

## **Cllr. Marcia D'Alton writes ...**

### **Christmas Tree for Monkstown**

This year for the first time, a cheerful little Christmas tree brightened up the central island of Monkstown. This tree was truly a community effort. The concept and execution of the plan was the culmination of several years of work by the Monkstown Amenity Association. The tree itself was donated by Mr. Sean James, Monkstown resident and former Passage West Town Commissioner. I managed to source suitable lights from Dublin at the last minute. The Carrigaline Area Office of Cork County Council kindly organised the design of the plinth and were more than co-operative in assisting with the electrical connections and the dressing of the tree. This co-ordinated effort brought much joy to the children and their parents who were present for the switching on of the lights on Christmas Eve.

In conjunction with the erection of the tree, Cork County Council cleared the island of dense trees and shrubbery. I had voiced my concerns about this overgrown shrubbery to the Area Engineer several months previously. Not merely was the shrubbery a serious visual block to motorists exiting onto the Strand Road from behind the island, but it has also attracted unsocial behaviour for many years. Where possible, salvaged trees and shrubs were replanted in the village playground.

Now that Christmas is over, I would welcome any suggestions for features or centrepieces which would enhance the central island in Monkstown village.

### **Proposed 596-unit housing development for Passage West**

In October 2004, the Passage West Town Council submitted an objection to An Bord Pleanála in relation to a planning application for a 596-unit housing development on lands at Pembroke, Passage West. The planning application made no provision for treatment of wastewater from the proposed development. However, subsequent to submission of the planning application, the developers suggested constructing a wastewater treatment plant on lands adjacent to but outside the boundary of the proposed development.

In December, An Bord Pleanála invited both the developers and objecting parties to comment on treatment of wastewater from the proposed development. On behalf of Passage West Town Council, I prepared a response to An Bord Pleanála. The comments of the Town Council re-echoed the concerns of the Members as voiced in their previous objection. These included the failure of the planning application to include plans for treatment of wastewater from a development which will increase the population of Passage West by one third, the potential construction of a wastewater treatment plant on greenbelt lands, the proximity of this wastewater treatment plant to both the public road and the proposed development and the visual and odour impacts which could potentially result.

Should you wish to obtain a copy of either this submission or the Town Council's objection to An Bord Pleanála, please let me know and I will arrange to have it forwarded to you.

### **Raising awareness of Monkstown Creek**

Monkstown Creek has been proposed as a designated Natural Heritage Area by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government under the Wildlife

(Amendment) Act, 2000. The Creek is a large expanse of mudflats which become exposed at low tide. These mudflats serve as a refuge and feeding ground for wild birds and nationally important numbers of cormorant nest in the surrounding trees. The ecological and scenic value of the Creek is treasured by both Monkstown residents and the many people who walk along the Slí na Sláinte from Glenbrook to Raffeen.

Through the Passage West Town Council and with funding from the Urban and Village Renewal Scheme, I organised the erection of a framed poster on the Slí na Sláinte marking the ornithological value of Monkstown Creek. The poster illustrates 21 water fowl species known to either visit or inhabit the Creek. The erection of such a poster is a long-held wish of many in Monkstown and this is a first and long-awaited step in raising awareness of the Creek's unique ecological value.

### **EPA calls Oral Hearing**

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has called an Oral Hearing in relation to Indaver Ireland's proposal to construct two incinerators and associated waste management facilities at Ringaskiddy. The Oral Hearing is scheduled for 11.30 am on 14 February at the Great Southern Hotel, Cork Airport. It will provide an opportunity for debate on a draft Waste Licence which the EPA has proposed to grant to the Indaver facility.

Both the Passage West Town Council and the Passage West/Glenbrook/Monkstown branch of CHASE will be among our local representatives at the Oral Hearing. Members of the public are welcome to attend and I strongly encourage all those who are interested to come along.

With you and your support, I am working through the Passage West/Monkstown Town Council to help our community realise its potential as a unique place to live, work and play. Please contact me by e-mail at [info@marciadalton.net](mailto:info@marciadalton.net), by mail at 4, Castle Terrace, Monkstown or by telephone 4863293 / 085-7333852.