

city matters

Belfast City Council
Looking after your city



Spring 2007

Eddie supports smoke-free Belfast

See page 3

In this issue:

- 4 Waterfront celebrates 10 years
- 5 Public holiday bin collections
- 18 Celebrating St Patrick's Day



Contents

- 3 Belfast goes smoke-free
- 4 Waterfront celebrates 10 years
- 6 Recycling challenge
- 7 Celebrated citizen: Bernard 'Barney' Hughes
- 9 Deep RiverRock Belfast City Marathon
- 10 Lost at the zoo
- 11 A pull-out guide to the rates
- 15 Early opening hours at leisure centres
- 16 Consumer advice
- 18 Giant fun in the Giant's Park
- 19 Get your alley-gating manual
- 20 City Hall, closed for renovation
- 21 What's on
- 23 Members of Belfast City Council
- 24 A-Z



We are committed to making sure that our services are available to all sections of the community. *City Matters* is available in Braille, audio and large print. We will consider providing it in other formats if requested. Please call 9032 0202 ext 2235.

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Pictured on the table in the Lord Mayor's parlour are babies born in Belfast on 1 August 2006 – the anniversary of the official opening of City Hall 100 years ago

Editorial

Welcome to the spring edition of *City Matters*.

In the centre of this issue, you'll find a four page pull-out explaining the rates. Here we tell you about the rates increase and explain where your money goes (pages 11 - 14).

In another competition packed edition, we are giving you the chance to win Captain Cleanup games on page 5; an eight-week yoga session on page 10; a LCD TV on page 7 and David Healy signed goodies on page 15.

This year the Waterfront Hall celebrates 10 years and you are invited to celebrate with us at the Lord Mayor's charity ball or come along to the family open day on 27 May (see page 4).

And don't forget to check when your bins will be collected at holiday times (page 5).

Space to breathe...

Belfast will be smoke-free from 30 April 2007. This means that it will be against the law to smoke in most enclosed workplaces and public places.

These include:

- **places of work** like offices, factories, bars, restaurants, cafes and hotels;
- **schools;**
- **hospitals;**
- **places used by members of the public**, like shopping centres, church and community halls and health centres;
- **most vehicles** used for work purposes and vehicles used to carry members of the public, will also have to be smoke-free.

This will include:

- **work vehicles** used by more than one person (even if they do so at different times) for example cars, lorries and vans.
- **vehicles used to transport members of the public** (even if they don't pay to use them) for example buses, taxis, trains and minibuses.

It is the responsibility of business owners to **display signs** at each entrance to smoke-free premises and in smoke-free vehicles. If the 'no smoking' signs aren't displayed, business owners could get a £200 fixed penalty or be prosecuted with a maximum fine of £1,000.


It is also their responsibility to **stop people smoking** in smoke-free places and vehicles. If they don't, they could get prosecuted and fined up to £2,500.

If you are found smoking on smoke-free premises or vehicles you could receive a £50 fixed penalty or be prosecuted up to a maximum fine of £1,000.

The new law is being brought in to protect workers and members of the public from second-hand smoke. Second-hand smoke increases your risk of lung cancer, heart disease and stroke. Similar laws have been introduced in other countries and have proved very popular with smokers and nonsmokers alike.

We are responsible for enforcing the legislation. Council officers are trained to enforce the new law. They will be visiting premises giving advice and assistance to businesses and where necessary taking legal action against offenders.

We're all set to move towards a cleaner, healthier, smoke-free future.

 For more information call **9027 0428** or go online at www.belfastcity.gov.uk/smokefree or www.spacetobreathe.org.uk



Preparing for smoke-free

Speaking to *City Matters* from Miami, our cover star Eddie Irvine endorsed the introduction of smoke-free legislation: "It's similar to when they introduced seatbelts. When the law first came in we had to get used to it and now it's unthinkable to drive without a seatbelt. The same will be true for the smoking ban, it makes total sense."

Belfast business managers have been getting ready for smoke-free and they've welcomed the challenge. Cables Bar at the Hilton Hotel went smoke-free in September 2006 and the response from the public has been very good.

Bernard Lavery, owner of Lavery's and the Pavilion bar, has taken the opportunity to completely refurbish Lavery's bar and add an outside smoking room complete with widescreen TV. He said: "I'm really positive about it. We're making changes to our premises to help customers enjoy their experience. They certainly won't stink of smoke at the end of the night!"

Helen Mulholland, from Botanic Inns said: "We welcome the introduction of the smoking ban and believe that in the long term it will be beneficial to the industry as a whole."



