

Chief Executive's Report

How we're
creating greater
opportunity for
all

January 2026



Reception for Shamrock Rovers at County Hall



About the Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive's Report is presented to elected members at each SDCC monthly meeting. It forms a key part of our governance and oversight framework, supporting members in their role by providing timely updates on the work of the Council.

In line with Section 136(2) of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended by the Local Government Reform Act 2014), the report outlines the performance of executive functions, the implementation of Council policy, and the delivery of services across the organisation.

This report should be read alongside updates provided to Area Committee Meetings and the quarterly Capital Progress Report, which together offer a comprehensive view of Council activity and progress.

Each edition includes:

- Updates on how we are delivering on our Corporate Plan goals
- Highlights of major initiatives and events
- A visual snapshot of recent community and Council activities

The report also provides an opportunity to shine a light on areas of our work that may not always be in the spotlight but are vital to the day-to-day life of the county.

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Climate Leadership

CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING

Project reTREE: Artificial Christmas Tree Recycling

We are delighted to announce the launch of an innovative new recycling scheme for artificial Christmas trees this festive season.

Project reTREE is delivered in collaboration with Balsam Hill, a leading artificial reusable Christmas tree company. From fifteen November to 31 January 2026, householders can bring old or broken artificial Christmas trees, including pre-lit trees with light strings attached—to the Civic Amenity Recycling Centre at Ballymount.

All artificial trees, regardless of brand, will be accepted free of charge. We request that any batteries in the tree be removed beforehand. Working with local stakeholders, Balsam Hill will ship these trees to France for proper recycling.

Recycling your artificial Christmas tree prevents unnecessary landfill waste, conserves resources used in manufacturing and allows the metal and plastic in the trees to be repurposed, supporting sustainability and the circular economy.

Christmas Tree Recycling (Non-Artificial)

Arrangements for Christmas tree recycling have been made from Friday, 2 January 2026 to Monday, 12 January 2026. This service is free and intended for domestic household trees only, with a limit of one tree per household or vehicle.

Signage will be placed at each location to indicate it as an official recycling point. For more details and to find a location near you, please visit www.sdcc.ie.

Recycling locations include:

- Tymon Park – Limekiln Road car park
- Tymon Park – Tymon North Road car park
- Dodder Valley Park / Firhouse Road (car park opposite Woodlawn Estate)
- Rathfarnham Castle Park – car park
- Oldbawn Church – car park

Lucan

- Beechpark Open Space
- Sarsfield Park open space
- Griffen Valley Park – Haydens Lane car park
- Foxborough open space

Palmerstown

- Glenaulin Park
- Woodfarm Acres

Clondalkin

- Corkagh – Green Isle Road car park
- Corkagh – St Johns car park
- Collinstown Park
- Foxdene Open Space
- Quarryvale Park



Recycle Those Christmas Trees

Climate Leadership



Connecting Community, Creativity and Climate Action in Tallaght

The Levers project, currently taking place in Tallaght Library, is an ambitious and collaborative initiative that brings together SDCC Libraries, Trinity College Dublin (TCD), and the Planning and Climate Action departments. We designed this project to inspire creative engagement with environmental issues, inviting young people to imagine, design, and prototype new ways for communities to connect with nature through storytelling, public art, and place-based experiences.

We are proud to be part of the LEVERS project; a collaborative initiative focused on climate action and education across Europe. The aim is to foster systemic thinking and critical approaches by bringing together partners from education, community organisations, and government. As part of the Horizon Europe programme, the project delivers climate

action learning initiatives in nine European locations. Led by Trinity College Dublin, the €2.4 million project seeks to embed collaboration and interdisciplinarity in climate education across different learning settings. We also explore local learning ecosystems as tools for community engagement and action on climate issues.

In Tallaght, our Libraries Maker in Residence and a researcher from TCD lead the project. The Libraries Digital and Development team invited all relevant partners to meet before the project began to discuss local climate issues and concerns raised by local communities around planning. The Levers Project kicked off in November, and Transition Year students from Mount Seskin School in Tallaght, along with their teacher, have been attending sessions weekly in the makerspace in Tallaght Library. This

programme runs from September 2025 to February 2026.

The project began with two separate, but equally compelling ideas developed by student groups. One centred on a walking tour in the Dublin Mountains near the Hell Fire Club. The aim was to help people gently access hiking paths, pausing at a series of stations where they would collect pieces of a narrative, ultimately building a comic book as they walked. The second group proposed a series of sculptures exploring the Irish famine of the eighteen hundreds and contemporary global hunger, using biodegradable materials and layers of printed media to symbolise the fragility and persistence of these histories.

Rather than choosing one idea over the other, we pivoted and evolved—blending the strengths of both. The new shared vision involves designing an interactive walking route beginning in or around Tallaght, with the possibility of eventually connecting to the Hell Fire trails. Along this route, participants will encounter a series of multifunctional stations featuring sculptural elements, educational messages, and sensory experiences. These stations might include insect hotels, herb or wildflower planters, biodegradable structures, or artistic representations inspired by folklore, biodiversity, history, or contemporary social themes.

Each station is imagined as both a point of reflection and a spark for curiosity. Visitors may learn about local wildlife, engage with stories from Irish folklore, or discover insights into social and environmental issues. The narrative component, originally

conceived as a comic book, is being reimagined as a field journal or nature log, allowing participants—especially young walkers—to record what they observe and learn along the way.

This term, our focus is on early-stage design work. Students are mapping their chosen walking routes, considering accessibility, biodiversity, and meaningful points of interest. They are also completing empathy and user-experience mapping to understand what a visitor might see, feel, and do at each station. Finally, they are selecting the story themes that will shape the project's tone and purpose, ensuring that every creative element ties back into environmental and climate-conscious education.

Over the Christmas period, our project partners developed research, drafted prototypes, and prepared materials, allowing students to move quickly into hands-on making in the new year. A site visit was planned for early January, giving participants the opportunity to physically explore potential station locations and deepen their understanding of the landscape they were designing for.

