh, Oideas Gael, Oidhreacht Chorca Dhuibhne, and An Gaelacadamh.

In addition €253,400 was provided to 111 Gaeltacht summer camps that were attended by 5,123 young people between the ages of 6 and 18 years.

The Department pays grants under a scheme to provide language assistants for children in Gaeltacht schools and in 2006 a total of €400,000 was expended in this regard.

### Third Level Activities

Financial assistance in excess of €1m over a three-year period has been provided by the Department towards the establishment of Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge, National University of Ireland, Galway. Funding continues to be provided for a number of 3rd level education outreach centres in the Gaeltacht.

### Údarás na Gaeltachta

Údarás na Gaeltachta is a non-commercial State body which comes under the aegis of the Department. Funding is provided to Údarás na Gaeltachta to develop the Gaeltacht economy for the purposes of encouraging the preservation and expansion of Irish as the principal community language. To this end, Údarás promotes employment and enterprise in the Gaeltacht through the development of local natural resources, the enhancement of skills and entrepreneurial abilities, in addition to the attraction of mobile investment to the Gaeltacht. It also promotes and supports community development initiatives and a wide range of language and cultural schemes. In 2006 the overall provision for Údarás na Gaeltachta was €42.77m, i.e., €11.05m in respect of administration, €4.72m in respect of current programmes and €27m in respect of capital expenditure.

The year 2006 saw an overall gain of 295 on the number of persons in full-time employment in the Gaeltacht. At year end, 7,953 persons were employed on a full-time basis and 4,380 were employed on a part-time/seasonal basis in Údarás-assisted companies.

During 2006, Údarás na Gaeltachta acquired the entire shareholding of Arramara Teoranta, previously a commercial State body under the aegis of the Department.

Further details are available from the Annual Report and Accounts of Údarás na Gaeltachta 2005 or on the website [www.udaras.ie](http://www.udaras.ie).

#### Strategy 4.3:

*Afford recognition to the distinctive heritage and culture of the islands through the promotion of social, physical and economic developments.*

Our islands have a valuable heritage, both built and natural, as well as rich cultural and linguistic traditions. The maintenance and development of strong communities on the islands is a particular challenge. During 2006, the Department continued with its work with islands' communities by:

- supporting the provision of safe, regular, high quality access;
- funding a wide range of capital projects from major pier improvements to smaller works programmes carried out in co-operation with the local authorities;
- promoting and co-ordinating Government policies vis-a-vis their impact on islands communities; and
- direct engagement with key community and development interests.

Particular initiatives progressed during 2006 included:

- Hosting a conference on renewable energy strategies for islands' communities. Arising from this initiative, the Department and Sustainable Energy Ireland have agreed to commission a major study on energy usage on the islands and the potential of alternative sources for future sustainability;
- In co-operation with Fáilte Ireland, the launch of a three-year tourism campaign designed to market Ireland's islands world wide as a niche tourism destination. The Department agreed to provide €171,500 (50%) towards the costs of the campaign;
- Measures aimed at promoting the future development of the islands were identified for inclusion in the NDP 2007-2013, including the development of the Aran Islands piers as a flagship project; and
- A Review of Islands Capital Expenditure 1998- 2004 was progressed in 2006 and this will assist in formulating future policy initiatives to secure a positive impact on the islands.

### Infrastructure

A total of €5.66m was spent in 2006 on the development of islands infrastructure such as harbour and pier improvements, roads and coastal protection works. Major projects undertaken during the year included:

- completion of a €12m pier development on Clare Island and Inishturk;
- commencement of the second phase of improved access facilities on Inis Bigil;
- commencement of major coastal protection works on Inishbofin, as part of a €4.4m contract;
- preliminary works for the development of improved ferry access facilities on the Aran Islands;
- completion of coastal protection works on Fenit Island; and
- a programme of works co-funded with and carried out by four Local Authorities.





### Support for access services

Subsidies totalling €4.2m were paid in 2006 in respect of 17 ferry and air services serving 15 islands communities. A number of contracts for these services were renewed, resulting in general, in an increased frequency of service to the islands.

### National Development Plan 2007-2013

Under the NDP 2007-2013, the islands will benefit from a major investment of €126m in the development and improvement of vital infrastructure and ferry and air access services. Up to €70m will be available in the next three years alone to complete major capital works, including the development of the ferry piers on the three Aran Islands. Priority will also be given to amenities for tourists and to the development of opportunities for islands communities to benefit from renewable energy technologies.



## Goal 5 – Promotion and Maintenance of the Irish Language:

To increase the use of the Irish language countrywide.

### Strategy 5.1:

*To secure better provision of public services through Irish by implementing the Official Languages Act.*

### Official Languages Act 2003

The process of implementing the Official Languages Act on a phased basis continued in 2006.

- The Act came into effect in its entirety on 14 July 2006 three years after its enactment.
- 21 additional language schemes covering 36 public bodies were confirmed by the Minister and published on the website of An Coimisinéir Teanga. A further 69 public bodies were requested by the Minister to prepare language schemes during the year.
- Draft Regulations under section 9(1) relating to the use of Irish and of Irish and English together on stationary, signage and pre-recorded oral announcements were placed by the Minister before each House of the Oireachtas and published. The draft Regulations were approved by motions passed in each of the Houses.
- An accreditation system for translators was launched by Foras na Gaeilge. The first examinations took place in July 2006 and the first panel of accredited translators was subsequently published on the Foras website [www.gaeilge.ie](http://www.gaeilge.ie).

