

COUNCILLOR MARIE BAKER

Keeping in Touch

Other News

TIDY DISTRICT COMPETITION

Well done to

- **Best Housing Estate / Apartment complex (201-400) (1st)**
Ardagh Residents' Association, Blackrock
- **Best Housing Estate / Apartment complex (5-100 houses) (2nd)**
Kill Abbey Residents' Association, Blackrock

WINTER READY CAMPAIGN

The Government Task Force on Emergency Planning has launched a Winter-Ready Information Campaign to give the public advice on how to prepare for the coming winter. Practical advice can be found on the new website www.winterready.ie



An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. John Bailey, Cllr. Baker and Ardagh Residents

Happy Christmas!

Rather than sending Christmas cards to my constituents I will be making a charitable contribution to the Alzheimer Society

I would therefore like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

A BETTER GOVERNMENT

There are enormous challenges facing this new Government and its constituent parties. They will need all the help they can get and therefore I would invite you to join Fine Gael to give your feedback and suggestions for solutions directly. Contact me if you would like to join your local branch, or alternatively join Young Fine Gael by contacting dunlaoghaireyfg@gmail.com

If you are unable to help with time perhaps you can help financially? If so, please contact me in confidence as you might be able to help through our Superdraw, which has lots of great prizes.

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Carysfort Maretimo Stream Project.

CARYSFORT MARETIMO STREAM

You may have noticed work taking place at Blackrock, including the village, Seapoint Avenue, Barclay Court, Carysfort Avenue, Carysfort Park and at Orpen. This is in connection with the long awaited project on the Carysfort Maretimo stream. The aim of the scheme is to reduce the risk of flooding that has affected many areas including Avondale, Carysfort Park, Avoca Park, Cloisters, St. Helier's Copse, Grove Paddock and Orpen. The work has commenced at

the sea end of the stream and will work backwards as far as the Stillorgan Reservoir.

The work includes the construction of a new trash screen to collect debris and a new underground pipe at the corner of Stillorgan Grove. A new pipe is also being laid through Carysfort Park which will divert flood flows away from the existing open stream.

The recent flooding at the end of October this year was the worst I have ever seen in

some areas. This underlines the importance of completing this project as soon as possible. However I have also asked the Council to examine if the flooding would have been eliminated if this scheme was already in place. If not, I have asked what else can be done to solve this dreadful problem

The scheme is long overdue and has had a number of false starts but it is great to see it has finally started – it has certainly been one of my priorities since I was elected onto the Council. The scheme will cost approx. 2.9 million euro.

It reinforces the need to continually invest in all aspects of long term water planning including maintaining the quality of our drinking water, reducing waste and dealing with drainage.

The Government has announced a 10million fund for victims of the recent flooding. Payments will be means tested and the fund will be run by the Department of Social Protection. I hope that this fund will go some way to help those most affected by last month's torrential rain and not covered by insurance. More details can be found at <http://www.welfare.ie/>

BLACKROCK LOCAL AREA PLAN (LAP)

The Council's Planning Department has commenced the process of developing a Local Area Plan for the Blackrock town area. To start the process an 'Issues Paper' has gone on public display this will set out the type of subjects that may be included in the LAP. Also on display will be a map defining the zone area in Blackrock that the LAP will relate to. The public consultation period will take place until 22nd December.

In addition the Council will host a number of open days in Urban Junction on Main Street, Blackrock as follows:

- Thursday 1st December from 6-8 pm
- Thursday 8th December from 6-8 pm

The 'Issues Paper' will also be on display in all the County Libraries.



Urban Junction

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ELECTION POSTERS – UGLY AND DANGEROUS

Earlier this year I submitted a motion to the Council to ban the erection of election posters in the County and instead provide designated locations where posters could be displayed. Unfortunately the motion was rejected by a majority of Councillors by a vote of 10 to 7 with one abstention.