We believe the Levers project represents a powerful model for cross-sector collaboration. By uniting academia, local government, climate action leaders, and the library as a community hub, we empower young people to imagine creative responses to urgent environmental challenges—rooted not only in global issues, but in the local places and stories that shape everyday life in Tallaght.

Climate Leadership



Responding to Storm Bram

In advance of the arrival of Storm Bram, the second named storm of this winter season, the National Directorate of Fire and Emergency Management (NDFEM) held a national weather briefing on Friday 5 December to advise stakeholders, including all Local Authorities, that while there was uncertainty on the direction of the storm, that Severe Weather Assessment Teams (SWATs) should actively monitor forecasts over the weekend.

The 'Status Yellow Wind Warning' for Dublin on Monday was upgraded to a Status Orange Warning by Met Eireann from Tuesday 9 December, 11:00 to 21:00.

SDCC's SWAT met to consider any additional actions and council crews carried out preparatory work including the cleaning of screens on the stormwater network, street sweeping to remove build-up of leaves and targeted gully cleaning.

Relevant staff actively monitored and responded to 33 reported weather-related incidents during the event.

In the main, due to this event, there were 28 reports of trees/branches down, 4 incidents of localised flooding and 1 incident of infrastructural damage.

Nature on our Doorsteps, Volume 4

The Nature on our Doorsteps series of Council publications represents an ongoing partnership between SDCC and the local Echo Newspaper group.

Since 2017, weekly columns on biodiversity have been prepared by the Council's Heritage Officer for publication by the Echo in their printed and digital media platforms. These columns and photographs highlight the wide diversity of plants, insects, spiders, invertebrates, and fungi that occur in the County.

The weekly columns are periodically compiled and published in separate volumes under the County Heritage Plan, with the latest publication in 2025 being Volume 4.

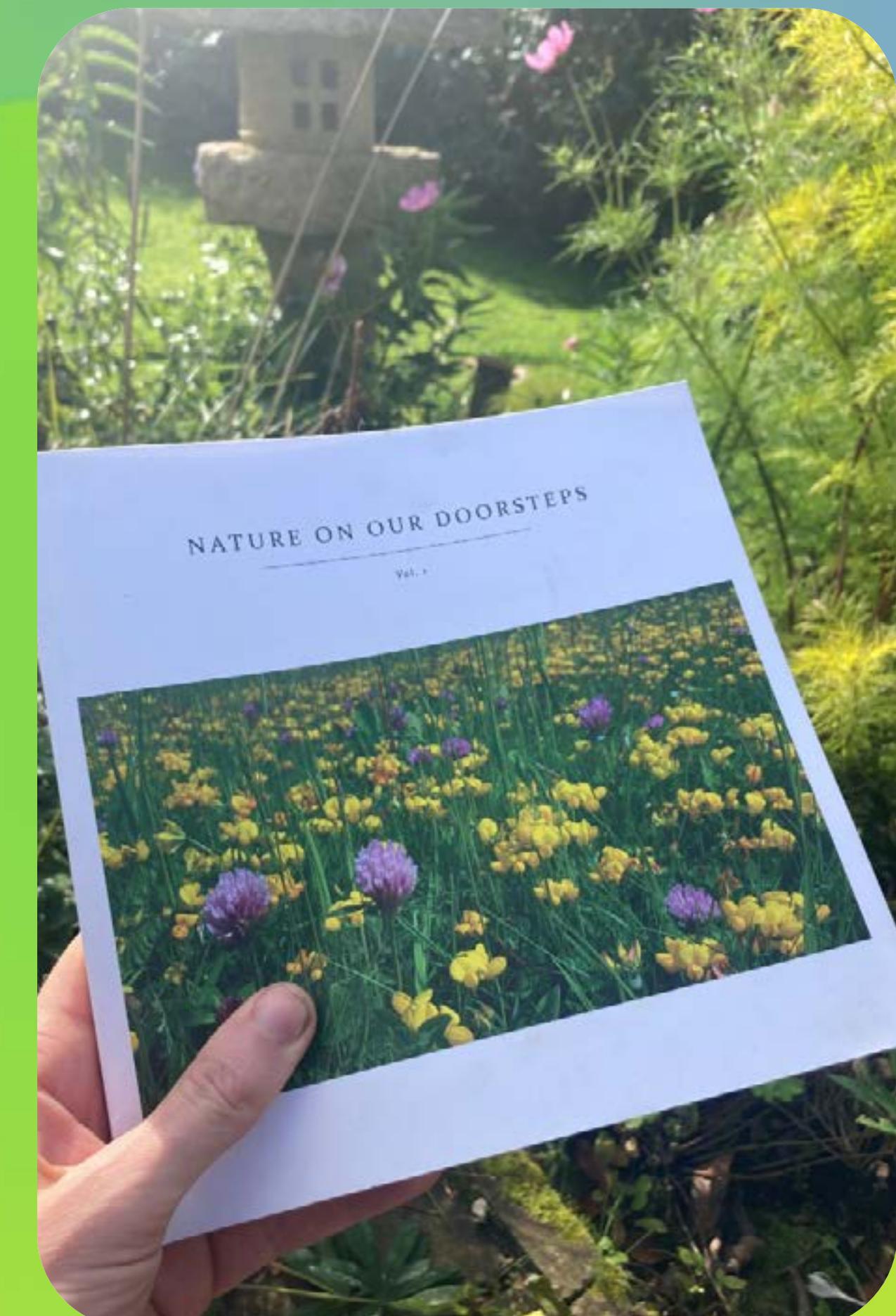
SDCC's Corporate Plan has identified goals that represent the Council's vision of ensuring that South Dublin is a place that meets the needs and ambitions of everyone living, working, doing business and visiting this County.

These goals are underpinned by a commitment to protect and enhance biodiversity. This commitment is demonstrated through a range of important policy objectives in our County Development Plan, Climate Action Plan, Biodiversity Action Plan, Heritage Plan, and Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Protecting and supporting the basic building blocks of nature helps to build a strong and resilient ecological and economic foundation for the County.

The Nature on our Doorsteps series of publications therefore represents a means of effectively communicating the surprising variety and the special nature of the County's biodiversity to a wide audience of readers.