In 2006 the following outputs were also achieved:

- The Government's Statement on the Irish Language 2006 was launched. This statement of policy will form the basis on which a series of actions to benefit the Irish language and the Gaeltacht will be developed. A twenty-year strategy for Irish will be drawn up based on the objectives set out in this statement.
- A dedicated fund of €1m was set up to facilitate the accelerated provision of specified 3rd level Irish language courses to help meet requirements arising from EU recognition of Irish as a full working language. The fund is administered in conjunction with the Department of Education and Science and the Higher Education Authority.
- A subsidiary fund was set up under Ciste na Gaeilge to support the teaching Irish in 3rd level Institutions abroad. A total of €374,774 was paid to 23 such Institutions in 2006.
- A Business Fund was set up to support the Irish Language in the Business Community. A total of €241,592 was paid to 4 organisations in 2006.
- A fund was set up to provide scholarships at Masters Degree level for placenames research. A total of €21,116 was paid to 3 applicants who qualified.
- A fund to provide Irish language DVDs for children was set up.
- A total of €3.6m was paid to 20 other organisations under Ciste na Gaeilge.





## Oifig Choimisinéir na dTeangacha Oifigiúla

The year 2006 was the second full year in operation of the Office. The role of the Office is to supervise and monitor the Act and to ensure that it is implemented. The Coimisinéir is independent in the performance of his functions.

### **Strategy 5.2:**

*Improve the status of Irish in Ireland and Europe.*

As indicated above, in 2006 the Government published a Policy Statement on the Irish Language, which commits it to the development of a 20 year strategy for the language and the promotion of functional bilingualism.

### Official and working language status for Irish at EU level secured

The Government's request to have Irish accepted as an official and working language of the European Union was approved by the European Council and came into effect on 1st January 2007.







Navigation Barge on Barrow.





## Goal 6 – North/South Co-operation:

To maintain, develop and foster North/South co-operation.

### Strategy 6.1:

*To support Waterways Ireland in the maintenance and development of the inland waterways principally for recreational purposes, as vested in it under the British – Irish Agreement Acts.*

The Department, working with the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland and the North/South Ministerial Council Secretariat, continued to support and fund Waterways Ireland in the maintenance and development of the inland waterways.

In 2006 funding of approximately €34m was provided by the Department to Waterways Ireland, whose Regional Headquarters at Scariff, Co Clare opened in August 2006. During the year the following was also achieved:

- The waterways maintenance programme progressed satisfactorily. All the waterways remained open and available for navigation during the boating season.
- In relation to the development of the waterways some 1284 metres of additional moorings were completed during the year. Service blocks were fitted out at both Portrunny and Garrykenny.
- Further bridge reconstruction works were completed on the Royal Canal with Longford Road Bridge opened to traffic in December 2006. The contract for Begnagh Bridge was placed in September, and work commenced on site. Design work on Mosstown and Lyneen Bridges progressed satisfactorily. Reconstruction work on 500 metres of bog embankment was successfully completed during 2006.
- Waterways Ireland continued to promote the waterways through the implementation of a marketing and promotion strategy.
- Waterways Ireland continued on a pathway of organisational development and performance, undertaking recruitment, staff training and meeting all statutory obligations and requirements and continued to maintain systems to secure good corporate governance.

### Strategy 6.2:

*To support An Foras Teanga (Foras na Gaeilge and Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch) in the promotion of the Irish language and the Ulster-Scots language and culture respectively, as provided for in the British-Irish Agreement Acts.*

The Department, working with the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland and the North/South Ministerial Council Secretariat, continued to support and fund An Foras Teanga in the promotion of the Irish language and the Ulster-Scots language and culture. In 2006, an amount of €15m was provided to An Foras Teanga.

Of significant note in 2006 was the additional staff approved for Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch (Ulster Scots Agency) and the agreement reached with the Northern Ireland authorities in respect of the Government's proposal to locate 30 staff of Foras na Gaeilge to Gaoth Dobhair.

### Strategy 6.3:

*To maximise cross border co-operation in other areas of the Department's work.*

#### Programme for PEACE and Reconciliation (PEACE II)

The EU Programme for PEACE and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of Ireland known as the PEACE II Programme is a joint Northern Ireland/Ireland Programme. The overall strategic aim of the Programme is to reinforce progress towards a more peaceful and stable society and to promote reconciliation.

The PEACE II Programme is being delivered through five main Priorities. These are:

- Economic Renewal;
- Social Integration, Inclusion and Reconciliation;
- Locally Based Regeneration and Development Strategies;
- Outward and Forward Looking Region; and
- Cross-border Co-operation.

The implementation of the various programme measures on behalf of the Department is carried out by Combat Poverty Agency / Pobal (Border Action). In 2006, 364 projects were supported under the PEACE II Programme.

#### INTERREG

INTERREG is a Community Initiative to assist border populations to overcome the special development problems and deficit arising from isolation within national economies, so that national barriers should not be an obstacle to balanced development and integration of the European territory. The specific aim of the funding is to address the economic and social disadvantages which can result from the existence of a border, by promoting the creation of cross border networks of co-operation, involving local communities and to promote economic and social development. In 2006 the Department continued to fund projects under this programme.

## Goal 7 – Corporate Support Services:

To provide corporate support structures to support the line divisions delivering on the Department’s mission, mandate and services.

### Strategy 7.1:

*Effectively manage the decentralisation of the Department to its new offices in Na Forbacha and to the headquarters at Knock Airport.*

The Department’s decentralisation programme, of which there are three main elements, was effectively advanced in 2006.