A still from the current television ad campaign



Local artist Brian Ballard at a recent exhibition of his work at the Switch Room

A guide to the Belfast arts scene

We have just launched the first in a series of free guides to encourage people to explore the city's bustling art and cultural scene.

The 32-page arts booklet is an invaluable tool for exploring the full spectrum of visual arts. From the largest public galleries and auction houses, to exciting new public art that is transforming Belfast's landscape.

The guide is designed to inspire your creativity with details on the large number of art workshops and classes suitable for all abilities.

Produced as part of our Cultural Tourism Strategy, future guides include music, literary tourism and a culture guide to Belfast.

i Copies of the guide are being distributed widely and are also available from the Belfast Welcome Centre in Donegall Place, call 9024 6609.



10 years old: the Waterfront shines at night

10 year old success story

Ten years, more than three million tickets sold, and £450m generated for the city of Belfast – that's the success story of our Waterfront Hall.

Every £1 we have invested in the Waterfront Hall over the last 10 years has generated a £10 dividend. A good return for the £20 million we originally invested towards building the entertainment and conference venue.

To celebrate our 10th anniversary we are organising music and theatre showcases, photographic and art exhibitions and a children's Urban Arts A-Kid-emy, as well as 10th anniversary signature events involving

major artists. You are invited to join us.

Girl band, the Sugababes, will be our signature event at the end of March, while April brings the opera *Aida* and the hilarious musical comedy, *I, Keano*.

The Lord Mayor's Charity Gala Concert will be a highlight on 12 May. On our family friendly day on 27 May there will be loads of free and affordable family entertainment throughout the building.

Over four million people have been through the Waterfront doors to date. If you're not one of them, now is your chance to get a closer look at the building and join our celebrations!

i www.waterfront.co.uk will keep you up-to-date with what is on offer or call 9033 4409.

Belfast celebrates a 'golden' opportunity

Belfast's reputation as one of the top European party capitals is moving up a gear – thanks to events planned in the run-up to Europe Day on 9 May.

Marking the 50th birthday of the European Union, a full programme of activities will show the best of what Belfast has to offer the rest of Europe.

We've been working with 27 community groups to organise a series of local events celebrating our European connections through the last 50 years.

This 'golden' opportunity kicked off in January when community groups were

asked to adopt a different member state of Europe. And, through this project, local children were able to find out about the national dance, dress, language and food of other cultures.

A family fun day will take place in the afternoon of 28 April at Lady Dixon Park. This will involve dance workshops, circus skills, face painting, competitions, and a full programme of activities.

i Get more information on the European 50th birthday events from Frances Murray at our European unit on 9027 0224 or email murrayf@belfastcity.gov.uk www.belfastcity.gov.uk/europe



Cranmore Integrated Primary are ready to help Captain Cleanup

Captain Cleanup: Game on

WIN!

Superhero Captain Cleanup got the show on the road with a dazzling campaign to help school kids look after their local environment.

The anti-litter superhero took on his arch-enemy General Grime and his gang of litterbugs in a roadshow which visited primary schools. His mission was to educate children about litter and to celebrate the launch of the new Captain Cleanup computer game. The superhero is part of our Brighter Belfast anti-litter education pack. He really came to life during the roadshow with an interactive play, quizzes and songs to help reinforce the campaign message.

You too can help Captain Cleanup beat General Grime by remembering 'don't drop it, stop it!' and playing the anti-litter game on our website www.belfastcity.gov.uk/captaincleanup

Win one of 50 Captain Cleanup computer games on CD, by telling us what our anti-litter slogan is. Email your answer to: captaincleanup@belfastcity.gov.uk or send a postcard to Captain Cleanup, Belfast City Council, FREEPOST BEL4010, Belfast BT1 5BR by 6 April 2007.

i Get more information on anti-litter workshops for your school, youth group or community group by contacting the community awareness team on 9032 0202 Ext 5379.

Recycling chips

Your recycling bin or box is fitted with a chip called a Radio Frequency Identification Device.

These chips allow us to:

- know if you need help to sort your materials;
- trace your lost box or bin;
- find out if we are meeting the waste targets set by government.

The information collected is matched to the number of your house and covers the weight, when and how often the bin is collected.

How do the chips work?

The chips are activated when they are scanned by the collection lorry, just like the barcodes used in supermarkets. The chip can't tell what the actual contents of the bin or box are.

Our collection crew check your

bin for the correct materials. If they see items that shouldn't be there, your bin won't be emptied and we'll leave a note to tell you that you've put the wrong items in it.

If the chip is removed or damaged, it is possible that your bin won't be lifted.