Copies of Volume 4 Nature on our Doorsteps is available on request from Planning and Transport.



Quality Housing



Private Rented Property Inspections

SDCC continues its proactive programme of inspecting private rented properties to ensure compliance with the Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2019.

The planned inspection schedule includes inspections of Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) and Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) properties, homes managed by Approved Housing Bodies, and privately rented dwellings. Inspections are also carried out in response to complaints from tenants or members of the public.

Where a property fails to meet minimum standards, the landlord is notified and is given a defined timeframe to complete required works, with compliance confirmed at re-inspection. Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) enforce the Regulations on the Council's behalf and may issue improvement notices or initiate legal proceedings in cases of continued non-compliance.

In 2025, we inspected over 4,500 dwellings, surpassing the target set by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Tenant Participation Strategy 2025 – 2029

Our new Tenant Participation Strategy details our commitment to making our county an inclusive and safe place to live, work and visit. Our aim is to empower our tenants: by promoting, encouraging and supporting active engagement and ensuring a sense of civic pride. We want to listen to our tenants' voices with the aim to support and improve their quality of life, by creating inclusive active and safe communities for all.

Tenant participation is the key to improving social housing for all. Our

dedicated Estate Management Team will support the setting up of locally based tenant participation working groups throughout the county within our own estates.

We will ensure our tenants are afforded the opportunity to share their ideas and information, and to have input into decisions to improve services within their communities and housing provision at a level of participation that suits. Please email estmgt@sdubincoco.ie for further information.

Tenant Participation Strategy 2025-29



Quality Housing



New Development Contribution Scheme 2026

The Council is required, under legislation, to operate a Development Contribution Scheme. This scheme enables us to attach conditions to planning permissions which require the payment of development contributions. These contributions are essential for funding and part-funding public infrastructure and facilities that support private developments throughout the county and are delivered directly by, or on behalf of, the Council.

At the October council meeting, members approved the adoption of the new Development Contribution Scheme for 2026–2028, which will come into effect from 1 January 2026. The updated scheme sets out the specific

circumstances where contributions may be waived or reduced. Notably, these include a range of new sustainable development measures, such as incentivising the reuse of upper floors, encouraging surface water permeability, and supporting the redevelopment of vacant or derelict properties.

Additionally, the scheme continues to offer a valuable mechanism for applying financial contributions to planning permissions in cases where it is not feasible to directly provide public open spaces and community facilities. This ensures that we can maintain and enhance local infrastructure while promoting sustainable development in South Dublin.

Housing Supply Monitor – Nominated for RTPI Digital Planning Practices

We are pleased to share that SDCC were nominated for an Award for Planning Excellence in Digital Planning Practices at the RTPI Annual Awards 2025. SDCC are only public sector organization from the Republic of Ireland to be shortlisted for an award across all categories, which were presented in London in November.

The Council's nomination recognises their innovative Housing Supply Monitor, a public-facing digital tool designed to track housing delivery across the Local Authority area. This platform exemplifies the evolving role of planners, integrating advanced digital mapping technologies in collaboration with technicians.

The Housing Supply Monitor not only offers a real-time snapshot of progress

towards the Development Plan's housing targets but also facilitates meaningful engagement among Councillors, staff, and members of the public on a highly topical, complex and often challenging issue. This initiative underscores SDCC's commitment to leveraging digital innovation to enhance transparency, participation, and informed decision-making across South Dublin.

By providing data and using interactive tools, the Housing Supply Monitor allows stakeholders to track housing developments and collaboratively address challenges as they arise. Its user-friendly interface ensures that information is accessible to all, enhancing transparency, participation, and supporting informed decision making.

Pilot Choice Based Letting with Approved Housing Bodies

As part of our ongoing strategic commitment to enhance operational efficiencies and reduce waiting times in the allocation of new social homes, we recently launched a pilot programme in November 2025.

This pilot involves the advertisement of multiple properties within new Approved Housing Body (AHB) housing developments through Choice Based Lettings (CBL).

By adopting this streamlined approach, our objective is to accelerate the allocation of new homes to eligible applicants from our social housing waiting list. Successful applicants will

be assigned their specific homes in consultation with the respective AHB.

Since the commencement of the pilot, we have advertised a record number of new properties—including 1, 2, and 3-bedroom homes across developments in Seven Mills in Clonburris, Graydon Court & Newcastle Boulevard in Newcastle, and Carrigmore Woods, Citywest.

Our Housing Allocations Team are working in partnership with AHB's to ensure that there is a focused effort to see families moving into their new homes as quickly as possible.

A Thriving Economy



Inaugural Clondalkin Christmas Market Draws 2,000 Visitors

The first-ever Clondalkin Christmas Market took place outside the Clondalkin Civic Offices alongside the annual tree-lighting ceremony and drew strong community interest.

Around 15 stallholders offered artisan crafts, festive food, and seasonal treats, creating a lively and welcoming atmosphere. Mayor Pamela Kearns attended, joined by local Councillors Eoin Ó Broin, Trevor Gilligan, Francis Timmons, William Carey, Emma Murphy,

Shirley O'Hara, Brian Lawlor, Madeleine Johansson, and Emer Higgins TD.

Santa Claus made a special appearance to help switch on the Christmas lights and distribute selection boxes to children. Entertainment included performances by RAMS, Local Vocals, and the Recovery Choir, along with Christmas-themed carnival games. Approximately 2,000 people attended throughout the day.

Fresh SCENE: Creative Networking Event at Work IQ, Tallaght

Hosted by Sarah Naylor, founder of Beauty Business in a Box; this vibrant event brought together South Dublin's creative community for a morning of connection, inspiration, and collaboration on 22 October, with up to fifty people in attendance.

Fresh SCENE gave attendees the chance to explore opportunities across the local creative sector and hear stories from special guests Marcello Fidelis (award-winning filmmaker), Don't Kill My Vibe

(contemporary Irish jewellery brand), and Mo O'Connell (award-winning filmmaker and actor).