Of the 140 posts to be relocated to Knock Airport, 70 (50%) were assigned to temporary offices in Tubbercurry as a precursor of the move to the new HQ which is scheduled for completion in 2008. The Tubbercurry offices opened in July 2006. At the same time, of the 10 posts to be relocated to Na Forbacha, 8 (80%) were assigned with the balance to be assigned in 2007.

Twelve of the Department’s business units were relocated in whole or in part to Tubbercurry. The units became quickly effective and customer service levels were fully maintained.

In the period January to June 2006, there was a staff turnover of over 50% in the Department’s headquarters in Dublin as staff transferred-in from other Departments and staff left to take up positions vacated in other Department’s or to pursue decentralisation opportunities elsewhere.

The considerable challenges arising were met in full and key business targets continued to be met.

This is a tribute to the hard work of the staff of the Department, both those who decentralised and those who did not, and to the decentralisation planning process. A key part of that planning included the development of a quality assurance process by the Internal Audit Unit. This helped to focus the relocating business units on key plan elements and provided assurance to the Department’s Management Advisory Committee (MAC) that the units were ready for relocation and would operate effectively in the new location.

Significant progress was made also in terms of the proposed decentralisation of part of Pobal to Clifden, Co. Galway. Of the 40 posts to be decentralised, 23 (58%) were assigned to temporary offices in Clifden during 2006. The full complement of posts will be relocated when Pobal’s permanent offices are complete, which is expected early in 2008.

Planning for the decentralisation of 30 Foras na Gaeilge (a North/South body) posts to Gaoth Dobhair, Co. Donegal was advanced in 2006. Agreement was reached at the North /South Ministerial Council for the move and a plan was prepared for consideration by the Foras na Gaeilge Board. It is anticipated that a number of posts will be relocated during 2007.

### Strategy 7.2:

*To advance and facilitate Public Service Modernisation in the Department and in the bodies under its aegis.*

In 2006, all of the modernisation elements were delivered successfully and to the satisfaction of the Civil Service Performance Verification Group.

### Strategy 7.3:

*To build on the Management Information Framework (MIF) to meet the evolving financial and information needs of management.*

### Strategy 7.4:

*To provide a comprehensive accounting service and promote best practice in financial management.*

### Strategy 7.8:

*To promote quality procurement management within the Department and in the bodies under its aegis.*

The MIF is now embedded in the Department, with positive impacts on financial reporting, along with enhanced information for managers. In the course of 2006, considerable progress was made with respect to increasing the use of electronic payments. In particular, electronic fund transfers were used to the following extent in 2006 (by reference to value in each case):

- Salaries: 100%;
- Travel & subsistence payments: 100%;
- Payments to suppliers: 88%; and
- Grants: 92%

Other developments in 2006 included the provision of customised training on the operation of the financial management system to new staff arriving in order to decentralise to Tubbercurry and the smooth delivery of payments and financial reports throughout the decentralisation process.

The year also saw significant progress being achieved in the preparation of the Department's first *Annual Output Statement* for presentation to the Dáil Select Committee on Arts, Sports, Tourism, Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, following the publication of the Revised Estimates Volume 2007. The Finance Unit coordinated this work with the assistance of the Centre for Public Management Research, resulting in the further development and refinement of existing performance indicators.

Detailed analysis was initiated on procurement practices as a precursor to the production of a Departmental Corporate Procurement Plan.

### Strategy 7.5:

*To ensure that quality IT facilities are provided across the Department to support its business objectives, including decentralisation.*

The provision of a quality IT support service to all the Department's staff and the implementation of the Department's IT Strategy Plan continued in 2006.

In 2006 a full range of IT services were provided with virtually no unplanned downtime. Of particular note and credit to the staff in the IT Unit, is that the decentralisation programme challenges were met fully, including the relocation of the Department's Accounts function to Tubbercurry.

**Strategy 7.6:*****Effective Management of the Human Resources Function.***

The Department's HR Strategy, including the further consolidation of the Performance Management and Development System and the equality agenda, was implemented fully as was the related Training and Development Strategy.

**Strategy 7.7:*****To provide a systems based internal audit function as a service to the Department.***

The presence of an effective internal control network is vital in safeguarding the assets of an organisation and ensuring effective operation of its systems.

In 2006, the Internal Audit Unit provided a financial advisory and audit service to the Department. During the year a number of systems audits, EU audits and value for money audits were undertaken by the Unit. Details of audit findings and subsequent audit recommendations were made available to senior management and copies were also provided to the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

Work of particular note carried out by the Unit included:

- The Department's Decentralisation Quality Assurance Process ensuring that Divisions relocating would have adequate systems of control, operation and administration in place prior to decentralising and would be in a position to function effectively and efficiently in their new environment;
- Value for Money Audits of Training, Consultancies and Local Development Structures in the Department;
- Risk Management;
- Audits of EU Programmes under Article 10 of Regulation (EC) 438/2001; and
- Wider Governance Issues.

**Evaluation of Expenditure and Effectiveness**

In 2006 the Department continued to foster a culture of ongoing evaluation. During the year the Department completed and published two Expenditure Reviews, Scéimeanna Feabhsúcháin sa Ghaeltacht and the Local Drugs Task Forces. Implementation of the recommendations arising from these Reports continues. Reviews of Capital Expenditure on the Off Shore Islands and Ciste na Gaeilge were also progressed during the year.

Under the supervision of the Capital Expenditure Committee significant progress was achieved across the Department in the implementation of procedures to meet the Department's obligations in relation to the ongoing review and evaluation of capital expenditure.

# Corporate Matters

## Corporate Governance Division

In November 2006, MAC established a Corporate Governance Division from within existing staffing resources to facilitate and further enhance corporate governance arrangements in the Department. Its mandate included a full review of the adequacy of the statutory basis for the Departments functions, powers, schemes and programmes. Arising from this initiative appropriate draft legislation is in preparation.