Will it be used to charge me for my waste?

No. Part of the rates you pay, totally funds the collection of household bins or boxes.

All the chip information that we hold is protected and only authorised staff can look at it.

Under the Data Protection Act, you're entitled to see any information which we hold about your address including recycling details.

i Call the recycling hotline: 08000 328100 log onto our web page www.belfastcity.gov.uk/wasteitsnotrubbish

Public holiday bin collections 2007

Cut out and keep

If you only have a **black** bin on a weekly collection

due to be collected on:

Monday 19 March 2007
Monday 9 April 2007
Tuesday 10 April 2007
Monday 7 May 2007
Monday 28 May 2007
Thursday 12 July 2007
Friday 13 July 2007
Monday 27 August 2007

it will now be collected on:

as normal
Monday 16 April 2007
Tuesday 17 April 2007
Saturday 5 May 2007
as normal
Thursday 19 July 2007
Friday 20 July 2007
as normal

If you have a **black** bin, **blue** bin and/or **brown** bin, the **appropriate** bin will be collected as follows

due to be collected on:

Monday 19 March 2007
Monday 9 April 2007
Tuesday 10 April 2007
Monday 7 May 2007
Monday 28 May 2007
Thursday 12 July 2007
Friday 13 July 2007
Monday 27 August 2007

it will now be collected on:

as normal
Saturday 7 April 2007
as normal
Saturday 5 May 2007
as normal
Saturday 7 July 2007
Saturday 14 July 2007
as normal

Please leave your bin out by 7am on the day of collection.

i For further information on public holiday waste collections, call us on 9027 0297. We also provide a free bulky household waste collection service. For further details please call 9027 0230. You'll also find these details on www.belfastcity.gov.uk/bincollections



More and more of us are realising the importance of recycling

Belfast's recycling challenge

All households in Belfast now have access to a household recycling collection. Sixty-six thousand households now have **blue recycling bins** which allow you to recycle:

- paper,
- plastic bottles,
- aluminium drinks cans,
- cardboard, and
- steel food cans.

Fifty-five thousand households also have **brown bins** which allow you to recycle garden waste such as grass cuttings, garden prunings, and cut flowers.

Additionally, 50,000 houses have **black 'Kerbie' boxes** which allow you to recycle:

- paper,
- cardboard,
- plastic bottles,

- glass bottles,
- aluminium foil,
- aluminium drinks cans,
- steel food cans,
- old clothes, and
- hand tools.

When we started the recycling collections in the summer of 2003 the recycling rate was 3%. Currently our recycling rate is 18%, which is an improvement of around 15% in three years.

If we fail to meet government recycling targets, it could mean facing heavy fines, which will result in a higher rates bill for your home.

Now that the facilities are in place in every home we believe we can raise the recycling rate even more. Will you help us rise to the challenge?

i For more information on recycling log onto www.belfastcity.gov.uk/wasteitsnotrubbish

Upgrade for Palmerston Road Recycling Centre

Residents in the east of the city can now recycle numerous items at the recently reopened Palmerston Road Recycling Centre. The centre, located off Hollywood Road, has just undergone a refurbishment and is now almost double its original size.

Items that can be recycled at the centre include:

- glass bottles,
- scrap metal,
- timber,
- books,
- batteries,
- old paint cans,
- cooking oil,
- ink cartridges,
- paper,
- food cans,
- cardboard,
- aluminium foil,
- garden waste,
- textiles,
- CDs,
- fluorescent tubes,
- engine oil,
- spectacles,
- old hand tools,
- plastic bottles, and
- drinks cans.

Currently the site has a recycling rate of approximately 70%. And with your support we hope to raise this again.

This year another recycling centre is scheduled to open at Park Road, off Ormeau Road. The opening of the Park Road facility will bring the total number of recycling centres in Belfast to four. Two other centres currently in operation are:

- Blackstaff Way, off Kennedy Way in the west, and
- Alexandra Park Avenue, off Antrim Road in the north.

Opening hours for the **recycling centres** are:

October-March
Mon-Fri 8am-5pm
Sat 9am-5pm
Sun 12noon-5pm

April-September
Mon-Fri 8am-8pm
Sat 9am-5pm
Sun 12noon-5pm



Recycling paper at Palmerston Road

WIN

northern
rock

An LCD television!



Northern Rock comes to Northern Ireland! Specialising in mortgages, the bank, based in Newcastle upon Tyne, will open

in Belfast's Wellington Place in early April. To mark this new venture, they are offering readers the chance to win a LCD TV.

