

Ballymoney

B ♦ U ♦ L ♦ L ♦ E ♦ T ♦ I ♦ N

April 2005

In Brief

Improved access at Borough Offices

People with disabilities should find Riada House more accessible as various improvements have been carried out including disabled parking spaces, new ramps and rails, automatic doors and lift to first floor.

Citizen Information Leaflets

A range of information leaflets has been produced and are available at Reception, Riada House, Health Centres and Community Centres.

Local Government Elections

The election will take place on 5th May 2005. All members of the public aged 18 or over, who are entitled to vote, particularly first time voters, are urged to cast their votes at this election.

Freedom of Information

On 1st January this year the Freedom of Information Act 2000 came into force giving you the right to request information from all public sector organisations, including your local Council. Council currently provides you with a significant amount of information via its website www.ballymoney.gov.uk.

New Council website

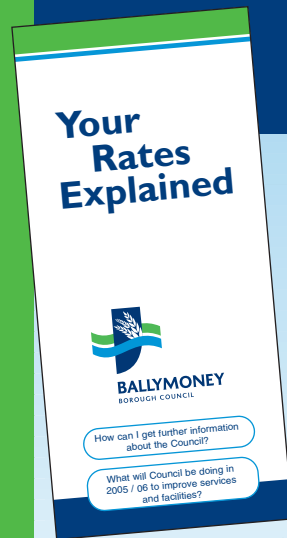
Council launched its new website www.ballymoney.gov.uk. We hope that the new website offers user friendly access to relevant information relating to Council services, facilities and initiatives.

Your rates bill

There are two parts to the rates a district rate, set by Council and a regional rate set by Government.

The regional rate pays for services such as education, housing, water and sewerage, roads, transport and personal social services.

The district rate set by Council pays for a wide range of Council services and facilities the Council provides including our leisure centre, sports grounds, parks and playgrounds, town hall, cemeteries, public conveniences, street cleaning, waste collection, recycling, building control, economic development, district policing partnership, civic events and democratic representation.



For the year commencing on 1st April 2005 the District Rates set by the Council are - for Domestic Properties 134.8 pence, an increase of 2.12% and for Non-Domestic properties 19.55 pence, an increase of 2.14%. Council's total estimated expenditure for 2005/2006 is £5.2 million.

What will Council do in 2005/2006 to improve services and facilities in Ballymoney Borough? Council plan to:

- Introduce a community sports programme for rural areas.
- Complete the refurbishment of the Town Hall to include new Museum, Tourist Information Centre and Public Toilets.
- Complete a new sports field, mini sports stadium, changing facilities
- and two tennis courts at Riada Playing Fields, Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre.
- Upgrade a number of play areas and playing fields in rural areas.
- Further improve Council recycling facilities

For more information on Council services please contact the Council on 028 2766 0200 or visit our website www.ballymoney.gov.uk

Council gets views of young people

During Local Democracy Week October 2004 students from the local secondary schools were invited to take part in a Council meeting to put their questions and views to their local councillors. Local Democracy Week 2004 gave Northern Ireland Councillors the opportunity to focus on young people and their interest (or lack of interest!) in local democracy.

The event was a great success with both students and councillors getting the opportunity to question each other on issues of importance to the young people in the Borough.

Council hope to organise another event of this nature where young people can put questions to their local councillors and become more involved with their local council.



BALLYMONEY
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www.ballymoney.gov.uk

Happy Blue Birthday

Just over 12 months ago, Ballymoney witnessed a major change in waste management with the introduction of the new 'blue bin-recycling at home' programme.



This was designed to complement the expansion of recycling opportunities available across the Borough. As with every new system, there is a period of adjustment, but after the first year there are a number of points worth noting:

1. In the first year, approximately 1200 tonnes of recyclable waste was collected through the blue bins.
2. This figure will be a vital factor in helping us meet targets as determined by Europe. Well done Ballymoney!
3. We have possibly the lowest rejection rate for unsatisfactory blue bins in Northern Ireland, roughly 3%.
4. The processor of the recyclable material constantly comments on the quality of material from Ballymoney. It is clean, dry and largely presented just as requested.

As we continue to produce more waste year after year and as landfill options decline, we all have a duty to think more about what waste we produce and how it might be minimized or at least dealt with after we produce it.

We can all make a difference, starting with our shopping habits. Do we need to buy goods with excessive packaging or are there alternatives? Are we recycling all that we can, either through recycling sites or blue bins? Do we understand all of the issues surrounding waste in Ballymoney?

Information and advice is readily available by contacting the Health and Environmental Services Department, 028 2766 0257. We want to help and advise and are willing to meet or talk to any individuals or groups who want to find out more.

Ballymoney Town Hall Update

The first phase of Ballymoney's new Arts Centre, Museum and Tourist Information complex at Ballymoney Town Hall has reached completion and the building opened its doors to the public on 3 March when it hosted the 66th Annual Ballymoney Drama Festival.



The beautifully refurbished building houses an auditorium which seats 350 and a number of meeting rooms of varying sizes which are all available for hire. The Museum and TIC is scheduled for completion this Summer.