## Freedom of Information

During the year, the Department received 37 requests under the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003. Of these requests, 11 were granted, 4 were part-granted, 13 were refused, 6 applications were withdrawn or handled outside the FOI Act, while 1 case was transferred to another body and 2 cases remained live at the end of the year. The categories of requesters during 2006 were as follows:

|                    |           |
|--------------------|-----------|
| Journalists        | 20        |
| Business           | 6         |
| Oireachtas members | 1         |
| Others             | 10        |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>37</b> |

The Bodies under the aegis of the Department, which were subject to FOI at end 2006 were:

Pobal  
Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland  
Bord na Leabhar Gaeilge  
Údarás na Gaeltachta  
An Coimisiún Logainmneacha  
National Drugs Strategy Team  
National Advisory Committee on Drugs (with effect from 31 May 2006)  
Western Development Commission

## Quality Customer Service

The Department's commitment to providing its customers with a high level of service was publicised throughout the year. Feedback via our Customer Comment Card and following the Department's presence at the National Ploughing Championship indicated high levels of satisfaction among our customers to the level of efficiency, response times and helpfulness of staff dealing with their enquiries.



## Legislative Activity

The Department was engaged in the following legislative activity during 2006:

### General Schemes/Heads of Bills brought to Government

| No. | Title   | Description  | RIA |
|-----|---|--|-----|
|     | Charities Regulation Bill<br>(General Scheme) | To regulate charities so as to ensure accountability and to protect against abuse of charitable status and fraud | Yes |

### Statutory Instrument prepared by the Department

| No. | Title  | Description   | RIA |
|-----|--|---|-----|
| 150 | Official Languages Act 2003<br>(Public Bodies) Regulation 2006 | The Regulations bring additional public bodies within the scope of the Official Languages Act 2003 and deletes from the first schedule to the Act the names of those public bodies that have ceased to exist or to operate since it was passed. | No  |

In 2006 the Department had no Bills published nor had it any draft EU Directives published for which it had lead responsibility.

# Appendix 1:

*Contact details and other information about the Department and its agencies and bodies*

## Contacting the Department

Information on the work of the Department may be obtained from our website at [www.pobail.ie](http://www.pobail.ie), or by e-mailing or telephoning the Department's offices as listed below.

1. The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs

Dún Aímhirgin  
43-49 Mespil Road  
Dublin 4

Lo-Call: 1890 474 847  
Main Switchboard: 01-647 3000  
Fax: 01-647 3051

Information/Press Office: 01-647 3130                      e-mail: [eolas@pobail.ie](mailto:eolas@pobail.ie)  
Department FOI Officer: 01-647 3216                      e-mail: [foi@pobail.ie](mailto:foi@pobail.ie)

Office of the Minister; Office of the Minister of State; Irish Language Policy (Part of); LEADER (Part of); Rural Development Policy; Comhairle na Tuaithe, Drugs Strategy Unit; North/South Co-operation; Charities Regulation; Community Services Programme; Schemes Review Division; Corporate Services (Part of).

2. The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs

Teeling St.  
Tubbercurry  
Co. Sligo

Main Switchboard: 071-918 6700  
Fax: 071-918 6750

CLÁR, Rural Social Scheme; LEADER (Part of); Community and Local Development Programme; LDSIP and RAPID Programmes; Community and Voluntary Supports Division; Corporate Services (Part of); Accounts.

3. The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs

Na Forbacha  
Co. Galway

Lo-Call: 1890 201 401  
Main Switchboard: 091-592555/503700  
Fax: 091-592595  
E-mail: [gaeltachtnaforbacha@pobail.ie](mailto:gaeltachtnaforbacha@pobail.ie)

Gaeltacht Schemes; Gaeltacht Policy; Irish Language Policy (Part of); Islands.

Gaeltacht Regional Offices  
An tEastát Tonscail, Na Doirí Beaga: 074-953 1598  
Tithe an Rialtais, Trá Lí: 066-712 1303



## Agencies and other bodies:

**An Coimisinéir Teanga** is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Official Languages Act and investigating complaints from members of the public.

An Coimisinéir Teanga  
Baile an tSagairt  
An Spidéal  
Co Galway  
Phone: 091-504006  
Fax: 091-504036

Coimisinéir: Seán Ó Cuirreáin  
E-mail: eolas@coimisineir.ie  
Website: www.coimisineir.ie

**An Coimisiún Logainmneacha (The Placenames Commission)** advises on the research of the placenames of Ireland and on providing authoritative Irish forms of those names for official and public use.

An Coimisiún Logainmneacha  
Dún Aimhirgin,  
43-49 Bóthar Mespil  
Baile Átha Cliath 4  
Phone: 01-647 3000  
Fax: 01-647 3270

Chief Placenames Officer:  
Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig  
E-mail: placenames@pobail.ie

**Bord na Leabhar Gaeilge** administers schemes to assist publishers and authors to publish material of interest in the Irish language.

Bord na Leabhar Gaeilge  
Ráth Cairn  
Áth Buí  
Co. na Mí  
Phone: 046-943 0419  
Fax: 046-943 0420

Chairman: Matt Ó Bradaigh  
E-mail: blg@leabhar.ie  
Website: www.leabhar.ie

**The Board of the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland** is mandated under the Charities Acts 1961 and 1973 to provide services to trustees of charities and to carry out the intentions of persons making donations and bequests to charities.