This event was held in collaboration with our Arts Office. SCENE is the South Dublin Creative Economy Network, created by our Local Enterprise Office, LEO South Dublin, and partners. It supports people working in our vibrant creative economy, from craft and design to artists of all disciplines, musicians, designers, and more.



A Better Place



Public Consultation for New Bowling Green at Sean Walsh Park, Tallaght

We have commenced a Part 8 process for a synthetic turf bowling green at Sean Walsh Park. This follows the delivery of older persons housing adjacent to the park, the imminent completion of the Whitestown Greenway (linking Sean Walsh Park with Killinarden Park and West Tallaght), and the receipt of ORIS grant funding to improve the pedestrian entrance at the western side of the park. The proposal will enhance facilities at the western side of Sean Walsh Park and increase the provision of intergenerational amenities.

The proposal includes:

- Construction of a synthetic turf bowling green
- Perimeter fencing
- Ducting
- All utility works, including surface water drainage and utility supplies
- Perimeter footpath
- All related hard and soft landscape works, including connecting footpaths and associated planting
- All associated ancillary works

Environmental screening and reports have been completed, and the proposal is currently at public consultation stage, with the Part 8 process underway.

Plans and particulars of the proposed development are available for inspection online on our Public Consultation Portal (<http://consult.sdblincoco.ie>), with a closing date for submissions to be confirmed. Submissions regarding the proposed development may be made in writing up to 5pm on the closing date, either online or by post.

These plans complement a number of other improvements planned or underway at Sean Walsh Park, including increased connections to the Whitestown Greenway

(which links downstream to the Dodder Greenway), the upgrade of the park's western vehicular entrance delivered as part of the Clúid Housing Scheme, and the planned upgrade of the existing pedestrian entrance and the trailhead for the Dublin Mountains Way.

These enhancements will improve pedestrian safety, mark the beginning of this long-distance walking route across the Dublin Mountains, and ensure a pleasant entrance at this important western end of the park.

For further information, please see <http://consult.sdblincoco.ie>.

Tallaght Village Enhancement – Public Workshops

The second round of public workshops for Tallaght Village Enhancement Scheme took place in Tallaght Priory on 24 and 25 of November. This workshop primarily focused on the future traffic layout for Main Street and as part of this discussion, five new layout options were presented to the public.

- Option 1 - Do Minimum
- Option 2 - Traffic rationalisation
- Option 3 - Bus Only
- Option 4 - One Way
- Option 5 - Pedestrianisation

Attendees were asked to provide comments on what they liked/disliked for each option and advised that the comments received would inform a finalised option, likely an amalgamation of

a number of the options presented.

In addition to layout options, a number of place making features were shown to generate discussion on material choices for the finished scheme.

There was an excellent and open discussion held on both nights regarding the scheme though no clear consensus reached on a preferred option. The overall feeling was that option 1 was not acceptable and that any of options 2-5 would be an improvement over the current layout.

Following the workshops the presentations were shared on the project webpage and feedback welcomed for a further two weeks.

A Better Place



Delivering Sustainable Development and Protecting Biodiversity

The 2025 Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards saw SDCC being named Local Authority of the Year. At the same event SDCC also took home top honours in two other categories including:

Sustainable Environment & Biodiversity: Balancing Green and Growth: Delivering Sustainable Development and Protecting Biodiversity—showcasing SDCC's commitment to protecting nature while supporting sustainable development.

South Dublin County Council's Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy is a pioneering approach to integrating biodiversity and sustainability into local planning.

It creates a connected network of ecological corridors across the county, ensuring the delivery of essential development and protecting and enhancing nature. A key strength of the strategy is its integration into daily operations, from influencing every planning application to guiding the management of parks, open spaces, and drainage networks.

A key innovation is use of the Green Space Factor—the first of its kind in Ireland—which provides an objective, measurable tool to assess the ecological quality of new developments. It incentivises nature-positive design by rewarding preserved features such as hedgerows and the

development of new features such as rain gardens and green roofs.

The strategy also advances the county's Climate Action Plan by incorporating nature-based solutions like Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) into new developments, which mitigate flooding, improve water quality, and enhance urban resilience to climate change. These measures reduce the strain on traditional drainage infrastructure and help manage stormwater more sustainably.

Furthermore, the strategy aligns with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan by prioritising connected pollinator-friendly habitats and promoting urban greening. It encourages the use of native species and supports the restoration of degraded habitats, enhancing the county's biodiversity and improving its ecological networks. SDCC's



county-wide Pollinator Action Plan now covers over 200 hectares of meadows, and community-led planting of Miyawaki woodlands.

By embedding sustainability into all aspects of planning and land management, the strategy enables balanced, nature-friendly development and offers a replicable model for how local authorities can foster biodiversity while meeting their development needs.

The 22nd annual Awards ceremony was hosted by Chambers Ireland, in association with the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage and sponsored by Ørsted.

For more information, please contact communications@sdublincoco.ie

A Better Place



Newcastle to Hazelhatch Road Surface Water Scheme commences

The Natural Water Section in collaboration with Uisce Éireann are to commence a scheme on the Newcastle to Hazelhatch road. The €8.5 million contract works include a new surface water pipeline that will alleviate flooding events in the Newcastle area.

This project also includes installing communication ducting to support future telecommunications needs. To construct the works safely, a road closure will be required and is expected to commence in late January 2026.

The Uisce Éireann works on this project include the replacement of an old undersized watermain from Celbridge to Newcastle. These works will ensure a reliable water supply for the area and will also cater for future water demands.

On completion of the project the road will be fully resurfaced. The collaboration between SDCC and Uisce Éireann combines three infrastructure projects into one larger project and will therefore reduce the disruption to the local residents and businesses.

Public Lighting LED Upgrade Programme: Progress and Challenges

We continue to make significant strides in energy efficiency and sustainability through its ongoing Public Lighting LED Upgrade Programme. As outlined in the most recent SDCC Energy Review for 2024, published by CODEMA in August, public lighting currently accounts for 36.4% of the Council's overall corporate energy load. This marks an improvement from the 38% reported in the previous year, demonstrating meaningful progress towards reducing energy consumption across the county.