Ballymoney Borough Council has also been successful in passing Stage One of its grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the new museum. Over the next year, with advice from HLF, the Council will select designers for the new museum galleries. In Stage Two of the application, HLF has pledged to give the Council nearly £300,000 (75% of the total cost) and work will begin on the fit out of the galleries. The project will be completed in early 2007 and will include a gallery tracing the history of the Borough and another on motorcycle road racing. In the interim period, the new museum building will re-open later this year with temporary displays in place.

For further details on hiring any of the facilities contact Leisure & Amenities Department 028 2766 0227.

Ballymoney Community Safety Strategy 2005-2008

The aim of the Strategy is to bring about a more co-ordinated approach to reducing crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, and to make the best possible use of resources in doing so.

The local Strategy contains key priorities, objectives and actions, which are of concern in Ballymoney. Information gathered through consultation and development of the audit identified a number of priorities as follows:

- Fear of Crime
- Offences Against the Person Particularly Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault
- Offences Motivated by Prejudice & Hatred
- Car Crime & Road Traffic Issues
- Property Crime
- Business & Retail Crime
- Paramilitary Activity
- Drug, Substance & Alcohol Abuse
- Anti-Social Behaviour

The Strategy is due to be formally launched during Northern Ireland Community Safety Launch Week, commencing 20th June 2005.

Following the launch the document will be available from the Council's website: www.ballymoney.gov.uk



Ballymoney Borough

District Policing Partnership

Local people shaping local policing

Ballymoney DPP is a strategic body set up to:

- Identify Policing Issues
- Prioritise Policing Issues
- Obtain Public Cooperation
- Monitor Police Performance
- Discuss Policing Matters

If you have a policing concern please contact: -Jonny Donaghy (DPP Manager) Ballymoney District Policing Partnership, Riada House, 14 Charles Street, Ballymoney BT53 6DZ

Telephone: 028 2766 0254 Fax: 028 2766 0222

E-mail: jonny.donaghy@ballymoney.gov.uk Website: www.districtpolicing.com

Hazard House Opens



Accidents in the home in the year 2000 in Northern Ireland were the cause of 9042 admissions to hospital through falls, burns, scalds and poisoning. 77 deaths were recorded in the same period.

The idea to develop HAZARD HOUSE began in August 2001 when representatives from Ballymoney, Coleraine and Moyle Home Accident Prevention Committees visited the Child Safety Centre in Armagh. This was a flat set up with all the necessary child safety equipment in each room.

The idea was to develop a HAZARD HOUSE for the people of Ballymoney, Coleraine and Moyle as an innovative way of highlighting the causes of accidents within the home and to promote safety by demonstrating practical and economical measures to reduce the risk of these accidents. Funding was obtained from Causeway Local Health and Social Care Group. The Housing Executive provided a house at 59 Hamilton Park, Ballymoney. Members of the management committee include representatives from Ballymoney, Coleraine and Moyle local councils and the Causeway Trust.

The house is open to all members of the public – to schools, community groups, mother and toddler groups, etc.

The proposed benefits for them visiting the house include an increased awareness of home safety issues and an ability to introduce measures in their own home to reduce risks and, as a result, accidents in the home.

For further information contact Warner Kirkpatrick (028) 2766 0257

Ballymoney Borough Twinning Association

The Council set up the Association in May 2000. Since then a sister cities agreement has been signed with Benbrook, Texas and a friendship agreement with Douglas, Isle of Man. The Association is part funded by the Borough Council and its aim is to foster goodwill and understanding between Ballymoney Borough and other parts of the world.

In 2005:

Our sister City of Benbrook is preparing to send 10 young students to Ballymoney for two weeks in July. The students will be home hosted and will experience the culture of Northern Ireland and their hospitality. During the

visit the students will visit many sites throughout Northern Ireland with their host student. This will be reciprocated in 2006 with Ballymoney students going to Benbrook, Texas for a similar visit.

To raise funds the association has held various events. Junior Pop Idol, which was held in the Leisure Centre on Saturday 26th February, was really well represented by the schools of the Borough with almost all sending entrants.

2005 is going to be a busy year for Twinning. If you are interested in becoming involved or have any ideas for events please contact Benny Knight, Chairman (028) 2766 0264 or through the Council representative Warner Kirkpatrick (028) 2766 0200 or email warner.kirkpatrick@ballymoney.gov.uk

Tackling Fuel Poverty in Ballymoney

In October 2003 Northern Energy Action Northern Ireland (NEA NI) published a league table of fuel poverty by district council area based on data from the Northern Ireland House Condition Survey 2001 carried out by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE).

The table highlighted that Ballymoney Borough Council area was ranked third worst within the 26 District Councils with 45.4% of the total households considered to be fuel poor.

In response to this obvious need, a Fuel Poverty Steering Group for the Ballymoney Borough has been established, led by the Health and Environmental Services Department in conjunction with local key partners, to assess the problem of Fuel Poverty in the Borough. An Awareness Raising Seminar open to the public will be held on Friday 15th April from 10.00am to 12.30pm in Ballymoney Town Hall. For further information, please contact Lynne McCullough, District Environmental Health Officer, 028 2766 0257.