Simply answer the question below and return this coupon to:

**Belfast City Council,
FREEPOST BEL4010,
Belfast BT1 5BR** (no stamp required)

Where will Northern Rock open their new branch?

Visit www.northernrock.co.uk for more information.

On the next page, tell us what you thought about this edition of *City Matters* and what you'd like to see in the next one (due out in July).

Name
.....

Address
.....
.....
.....

Postcode
.....

Tel
.....

Terms and conditions: Only one entry per household. No Belfast City Council employees may enter the competition. You must live within the Belfast City Council electoral area to enter.

Send your entries by **6 April 2007**. The winner will be notified by 13 April 2007. There is no alternative to the prize. Our decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Full terms and conditions are available on request.

Celebrated
citizens



Bernard 'Barney' Hughes Master baker, liberal and reformer (1806 – 1878)

When the 18 year-old penniless labourer, Barney Hughes arrived in Belfast from Armagh, he got a job as a baker's boy in a bakery in Church Lane. By the 1870s he owned the largest baking and milling business in Ireland and had been elected Belfast's first Catholic representative on the Town Council.

Barney reacted to the Great Famine by producing a cheaper household loaf and refusing to increase his prices. Soon his efficient production methods made him the market price leader. The popularity of Barney's 'bap' won him fame in the Belfast children's song 'half a bap with sugar on top'.

He spoke out against poor working conditions generally and in his own industry he was a key figure in the abolition of Sunday and night baking. He married Jane, a Presbyterian, in 1829

and they had three sons. Following Jane's death aged 44, Barney married his second wife and they had three daughters.

Barney had a strong sense of social justice and personal courage. When he was an eye witness to the sectarian riots of 1857 and

He had a strong sense of social justice and personal courage

1864, he gave evidence to the Royal Commissions of Inquiry, provoking the Tory hierarchy of Belfast. His independent outlook also brought him into conflict with the local Catholic bishop and the Catholic press.

He donated the ground that St Peter's Cathedral is built on and his three sons donated the triple stained glass window, in the southern aisle, in memory of their mother Jane.

Hughes continued working until his late sixties and died on 23 September 1878. He is buried in Friar's Bush.

And the winner is...

Congratulations to our competition winner **Moira Anderson**, who won a five-day return ferry crossing from Belfast to Stranraer with Stena Line. Moria is pictured (left) receiving her prize from Sharon Greer of Stena Line.



Your views

We hope you have enjoyed reading *City Matters* and welcome your comments.

Please spare a minute or two to let us know what you thought about this issue:

1 Did you find *City Matters* useful?
 Yes No

2 Did *City Matters* improve your understanding of the work of the council?
 Yes No

3 Has *City Matters* improved what you think about the council?
 Yes No

4 Did you find *City Matters* easy to read?
 Yes No

Any other comments on what you liked or didn't like about this edition?

Thank you for taking the time to tell us what you think. Now return this coupon to:

Belfast City Council
FREEPOST BEL4010
Belfast BT1 5BR
(no stamp required)

Or email your comments to
corporatecommunications@belfastcity.gov.uk

Wildlife and walking



Mute swans at Victoria Park

Belfast has lots of wildlife. Living alongside us humans are plants, birds and animals of all kinds – we call this biodiversity. Biodiversity includes everything from red squirrels scampering in the park to swifts screaming high above Royal Avenue, to the butterflies in your garden. Biodiversity adds beauty to our everyday lives enhancing our sense of wellbeing. To ensure that the biodiversity of Belfast is looked after properly we have launched our Biodiversity Action Plan.

The plan, in partnership with many other organisations, will deliver actions that will:


- protect those plants and animals most at risk,

- help raise the awareness of urban wildlife, and
- get more people involved in biodiversity projects.

We would encourage everyone to keep their eyes open for wildlife, especially when out walking. Walking is one of the simplest and most affordable means of exercise.

'A walk in the park' is a guide to 21 different walks in Belfast parks. It's really useful if you want to enjoy our natural environment while improving your physical and mental health.

The booklet has information on parks, the length of suggested walks, and what sights to look out for.

 Get a copy of our biodiversity plan by calling Orla Maguire on 9066 2259 or see www.belfastcity.gov.uk/biodiversity. For a copy of our 'walk in the park' booklet telephone 9066 2259 or see www.belfastcity.gov.uk/parks

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how to apply for a job with the Council?

@ your one-stop site for all about Belfast:
www.belfastcityonline.net



Participants in the 2006 Belfast City wheelchair marathon

On your marks, get ready...