Office of the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland

12 Clare Street  
Dublin 2  
Phone: 01-676 6095  
Fax: 01-676 6001

Secretary to the Board:  
Orla Barry Murphy  
E-mail: charities@eircom.net



**The Dormant Accounts Board** was established on 4 January 2006. The Board is responsible for preparing the Disbursement Plan which provides the framework under which Government decisions are made in relation to disbursements from the Fund. The Board also reviews and assesses the impact and effectiveness of disbursements from the Fund.

Dormant Accounts Board

PO Box 10457

Dublin 4

Phone: 01-647 3000

LoCall: 1890 457058

Fax: 01-676 9577

E-mail: [info@dormantaccounts.ie](mailto:info@dormantaccounts.ie)

Website: [www.dormantaccounts.ie](http://www.dormantaccounts.ie)

**An Foras Teanga** is one of the Cross-Border Implementation Bodies established under the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999 and is comprised of **Foras na Gaeilge** and the Ulster-Scots Agency-**Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch**. Foras na Gaeilge has the objective of promoting the Irish language on an all-island basis. Its responsibilities include support of community-based projects, education initiatives, as well as provision of dictionaries, terminology and other resources for the language. Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch has responsibility for the promotion of greater awareness and the use of Ullans and of Ulster-Scots cultural issues, both within Northern Ireland and throughout the island.

Foras na Gaeilge

7 Merrion Square

Dublin 2

Phone: 01-639 8400/1850 325 325

Fax: 01-667 0828

Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch

Franklin House

10-12 Brunswick Street

Belfast BT2 7GE

Phone: 028-9023 1898

Fax: 028-9023 1898

Chief Executive: Ferdie Mac an Fhailigh

E-mail: [eolas@forasnagaeilge.ie](mailto:eolas@forasnagaeilge.ie)

Website: [www.forasnagaeilge.ie](http://www.forasnagaeilge.ie)

Chief Executive: George Patton

E-mail: [info@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk](mailto:info@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk)

Website: [www.ulsterscotsagency.com](http://www.ulsterscotsagency.com)

**National Advisory Committee on Drugs (NACD)** was established in July 2000 to advise the Government in relation to the prevalence, prevention, treatment and consequences of problem drug use in Ireland based on analysis of research, findings and information available to it.

National Advisory Committee on Drugs

3rd Floor

Shelbourne House

Shelbourne Road

Ballsbridge

Dublin 4

Phone: 01-667 0760/0765

Fax: 01-667 0828

Director: Ms. Mairead Lyons

E-mail: [info@nacd.ie](mailto:info@nacd.ie)

Website: [www.nacd.ie](http://www.nacd.ie)



**The National Drugs Strategy Team (NDST)** is a cross-departmental Team from Departments and agencies involved in the drugs field. It also includes representatives from the community and voluntary sectors. Its purpose is to oversee the work of the Local and Regional Drugs Task Forces, make recommendations on issues arising, and report on progress in this area.

National Drugs Strategy Team  
4/5 Harcourt Road  
Dublin 2  
Phone: 01-475 4119/4120  
Fax: 01-475 4045

Director: Patricia O'Connor  
E-mail: [username@ndst.gov.ie](mailto:username@ndst.gov.ie)  
(i.e. [joe\\_bloggs@ndst.gov.ie](mailto:joe_bloggs@ndst.gov.ie).)

**Pobal** is a not-for-profit company with charitable status that manages the implementation of Exchequer and EU Funded programmes on behalf of Government Departments.

Pobal  
Chief Executive: Dr Tony Crooks  
Website: [www.pobal.ie](http://www.pobal.ie)

**Head Office:**

Holbrook House  
Holles Street  
Dublin 2  
Phone: 01-240 0700  
Fax: 01-661 0411  
E-mail: [enquiries@pobal.ie](mailto:enquiries@pobal.ie)

**Cork Office:**

SIAC Building  
Ballycurreen Cross  
Airport Road  
Cork  
Phone: 021-470 3700  
Fax: 021-470 3710

**Sligo Office:**

Waterfront House  
Bridge Street  
Sligo  
Tel: 071-913 8240  
Fax: 071-913 8008

**Galway Office:**

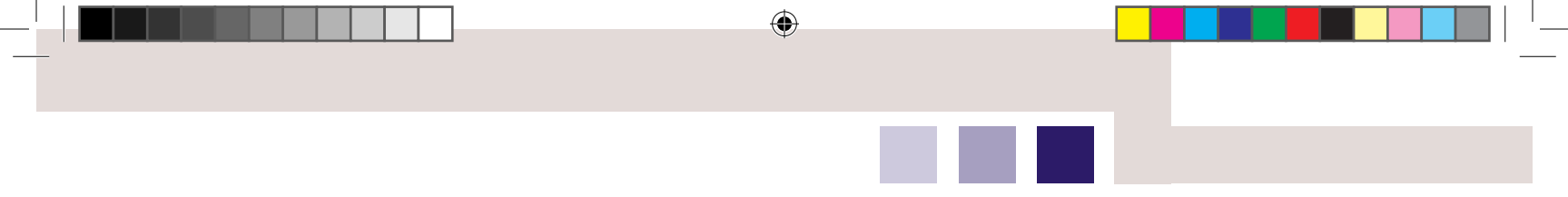
Millars Lane  
The Fairgreen  
Clifden  
Co Galway  
Phone: 01-448 4845  
Fax: 095-30740

**Monaghan Office:**

Border Action (Joint Venture  
with the Combat Poverty Agency)  
European Union House  
Monaghan  
Co Monaghan  
Tel: 047-71340  
Fax: 047-71341  
E-mail: [info@borderaction.ie](mailto:info@borderaction.ie)  
Website: [www.borderaction.ie](http://www.borderaction.ie)

**Limerick Office:**

Glanmore Suite  
3rd Floor  
Park House  
Arthurs Quay  
Limerick  
Phone: 061-313084  
Fax: 061-314729



**Údarás na Gaeltachta**, established in 1980, is a regional development agency that combines an economic development role – that of creating sustainable jobs and attracting investment to the Gaeltacht regions – with community, cultural and language development activities, working in partnership with local communities and organisations.