We remain on track to achieve the National Efficiency Target of a 50% reduction in energy use over baseline by 2030. This commitment is reflected in the impressive upgrade of 83% of the Council's public lighting stock to energy-efficient LED technology. In 2025, the Council successfully met its corporate target by upgrading 1,500 lighting units to LED and is challenging this achievement in 2026 with an increased target of 1,750 upgrades.

Despite this progress, a key challenge remains; the upgrade of the remaining 5,750 older orange light fittings. These lamps present a unique difficulty, as the components required for their repair have been obsolete for some time. We therefore rely on the LED upgrade programme to harvest suitable fittings for ongoing maintenance of the existing stock.

Due to regulatory requirements, these outdated orange fittings cannot be simply upgraded to LED without the

direct involvement and presence of ESB Networks (ESBN) on site. We continue to work with ESBN to ensure that as much progress as possible is made on this aspect of the programme and we have regular monthly project meetings with ESBN, working collaboratively to pre-plan and schedule site works across the county to maximise the use of available resources.

We will continue to seek support where necessary to ensure the successful completion of the LED upgrade programme, further advancing SDCC's commitment to energy efficiency and sustainable development.



Connected Communities



*Creative
Communities*

SDCC

Creative and Active South Dublin

The Creative and Active Programme is a growing collaboration across Noise Music, Active South Dublin, and our community development teams. Our aim is to expand creative and physical activity opportunities for young people throughout South Dublin County, providing inclusive routes into arts, movement, sport, and technical skill development.

Our partnership brings together music production, dance, DJing, circus arts, parkour, urban sports, and creative design. Through these activities, we support youth confidence, wellbeing, and community connection.

Currently, we deliver the programme in Quarryvale Youth and Community Centre, where weekly sessions attract over 40 young people. The National Family Fun Day was hosted here, further strengthening local engagement. Brookfield Youth and Community Centre

also engage up to 20 participants weekly, while programme development is underway in both Killinarden Community Centre and Balgaddy Youth and Community Centre, expanding our reach into additional communities.

Participants are local and come from diverse backgrounds. It has been remarkable to see how well they connect, support, and accept one another. Many of these young people do not qualify for traditional Youth Service programmes, so it is especially encouraging to see them forming their own groups, developing friendships, discovering new skills, and growing in confidence.

Across all partners, we aim to build sustainable structures, strengthen cross-sector relationships, and contribute to long-term cultural vibrancy in South Dublin through youth-led creativity, public showcases, and community celebration.

Different Minds, Shared Spaces

We have launched Different Minds, Shared Spaces, a newly developed podcast series created to increase awareness and understanding of neurodiversity within our community. The series presents 10 episodes, each featuring conversations with individuals, practitioners, and advocates who share personal, professional, and research-based perspectives on a spectrum of neurodivergent conditions. Topics discussed include autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia, pathological demand avoidance (PDA), and related areas, providing listeners with accessible insight into varied lived experiences.

Our aim is to provide an inclusive platform that supports greater awareness

of neurodiversity, encourages open discussion, and affirms the wide range of ways in which people learn, communicate, and participate in everyday life. One episode was recorded as part of our Red Line Book Festival and focuses on the publication *Wired Our Own Way*, offering an extended discussion on representation, identity, and neurodiversity in contemporary literature.

The podcast forms part of our wider objective to make information and engagement opportunities accessible in multiple formats. While in-person talks, workshops, and programmes continue to be delivered across library branches, the podcast offers an alternative mode of access, enabling individuals to listen

**DIFFERENT MINDS,
SHARED SPACES
PODCAST**

**A podcast series from SDCC Libraries,
Different Minds, Shared Spaces celebrates neurodiversity in all its forms.**

Connected Communities

Different Minds, Shared Spaces (cntd.)

at their convenience. This approach allows for engagement beyond scheduled events, including for those who may not be able to attend in person.

Alongside the promotion of personal stories and lived experiences, the series highlights relevant supports and resources available across our libraries, including assistive technologies, inclusive collections, reading materials, and sensory-friendly programming. Through this combination of storytelling and practical signposting, the podcast supports our strategic commitment to

inclusive service provision.

Different Minds, Shared Spaces contributes to positioning the library as a welcoming environment for neurodivergent individuals and their supporters. By sharing experiences through an accessible audio format, the series strengthens community understanding and reinforces our ongoing commitment to equity, access, and inclusive cultural participation. The podcast is available on all major podcast platforms.

Data Protection Week: Building Awareness, Preventing Breaches

Launched by the Council of Europe in 2006 and observed annually on 28 January, Data Protection Day is an international event to raise awareness about privacy and data protection best practices within the workplace and in a personal capacity. During the week of 26 January, we will mark our commitment to Data Protection and deliver a comprehensive programme of events and workshops. The week is designed to empower staff and our elected members with practical knowledge, hands-on training, and expert insights. The programme moves beyond “tick-box” compliance, focusing on real-world risks and actionable strategies.

Highlights of the Week:

Plenary Session: John Conway (LGMA Data Protection Officer) will deliver an online overview for all staff, covering the basics of data protection, SDCC's role as a processor, and the importance of responsible data handling. Updates on staff training and the latest in Gen AI guardrails for the public sector will be shared.

Keynote Address: David Murphy, Deputy Data Protection Commissioner, will address all staff sharing the latest on enforcement, compliance, and practical recommendations for local authorities. This session will also be made available to the Local Authority sector.

Elected Members Training: A dedicated online session highlights elected members' responsibilities as data owners, with expert input from AILG and EVAD.

Human Error & Breach Prevention

Workshop: With 60% of breaches linked to misdirected emails and post, our Data Protection Officer, John Nealon will host a practical session for Housing staff, focusing on common mistakes and what to do if things go wrong.

DSAR Spotlight workshop: A workshop for decision makers will tackle complex scenarios, redaction rules, and updates on data retention.

Drop-In Clinic: Staff are invited to the concourse for coffee and informal Q&A, ensuring everyone has access to support and advice.