Summer Walks Programme

A new 2005 Summer Walks Programme is currently being planned, and a leaflet detailing the full range of events will be available towards the end of May. As well as several week-day evening walks, Council intend to include two Saturday half-day rambles for the more enthusiastic walker. Last year, the 2004 Programme was exceptionally well attended, with a total of 555 participants over the eight events. Sonya Crawford, the Countryside Access Officer, would like to take this opportunity to thank all those walkers who made last year's Programme such a success, and to welcome both newcomers and repeat visitors to the forthcoming summer events. If you would like your name added to the current mailing list to receive a walks leaflet, or if you would simply like to discuss public access in Ballymoney, you can telephone Sonya on 2766 0236 or email sonya.crawford@ballymoney.gov.uk

Council's Corporate Plan 2004-2007



The aim of Council's 3 year Corporate Plan is to make clear how Council intend to go about making life better for the citizens of the borough.

It presents the Council's view on the role it can play in the development of the Borough and how it will be working in partnership with government and a range of other partners in order to achieve Council's overall mission, which is to improve the quality of life for the citizens of Ballymoney Borough.

The plan contains 21 business objectives. Council will publish a Performance Report each year to update citizens on progress being made on the Corporate Plan objectives.

For a copy of the Corporate Plan 2004-2007 visit www.ballymoney.gov.uk or call to the Council offices 9.00am - 5.00pm Mon - Fri.

Ballymoney Safer Bonfire Competition

Ballymoney Borough Council in conjunction with the Community Safety Partnership has agreed to hold a Safer Bonfire Competition within the Borough in 2005.

The Council wish to encourage organisers of traditional bonfires in the Borough to enter the Competition. There will be 2 competitions. The first competition will be for bonfires up to and including July 2005, and the second one will be for bonfires up to and including October 2005. The deadline for entries to the first and second competitions will be 31st May and 31st August respectively. Bonfires before and after the event can be an eyesore and it is therefore hoped that this competition will encourage a safer, more environmentally friendly approach which will benefit everyone. Only bonfires which have taken place for 5 years or more will be eligible to enter the competition.

A bonfire awareness raising seminar and launch of the competition will be held on Tuesday 10th May and will be open to all organisers of bonfires.

For further information and details on competition rules please contact Bryan Edgar or Julie McGarry, Health & Environmental Services Department, 028 2766 0257. The rules and application forms may also be found on the Council's website under Community Safety.

What you said in Best Value Residents' Satisfaction survey

The Local Government (Best Value) Act 2000 requires Councils to continually make efforts to improve their services and facilities.

In a recent Best Value Residents' Satisfaction Survey, carried out as part of this process, the results showed that two thirds (66%) of those surveyed in Ballymoney Borough were satisfied with the services provided by Council. This rose to a high of 92% satisfaction with our Refuse Collection Service.

The results show that the Council is perceived by three quarters of Borough residents, as efficient in the delivery of its services.

The services which residents consider most important include street cleaning, refuse collection, parks and play areas, public toilets and recycling facilities. The satisfaction level with these services is shown below.

Street Cleaning	61%	Public Toilets	55%
Refuse Collection	92%	Recycling facilities	88%
Parks & Play Areas	74%		

Council has commenced a programme of upgrading a number of play areas and playing fields in rural areas and new public toilets will be in place at the Town Hall complex.

We value your comments

Your opinion matters to Council and we will take every opportunity to improve the quality of service we provide to you. If you are happy or unhappy with us or the service we provide we want to hear from you. See contact details at the bottom of this page or use our online comment line at www.ballymoney.gov.uk



"Make Poverty History in Ballymoney"

People in the Borough can play an exciting role in trying to eliminate poverty and inequality in the developing world by supporting the 'Make Poverty History' campaign.

1. Support the Oxfam textile banks located around the Borough. In the past 16 months, these banks have generated approximately £44,000 for the relief of poverty.
2. Support Fairtrade. Fairtrade is a simple concept in that rather than donating money to a cause, you can now purchase a range of products, both food and non-food, and in exchange for your money you receive good quality goods. At the same time, the producers receive a fair payment for their produce.

Recycling old clothes and textiles is making a real difference, but please be careful as to where you donate these items. There are many less than genuine people involved who use the goodwill of others to profit personally. Claims which appear to be genuine, may not be all they appear. For advice on this, please contact Health and Environmental Services on 028 2766 0257

Please look out for the Fairtrade mark, it represents equality and it is your guarantee that you are making a difference. These products are available in local supermarkets, so let's make a difference in Ballymoney.

Ballymoney Borough Council

Riada House, 14 Charles Street, BALLYMONEY BT53 6DZ

Telephone: 028 2766 0200 Fax: 028 2766 0222 E-mail: info@ballymoney.gov.uk Web: www.ballymoney.gov.uk

Our website contains information about the Council and its services and is updated regularly.