Údarás na Gaeltachta  
Na Forbacha  
Gaillimh  
Phone: 091-503100  
Fax: 091-503101

Chief Executive: Pádraig Ó hAoláin  
E-mail: [eolas@udaras.ie](mailto:eolas@udaras.ie)  
Website: [www.udaras.ie](http://www.udaras.ie)

**Waterways Ireland** is a Cross-Border Implementation Body established under the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999. Waterways Ireland's primary function is the management, maintenance and development, principally for recreation purposes, of the majority of the inland navigable waterway system throughout the island.

Waterways Ireland  
20 Darling Street  
Enniskillen  
Co. Fermanagh  
BT74 7EW  
Phone: 048-6632 3004  
Fax: 048-6634 623757

Chief Executive: John Martin  
E-mail: [info@waterwaysireland.org](mailto:info@waterwaysireland.org)  
Website: [www.waterwaysireland.org](http://www.waterwaysireland.org)

The **Western Development Commission (WDC)** is a statutory body promoting economic and social development in the Western Region (defined as the counties of Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway and Clare). Its three principal activities focus on ensuring that economic and social policy effectively meets the development needs of the Western Region, fostering and promoting regional development initiatives, and managing the Western Investment Fund. This Fund provides risk capital by way of equity and loans on a commercial basis to projects and businesses.

Western Development Commission  
Dillon House  
Ballaghaderreen  
Co. Roscommon  
Phone: 094-986 1441  
Fax: 094-986 1443

Chief Executive Officer: Gillian Buckley  
E-mail: [info@wdc.ie](mailto:info@wdc.ie)  
Website: [www.wdc.ie](http://www.wdc.ie)

## Appendix 2:

### *Glossary of Terms*

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>AIT</b>      | Area Implementation Team   |
| <b>BMW</b>      | Border, Midland & Western  |
| <b>CCTV</b>     | Closed Circuit Television  |
| <b>CE</b>       | Community Employment Scheme  |
| <b>CDB</b>      | County/City Development Board  |
| <b>CDP</b>      | Community Development Programme  |
| <b>CLÁR</b>     | Ceantair Laga Ard-Riachtanais  |
| <b>CSOP</b>     | Scheme of Community Support for Older People   |
| <b>EU</b>       | European Union   |
| <b>FOI</b>      | Freedom of Information   |
| <b>HR</b>       | Human Resource   |
| <b>ILSU</b>     | Irish LEADER Support Unit  |
| <b>IDG</b>      | Inter-Departmental Group on Drugs  |
| <b>INTERREG</b> | Community initiative for interregional cooperation which assists border regions and promotes joint projects between beneficiaries in different Member States |
| <b>IT</b>       | Information Technology   |
| <b>LDSIP</b>    | Local Development Social Inclusion Programme   |
| <b>LDTF</b>     | Local Drugs Task Force   |
| <b>LEADER</b>   | Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale<br>(Links between the rural economy and development actions)                                     |
| <b>MAC</b>      | Management Advisory Committee  |
| <b>MIF</b>      | Management Information Framework   |
| <b>NACD</b>     | National Advisory Committee on Drugs   |
| <b>NDP</b>      | National Development Plan  |
| <b>NDST</b>     | National Drugs Strategy Team   |
| <b>PEACE II</b> | EU Funding Programme to reinforce progress towards a peaceful stable environment and to promote reconciliation   |
| <b>Pobal</b>    | Formerly ADM Ltd.  |
| <b>PSMA</b>     | Public Service Management Act  |
| <b>RDTF</b>     | Regional Drugs Task Force  |
| <b>RAPID</b>    | Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development   |
| <b>RIA</b>      | Regulatory Impact Analysis   |
| <b>RSS</b>      | Rural Social Scheme  |
| <b>SME</b>      | Small and Medium Enterprise  |
| <b>WDC</b>      | Western Development Commission   |
| <b>YPFSF</b>    | Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund   |