Every session is designed to give you practical tools and know how to protect the information entrusted to the council and reduce real-world risks. With your help we can build a safer digital environment for all who entrust their data to us. Please keep an eye on the Intranet/Workvivo app in January for more information.



Cultural Richness



Festive Spirit Shines at South Dublin County Christmas Markets

New Locations, Local Cheer, and Seasonal Success

Our Christmas markets lit up December, drawing crowds to both returning and new venues. This year, we expanded festivities to Clondalkin and Lucan, each enjoying significant attendance and vibrant community spirit. An estimated 2,000 people descended upon the Civic Centre in the heart of Clondalkin over the day as the village hosted a lively pop-up market featuring hot food, crafts, games, music,

and a magical Christmas tree lighting.

Lucan House was a wonderful backdrop to the first Christmas market in the grounds of the Palladian mansion, where visitors were delighted with a festive market, uniquely linked with the Christmas Circus of Wonders and Curiosities, where holiday magic meets the marvels of the big top!

We look forward to building on the success in 2026.

Reception for Double Winners Shamrock Rovers

Mayor Cllr Pamela Kearns hosted a reception for Shamrock Rovers FC in County Hall to recognise and celebrate Shamrock Rovers' success in winning the SEE Airtricity Men's Premier Division and the Sports Direct Men's FAI Cup in the 2025 Season.

At the event the Mayor presented two framed photos of Shamrock Rovers lifting the league trophy and the FAI Cup to Ciaran Medlar, Chairman of Shamrock Rovers, and Stephen Bradley, Shamrock Rovers' first team coach.

The Mayor said "It is a privilege to offer this token in recognition and celebration of Shamrock Rovers' achievements. Your club continues to inspire our community through your unwavering commitment, remarkable skill, and deep passion for both the sport and your team. Securing both the league and the cup in a single season stands as a testament to the dedication and hard work that defines this group."

"We take great pride in our relationship with Shamrock Rovers, as well as with the staff and management of Tallaght Stadium, and we look forward to seeing this relationship flourish in the years ahead."

The event was attended by South Dublin Councillors, the Shamrock Rovers team, board and management as well as match day volunteers.

Both Colm Ward, Chief Executive of SDCC and Ciaran Medler, Chairman of Shamrock Rovers spoke of the long-standing relationship between the Council and the club.

Shamrock Rovers has a long and proud history, and Tallaght and Tallaght Stadium, home to the club since 2009, is now woven into that history. Shamrock Rovers are Ireland's most successful club with a record 22 League of Ireland titles, and a record 26 FAI Cups.



Cultural Richness

TradFest 2026

From 21 to 25 January, venues across Tallaght, Clondalkin, Rathcoole, Rathfarnham and the Dublin Mountains will soon come alive with traditional Irish music as TradFest returns to the county. With eighteen mainline acts and more than fifteen fringe events, Ireland's largest traditional music festival offers audiences the chance to enjoy outstanding live performances in unique local settings.

St Maelruain's Church in Tallaght village welcomes two celebrated Irish performers. Brian Kennedy takes to the stage on 22 January for an evening showcasing his remarkable career as one of Ireland's most recognised voices. Liam Ó Maonlai follows on 23 January with a special one-off performance that brings his distinctive musical style back to Tallaght.

Áras Chrónáin in Clondalkin hosts a series of intimate and atmospheric events. Stephen Rea, TradFest's patron and long-time advocate for Irish arts and culture, leads a celebration of the harp on 24 January. He is joined by BRÍDÍN, a harpist, singer and composer from Sligo, along with the TU Dublin Harping Ensemble. On 21 January, Mike Hanrahan of Stockton's Wing and renowned vocalist Eleanor Shanley present an evening of music and storytelling, drawing from their extensive catalogues and recent collaborations.

Rathfarnham Castle joins the festival as a new venue this year. Louise Mulcahy's

performance is already sold out, but tickets remain available for Grainne Hambly on 24 January and Eoghan Ó Ceannabhain on 25 January. Both artists bring exceptional musicianship rooted in Irish tradition.

In Rathcoole, the Court of Petty Sessions hosts uilleann piper Mark Redmond on 24 January, followed by concertina player Micheál Ó Raghallaigh on 25 January.

Families can enjoy a lively afternoon céilí in Glenasmole Community Centre on 24 January. Set against the backdrop of the Dublin Mountains and overlooking Glenasmole Valley, the event welcomes dancers of all ages and experience levels.

Community partners, libraries, the Dublin Mountains Partnership and local businesses are adding to the festival atmosphere with a vibrant fringe programme. Workshops include opportunities to try the uilleann pipes with Na Piobairí Uilleann in Tallaght Library on 24 January, and an open music session for teen musicians hosted by Craobh Naithí Comhaltas in Ballyroan Library. The Dublin Mountains Partnership has organised a TradFest walk from Rua Red in Tallaght to the Glenasmole céilí on the same day. Aon Scéal Café in Tallaght will also host singer-songwriter Danaí Ó Céileachair, who will perform new original songs as Gaeilge for the festival.

Visitors can expect organised and impromptu sessions across libraries, cafés and community venues in Tallaght, Clondalkin, Rathfarnham and Rathcoole throughout the festival period. Scan the QR code for more information and the full schedule of events.

TRADFEST 2026

IN SOUTH DUBLIN

21-25 January 2026



Mike Hanrahan & Eleanor Shanley Live at Áras Chrónáin 8:30pm, Jan 21

Brian Kennedy Live at St Maelruins Church 8:00pm, Jan 22

Frankie Gavin Trio Live at Áras Chrónáin 8:30pm, Jan 22

Liam Ó Maonlai Live at St Maelruins Church 8:00pm, Jan 23

Lei Featuring Sibeal, Niadh & Roisin Ni Chasaide Live at Áras Chrónáin 1:00 pm, Jan 24

Louise Mulcahy Live at Rathfarnham Castle 4:00 pm, Jan 24



tradfest.com

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TEMPLE BAR COMPANY Funding Festivals FÁILTE IRELAND Tourism Ireland COMHALÍTÉAR PHÍOÍ CHONTAÍ DLR GUTHRIE CATHRACH BHAILE Átha Cliath OPW RTÉ RÁDIÓ RTÉ ARTS

Gender Pay Gap Report 2025

Gender Pay Gap Report 2025

SDCC published its Gender Pay Gap Report in November highlighting the percentage difference between what men and women on average are paid in the organisation, irrespective of role or grade. The 2025 report shows a mean Gender Pay Gap of -10%. This figure reflects that the average earning of all females in South Dublin County Council is 10% higher than the average earning of all males in the organisation.

