

Cllr. Marcia D'Alton writes ...

Pembroke Wood Residents Association meeting

Pembroke Wood is one of the largest and most recently completed estates in Passage West/Monkstown. As is the case with so many new construction projects, the estate is experiencing some teething problems which need to be sorted out. Many residents have approached me expressing their concerns in a number of areas. In response to these concerns, a public meeting for all Pembroke Wood residents has been organised at which a new Pembroke Wood Residents Association will be formed. The new Residents Association will be best placed to tackle the issues outstanding in the finishing off of the estate and will undoubtedly be enthusiastic about the long-term maintenance and enhancement of the estate. The meeting will be held at the Passage West Soccer Club on Tuesday, April 4th at 8pm. All Pembroke Wood residents are very welcome to attend.

I have proposed a motion for the March meeting of the Passage West Town Council in relation to the installation of traffic calming measures on the main Pembroke Wood estate road. Speed ramps had been installed by the builders during estate construction. Since these were removed prior to the road resurfacing, cars have been travelling at tremendous speed through the estate. This is highly dangerous, particularly in an environment such as this where children are playing. I will be proposing that Passage West Town Council asks the developers to take responsibility for the installation of either speed ramps or chicanes to slow traffic through the estate. The long spine road of the estate is clearly of a design which attracts speed and it would be beneficial if Cork County Council should enter discussion with both the Town Council and the developers as to the traffic calming solution most likely to be effective in this instance.

Review of the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan

In 2001, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published a National Hazardous Waste Management Plan. The Plan is currently being reviewed by consultants on behalf of the EPA. I have prepared a submission to this review which I hope will be approved and adopted by Passage West Town Council. I believe it vitally important that the opinions of those living in Passage West and Monkstown should be made known to the EPA. The recent proposal to construct a national hazardous waste incinerator at Ringaskiddy is testimony that policies decided at national level have the potential to affect all of us.

In my submission, I have asked that any revision of the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan should:

- Emphasise the principles of sustainability.
- Regard hazardous waste prevention as being its paramount aim.
- Provide specific goals and programmes rather than loose intentions towards achieving hazardous waste prevention.
- State a positive commitment towards liaising with government in implementing fiscal measures to promote hazardous waste reduction.
- Place a moratorium on the establishment of any national hazardous waste disposal facility until agreed targets for hazardous waste prevention are reached.
- Place a moratorium on the operation of a national hazardous waste thermal treatment facility until a baseline study of human health is conducted and systems for monitoring of human health are put in place.

A cleaner Monkstown village

On several occasions during the windy weather of last week, I sat in the car park in Monkstown and watched as people tried to stuff papers and plastic into the bring banks. Much of their effort was in vain as the wind whipped them away, scattering them throughout the car park.

I raised a motion at the February meeting of the Passage West Town Council, asking for support to have these bins removed because of the litter they were causing in Monkstown village. What I said at the time was misreported in several newspaper publications. The tenet of my argument was that those who use these bins could be considered in five categories:

1. Those, including the elderly, who are unable to drive and unable to get to the Raffeen Civic Amenity Site some two miles further down the road.
2. Those who live in small houses and are unable to accommodate storage of large volumes of recyclable material. I pointed out that I and my family were amongst this category but that we had readjusted to facilitate once weekly visits to Raffeen.
3. Those who do not like the Raffeen Civic Amenity Site nor the additional sorting it involves.
4. Those who come from further afield and stop at the nearest facility. These people could continue to Raffeen without any difficulty.
5. Those who dump black bags of household waste under cover of darkness.

I pointed out that it is generally as a result of the actions of people in Category 5 that I was asking for the removal of the bring banks. Retention of the bring banks would facilitate only those falling into Category 1. I also suggested that if the bring banks were to serve those who really needed them, i.e. Category 1, then they should be moved to Passage West where there is a far greater population unable to get to the Raffeen Civic Amenity Site.

The decision of the Town Council was that the bring banks should be removed. However, to facilitate those who could not get to Raffeen, it was decided that the Town Council would ask for their retention until Cork County Council had distributed dedicated recycling bins to all homes. Were these not distributed before March 31, the bring banks were to be removed.

The deadline has now passed. The bring banks will be removed. All those using the County Council waste collection service have their own recycling bins outside their own doors. We can finally clean up the car park in Monkstown and be proud of the environment we offer.