In my view, these posters are unsightly during the election campaign itself and if not removed correctly often leave the plastic ties behind on the lampposts, remaining unsightly for months to come. I am particularly conscious of this through my work on the Blackrock Tidy Towns Committee and indeed have removed many such ties myself!

In bad weather these posters can often become detached from the poles, causing a danger to passing pedestrians, cyclists and motorists alike. I also feel that the time, resources and money that political parties and independents put into these posters would be better spent detailing the real policy differences between candidates at election time.

I proposed instead that the Council would establish a limited number of sites where election material from candidates could be erected. This is the process that is followed in many countries on the continent.



As long as posters are legal any candidate, including myself, will feel obliged to use posters. It would be naive to do otherwise. There is plenty of evidence from political parties, and from academic research, that not putting up any or putting up very few posters can influence the outcome of an election result. I just don't think the number of posters is how we should measure the quality of our candidates at election time.

Although I was unsuccessful with my motion on this occasion I will try again. There might be a different outcome in time to come with either new members on the Council or existing councillors changing their minds.

BLACKROCK BUSINESS NETWORK

The protection of local businesses and jobs is one of the greatest challenges facing us in this recession. For the past 18 months I have devoted a lot of time to the work of the Blackrock Business Network, the business association for the town of Blackrock. Currently I am acting as secretary to the group. Our biggest project this year was the creation and launch of our own website - iloveblackrock.ie. In this website you will find details of the services available from businesses in Blackrock – in fact there are over 350 businesses, both small and large, employing thousands of people in our town.

We also held our second Family Fun Day, although the weather wasn't as kind to us as last year. On the same weekend at the end of August we also held the first Blackrock Animation Festival. We were very proud to have received 45 International entries to our Animation Competition.

One of the themes I stressed in my year as Cathaoirleach of the Council was the importance of supporting local businesses by buying local. I would urge you to visit the website and support local businesses and jobs.



Opening of Blackrock Animation Festival with Jimmy Deenihan, Minister for Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht and Cllr. Marie Baker



Booterstown Avenue

BOOTERSTOWN AVENUE

I was delighted to see the renewal work on the paths and road on Booterstown Avenue as both were in a shocking condition and their renewal was long overdue. Indeed I started raising the condition of the paths as far back as 2003 and have been doing so ever since. Persistence does sometimes pay off!

I also welcome the renewal of the road surface on part of Newtownpark Avenue. With money so scarce at Council level I was delighted to see this work carried out in the area.

SPOTLIGHT ON STREET LIGHTING

I thought you might be interested to hear about a new service to report faulty street lighting. A new web service from Airtricity at www.airtricitysolutions.com can be used by clicking the "Report a Fault" button on the home page. This allows you to log a faulty streetlight and to follow the progress of the fault resolution.

Of course the traditional method of reporting faults is also available 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday by ringing **1850 372 772**.



SPOTLIGHT ON OUR LIBRARY SERVICE

I am a great supporter of the library service and at Council budget time always keep an eye to ensure that even in difficult times it is adequately resourced. I had previously proposed the diversion of some money from other cultural events to continue to support the book fund in particular.

- Library "traffic" has increased by approx. 11% in Deansgrange and by 17% in Dun Laoghaire.
- Tenders have been received for the proposed development of the Central Library and Cultural Centre in Dun Laoghaire.
- The refurbishment of the Stillorgan Library is complete and the library has re-opened.
- Detailed design stage has been completed on the Deansgrange library extension. It is hoped that building work might commence by the end of the year.
- In relation to Blackrock Library it is anticipated that work will re-commence on site early in the new year and will take 12 months to finish.
- The library service is experimenting with email alerts. This service is designed to inform library users when their books are due and to alert them when a reserved item is ready for collection.



Deansgrange Library

Cllr. Marie Baker Working for you in our area with Cllr. Barry Ward, Mary Mitchell O'Connor T.D. and Gay Mitchell MEP

FINE GAEL