All employers with more than 50

employees in Ireland are required to publish their gender pay gap data each year, based on a reference date during the year. All local authorities in the country used 30 June 2025 as their reference date for 2025 reporting.

Our employees have equal opportunities for recognition and career development and are treated fairly and equitably and we are committed to creating and maintaining an open and inclusive workplace.

College Awareness Week – Secondary Schools Outreach

As part of College Awareness Week in November, SDCC visited seven local schools for a variety of events:

- Firhouse Community College
- St Paul's Secondary School, Greenhills (pictured)
- Tallaght Community School
- Coláiste Pobail Fóla, Saggart
- Old Bawn Community School, Tallaght
- Mount Seskin Community College, Jobstown
- Sancta Maria College, Rathfarnham

Accessibility Week Events and Activities

Accessibility Week took place from 3 to 10 December, offering a programme of events that highlighted our ongoing commitment to equality, inclusion, and universal access. The week combined the release of a series of awareness-raising videos, community events, and public-facing initiatives. On International Day of Persons with Disabilities, we launched a new partnership with the Autism charity As I Am. A sensory map and visual guide were unveiled as part of our journey toward Autism-Friendly accreditation. North Clondalkin Library hosted the launch of new bilingual communication boards, alongside a sensory-friendly "Sensory Explorers" workshop.

Our awareness-raising videos introduced our newly developed accessible font, part of our rebrand and a reinforcement of best practice in digital communications. In these videos, Gráinne Meehan discussed her role as our Access Officer and encouraged anyone who needs access support to get in touch at gmeehan@

sdublincoco.ie. Viewers also learned how footpath accessibility issues in public spaces are reported and resolved. A virtual tour of one of the county's Changing Places facilities highlighted their importance, while the showcasing of inclusive outdoor gym equipment in Greentrees Park demonstrated our commitment to accessible recreation.

A programme of community-based activities, led by Sports Inclusion Disability Officer Siobhan Gallier, enriched the week, including a Sports Fest for day-service users, deaf aquarobics and Zumba, and a sensory-friendly silent disco. These events emphasised the importance of participation, wellbeing, and social connection for people of all abilities.

The programme concluded on Human Rights Day with the launch of our updated Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty Framework, reaffirming our commitment to embedding accessibility and equality across all services.

County Matters

Annual Service Delivery Plan 2026 Adopted

SDCC's annual service delivery plan (ASDP) for 2026 was approved by elected members at the Council meeting in December 2025. The ASDP sets out our key projects, service standards, and targets, as we work towards our purpose of creating greater opportunity for all. The plan details the services and service level standards that we aim to deliver in 2026 based on available funding and resources as outlined in our Annual Budget 2026. The ASDP for 2026 is informed by the goals that were adopted as our five year Corporate Plan 2025 – 2029 and were matched across the UN Sustainable Development Goals:



Climate Leadership, Quality Housing, A Thriving Economy, A Better Place, Connected Communities, Cultural Richness, and People First.

Key targets for 2026 under the goals of our Corporate Plan include:

Goal 1: Climate Leadership

- 46.5% improvement in our energy efficiency performance and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.
- Achieve ISO 50001 accreditation
- Maintain 21 hectares of biodiverse meadowland
- Progress phase 2 of the district heating



network

- Complete Killinarden Greenway
- Provide 5,000m of walking and cycling routes in parks open spaces.
- Complete traffic light repairs within 5 hours (85%)
- Deliver 12 new traffic calming schemes

Goal 2: Quality Housing

- Deliver 788 new social homes
- Deliver 145 new age friendly homes
- Support 220 HHAP tenancies to prevent homelessness.
- Progress development of modular homes for homeless households
- Deliver three new group housing schemes under the Traveller Accommodation programme
- Issue 70 vacancy home grants
- Deliver 125 home energy efficiency upgrades
- Update the differential rent scheme
- 60% of tenants registered for housing online.

- Take 8 housing estates in charge

Goal 3: A Thriving Economy

- Support 35 startup businesses and 160 jobs in Work IQ
- Progress Tallaght evening time economy initiatives.
- €200,000 on business support initiatives
- Roll out a programme of events to increase tourist visits
- 8,000 jobs sustained in Grange Castle Business Park
- Expand Tallaween by supporting associated events delivered by external partners
- Agree sponsorship proposal for Tallaght Stadium

Goal 4: A Better Place

- Update signage in regional parks and deploy visitor counters at park entrances
- Implement the sports pitch strategy, measured in the number of pitches delivered.

Annual Service Delivery Plan 2026 Adopted (cntd.)

- The number of street trees maintained, and the number of trees planted and removed will be measured as part of the tree management policy
- Deliver 12 new recreation/amenity facilities
- Expand seasonal calendar of local events and markets
- Deliver 2 biodiversity projects
- Deliver 5 road safety campaigns
- Upgrade 1,750 LED public lighting
- Complete round 5 of the Dublin Agglomeration Noise Action Plan

Goal 5: Connected Communities

- Promote women's caucus to grow its membership and reach
- Maintain the electoral register and conduct local voter registration initiatives
- SICAP supports 1,483 individuals and 90 community organisations across 12 target groups
- Detached street worker programme extended to North Clondalkin



- Develop and deliver a new age friendly strategy 2026 - 2030
- Develop and deliver a new migrant integration strategy
- Advance the delivery of new library facilities in Citywest, Adamstown and Rathcoole
- Increase library opening hours
- Complete an arts infrastructure development strategy
- Roll out accessible parking app