## Appendix 3: Expenditure in 2006

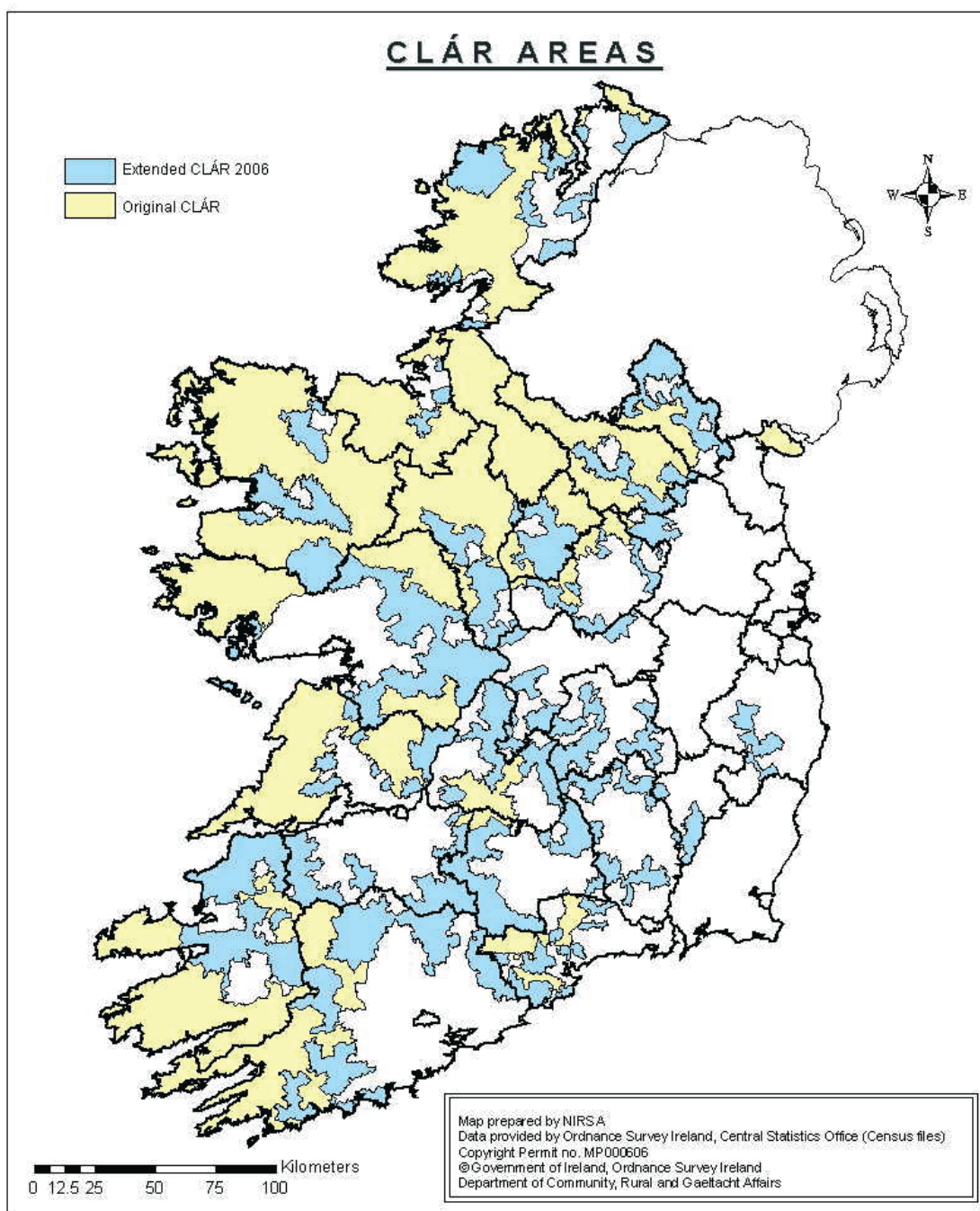
\* The Outturn here is provisional and at the time of compiling this Report, the Comptroller and Auditor General had not audited the Department's 2006 Appropriation Account

| Subhead                                     | Expenditure in 2006<br>Service  | Outturn<br>€000 |
|---|---|-----------------|
| <b>Administration</b>                       |   |                 |
| A.1.  | Salaries, Wages and Allowances  | 12,454          |
| A.2.  | Travel and Subsistence  | 760             |
| A.3.  | Incidental Expenses   | 1,471           |
| A.4.  | Postal and Telecommunications Services  | 389             |
| A.5.  | Office Machinery and Other Office Supplies                                      | 963             |
| A.6.  | Office Premises Expenses  | 443             |
| A.7.  | Consultancy Services  | 384             |
| <b>The Irish Language and the Gaeltacht</b> |   |                 |
| B.  | Payments to An Foras Teanga   | 15,135          |
| C.  | Payments to Ciste na Gaeilge (Part funded by National Lottery)                  | 4,251           |
| D.  | An Coimisinéir Teanga   | 647             |
| E.  | Gaeltacht Housing – Grants under the Housing (Gaeltacht) Acts 1929-2001         | 3,589           |
| F.  | Cultural and Social Schemes   | 10,162          |
| G.  | Improvement Schemes in the Gaeltacht  | 24,240          |
| H.  | Islands   | 10,131          |
| I.1.  | Údarás na Gaeltachta – Administration   | 11,056          |
| I.2.  | Údarás na Gaeltachta – Current Programme  | 4,720           |
| I.3.  | Údarás na Gaeltachta – Grants for Projects and Capital Expenditure on Premises  | 27,000          |
| I.4.  | Údarás na Gaeltachta – Election   | 34              |
| J.  | Advanced Irish Language Skills Initiative                                       | 34              |
| <b>Community Affairs</b>                    |   |                 |
| K.1.  | Grants for Community and Voluntary Service (Part funded by National Lottery)    | 11,514          |
| K.2.  | Community Services Programme  | 38,840          |
| L.1.  | Local and Community Development Programmes (Part funded by National Lottery)    | 71,148          |
| L.2.  | Improved Co-ordination of Local and Community Development Schemes               | 4,764           |
| M.  | Programme for Peace and Reconciliation/ Interreg                                | 13,828          |
| N.  | Drugs Initiative/Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund                     | 41,308          |
| O.  | RAPID   | 5,877           |
| <b>Rural Affairs</b>                        |   |                 |
| P.1.  | Western Development Commission  | 2,224           |
| P.2.  | Western Investment Fund   | 5,469           |
| Q.1.  | Rural Development Schemes   | 1,431           |
| Q.2.  | LEADER/ National Rural Development Programme                                    | 36,567          |
| Q.3.  | Rural Social Scheme   | 23,996          |
| Q.4.  | Rural Social Scheme (Dormant Accounts Funded)                                   | 16,000          |
| R.  | Ceantair Laga Ard-Riachtanais (CLÁR)  | 23,007          |
| <b>Other Services</b>                       |   |                 |
| S.  | Grant to Waterways Ireland  | 34,133          |
| T.1.  | Dormant Accounts – Administration   | 1,429           |
| T.2.  | Initiatives Tackling Economic and Social Disadvantage (Dormant Accounts Funded) | 250             |
| U.  | Charities Regulation  | 99              |
| <b>Gross Total</b>                          |   | <b>459,747</b>  |