Goal 6: Cultural Richness

- Support the development of TradFest in South Dublin and associated events
- Animate Parthalán Place with an expanded programme of activities and events
- Develop a plan for the Council's archives
- Deliver a programme of urban street murals
- Deliver Irish language initiatives through Gaeilge 365 pilots and opportunities to speak Irish



- Ensure compliance with Irish language advertising legislation

Goal 7: People First

- Promote SDCC as an employer of choice to achieve 92% staff retention
- Expand the apprenticeship programme
- Develop and deliver a new innovation strategy
- Deliver 15 staff wellbeing initiatives
- Promote awareness and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- 90% of front facing staff completing Autism Friendly training
- 200+ health and safety work site inspection
- Develop a new Customer Service Charter
- Grow our social media engagement
- Develop a new accessible and easy to use website and ensure comprehensive, reliable and timely information

- Progress digital service transformation and support improved digital literacy
- 4 audit committee meetings and deliver internal audit work plan
- 120+ contracts awarded over €25,000

Reporting:

The Chief Executive's report is presented monthly to the elected members at every council meeting, detailing service delivery and important achievements. In early 2027, we will report to the council on the achievements delivered under the implementation of the Corporate Plan in 2026. The delivery of the service levels and targets set out in the ASDP 2026 will also be reported in the 2026 annual report. A summary of the adopted Annual Service Delivery Plan 2026 will be delivered to every home, school and business in South Dublin County and will be promoted on social media.

County Matters

Launch of Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Framework

Our updated Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty Framework was launched to mark Human Rights Day on 10th December. The event coincided with the conclusion of Accessibility Week, underscoring our commitment to equality, inclusion, and the protection of human rights for all who live and work in the county and engage with our services.

The newly revised framework reflects the latest guidance from the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) and strengthens our statutory responsibility to prevent discrimination, remove barriers, and work towards equal

outcomes across our policies, services and workplace practices. Available on our website, the framework provides guidance on how equality and human rights considerations should be integrated from the earliest stages of planning and decision-making.

Opening the event, Mayor Cllr. Pamela Kearns highlighted the significance of launching the framework on Human Rights Day, the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Mayor emphasised the importance of embedding the framework's commitments across Council work and encouraged elected



members to champion its values of respect, participation, accessibility and inclusion, particularly through the work of the Strategic Policy Committees.

Director of Community, Lorna Maxwell, acknowledged the work led by the council's Equality and Human Rights Working Group and expert consultant Niall Crowley, noting that while the publication of the updated framework is an achievement, its real value lies in its everyday application by staff as the framework will support advancing the equality and human rights duty across strategic planning, service design, consultation processes and significantly, organisational culture.

Niall Crowley outlined the significance

of the new IHREC guidance and the strengthened approach now in place within SDCC.

He highlighted the importance of the values statement, encompassing respect, participation, accessibility and inclusion, as a tool to guide implementation. Staff were reminded of the importance of contacting the Equality Office at the outset of developing new policies, plans or strategies to ensure that the Duty is embedded from the beginning stages.

The launch represents an important milestone in our ongoing commitment to building a more inclusive, equitable South Dublin County, one where human rights are protected, respected, and promoted.

Finance Report

	Arrears @ 31 Dec 2024	Adopted Budget 2025	Billed to 19th December 2025	Rec'ts/Credits to 19th December 2025	Arrears @ 19th December 2025	% of BILLED income achieved
Via Billing Systems						
Commercial Rates	€13,665,414	€153,170,200	€155,163,416	€156,439,136	€12,389,694	101%
Entry Year Property Levy (PEL)	€103,598	n/a	€0	€59,617	€43,981	0%
Housing Rents	€7,910,111	€36,293,800	€37,283,696	€37,378,992	€7,814,815	100%
Housing RAS Rents	€1,267,971	€2,246,400	€2,209,127	€2,143,069	€1,334,029	97%
Via Cash Systems						
NPPR Charge	n/a	€20,000	n/a	€12,387	€0	62%
Planning Fees	n/a	€972,000	n/a	€1,283,621	€0	132%
Fire Certificates	n/a	€1,000,000	n/a	€616,517	€0	62%
Parking Fees	n/a	€820,000	n/a	€833,081	€0	102%
Water Services/Uisce Cireann	€129,924	€6,937,500	€6,005,829	€4,998,741	€877,164	72%
	€22,817,170	€201,459,900	€200,662,067	€203,765,161	€22,459,683	

Rents Aged Debt				Rates Aged Debt			PEL Aged Debt		
Category	Numbers	Amounts	% of Accounts	Year	Bal O/S	%	Year	Bal O/S	%
Accounts not in Arrears	6387	2,836,665	59%	2025	5,196,300	42%	2025	€0	0%
0-6 weeks	1954	389,114	18%	2024	2,080,290	22%	2024	€0	0%
7-12 weeks	240	317,111	4%	2023	1,406,276	12%	2023	€1,2715	3%
13-18 weeks	303	378,640	3%	2022	362,893	3%	2022	€41,335	94%
19-24 weeks	205	351,704	2%	2021	190,183	4%	2021	€1,351	3%
25-51 weeks	584	1,693,457	5%	2020	47,084	0%	2020	€0	0%
1 - 2 years	483	2,683,899	5%	2019	644,200	5%	2019	€0	0%
Greater than 2 years	483	4,837,614	4%	Pre 2019	1,462,168	12%	Pre 2019	€0	0%
Totals	10,859	€7,814,815	100%	Totals	€12,389,694	100%	Totals	€43,981	100%

Christmas Tree at County Hall Tallaght



Christmas Tree lighting in Clondalkin



Reception for Shamrock Rovers at County Hall



Launch of Sensory Map of County Hall with As I Am



Christmas Market at Tallaght Library



School Safety Zone at St Ronans NS Primary School in Deansrath, Clondalkin



Mini woodland planting in Firhouse



SDCC Libraries Comics Project





Lighting the Christmas Tree at County Hall Tallaght

Socials

[Facebook](#)



[Instagram](#)

[YouTube](#)

Website

www.sdcc.ie

Corporate Plan

corporateplan.sdcc.ie

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