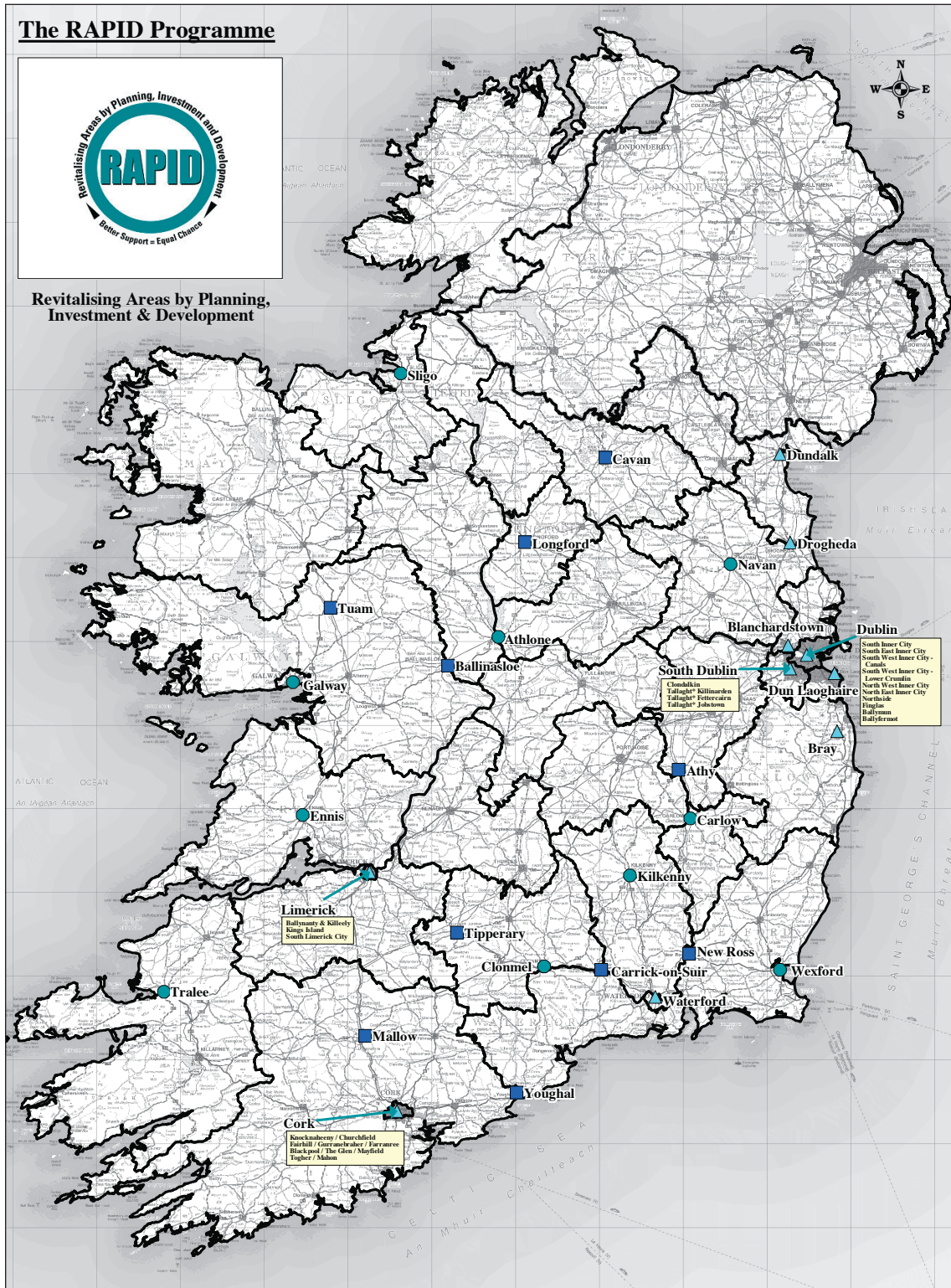


# Appendix 4: CLÁR Areas



# Appendix 5:

## RAPID Areas





- South West Inner City
- Dublin South Inner City
- Dublin Northwest Inner City
- Dublin North East Inner City
- Dublin South East Inner City
- Dublin – Northside
- Dublin – Finglas
- Dublin – Ballymun
- Dublin – Ballyfermot
- South Dublin – Killinarden
- South Dublin – Fettercairn
- South Dublin – Jobstown
- South Dublin – Clondalkin
- Blanchardstown
- Dun Laoghaire Rathdown
- Bray
- Dundalk
- Drogheda
- Cork – Knocknaheeny, Churchfield
- Cork – Fairhill, Gurranebraher, Faranree
- Cork – Blackpool, The Glen, Mayfield
- Cork – Togher Mahon
- Limerick – Ballynanty & Kileely
- Limerick – King’s Island, Bishops Palace
- Limerick – South Limerick City
- Waterford
  
- Athlone
- Athy
- Ballinasloe
- Carlow
- Carrick on Suir
- Cavan
- Clonmel
- Ennis
- Galway
- Kilkenny
- Longford
- Mallow
- Navan
- New Ross
- Sligo
- Tipperary
- Tralee
- Tuam
- Wexford
- Youghal