It's that time of year again – the 26th Deep RiverRock Belfast City Marathon is happening on Bank Holiday Monday, 7 May 2007. The race begins at the front of City Hall and finishes in Ormeau Park. And we need you!

Last year the main marathon event attracted over 1,550 competitors while the walk, team relay and fun run brought the total number of participants to over 13,700. If you'd like to be part of it this year but don't think you've got the motivation, (not to mention the fitness levels) to do 26 miles, the good news is that you can still get involved by taking part in the relay race, walk or fun run. You can also take part by volunteering.

We welcome volunteers on either an individual or group basis, with groups being made up of six to ten members.

Full training will be given to all those who volunteer. We will also provide volunteers with a fresh packed lunch, a Deep RiverRock Belfast City Marathon waterproof jacket, t-shirt and official volunteer medal.

We have a range of tasks to suit all volunteers. You can either supervise a refreshment station or try your hand at stewarding on the day. Come along and enjoy the atmosphere while helping out the runners. Don't miss your chance to become involved in one of Belfast's biggest events.

i Get information from the Marathon Office on 9060 5933 or www.belfastcitymarathon.com This year's official charity is the Down's Syndrome Association: www.downs-syndrome.org.uk

Belfast's youth 'get back' their ID

A new creative project has been helping Belfast teenagers find their own identity – as well as learning about diversity.

The initiative involves teenagers from a variety of backgrounds – including Muslim, Chinese, Polish and Northern Irish.

Working on the 'Getting back to where we came from' project, they've been looking at historic objects from the Ulster Museum and their personal possessions, helping them to discover and express who they are.

The project's title is a tongue in cheek reference to a cheap insult commonly directed at people who are perceived to be different – "go back to where you come from!"

If we can encourage more interest in diverse cultures, there'll be a brighter future for Belfast.

You can see the results of their work – and get a glimpse of what makes young people in Belfast 'tick' – at an exhibition opening in City Hall on 13 March.



Aleksi, a young Polish student at Hazelwood College, learns about Chinese slippers from the 19th century

i For more information contact Olga Murtagh on murtagho@belfastcity.gov.uk or call 9032 0202.

City Matters speaks!

If you know of anyone who has a visual impairment, please let them know that we provide City Matters in audio tape and in Braille.

Just contact Corporate Communications on 9032 0202 ext 2235 to request a copy in your preferred format or email corporatecommunications@belfastcity.gov.uk





David Ervine (1953 – 2007)

Leader of the Progressive Unionist Party (PUP) and Belfast City Councillor, David Ervine died on Monday 8 January 2007. The 53 year-old played a significant part in the council from his election in 1997.

The Lord Mayor of Belfast, Councillor Pat McCarthy, paid tribute to him:

“David will be sorely missed. On behalf of everyone at Belfast City Council, I extend our deepest sympathy to his wife, two sons and the rest of his family circle.”



Ring-tailed lemurs find their way around the zoo

Lost at the zoo

Following three customer surveys in 2006, Belfast Zoo is acting on feedback from visitors by adding new directional signage at 12 important points around the zoo.

Each sign has new features to help visitors find their way around the zoo grounds. The new features are:

- picture keys to help you to find your favourite animals;
- strong use of colour to differentiate major landmarks like the Floral Hall and the Elephant House;

- information on the steepness of your chosen route; and
- highlights of your journey.

We're producing a new user-friendly map that links with the new signage. It illustrates the zoo attractions and helps you choose your preferred route.

The new signs and map will be ready this Easter.

 Call 9077 6277 or visit the website on www.belfastzoo.co.uk


Health and fitness

Our upgraded fitness suites are installed with the latest equipment and we have qualified staff available to give expert advice and guidance. Our leisure centres are there to help you live a healthy lifestyle. You can receive exercise programmes tailored to your needs, whether it's to lose weight or improve your fitness.

We have a citywide activity programme that aims to focus on your needs.

The programme provides over 200 classes a week, ranging from activities for young people such as the 'Make a Splash' programme, junior tennis, after schools activity clubs and Kidzfit gym.

Adult classes range from spin, circuits, body pump, yoga, Pilates and aerobics. Whether your aim is to sign up to a new activity, make some new friends or spend some time toning your muscles at the gym, our leisure services can provide it all.

 Contact Sean McQuade, Health and Fitness Officer on 9032 0202 ext. 3540 or email mcquades@belfastcity.gov.uk. Visit www.belfastcity.gov.uk/leisure



Based in Botanic Avenue, Namaste Yoga Studio are offering you the chance to stay healthy with an eight week yoga programme or a body treatment.

To be in with a chance of winning one of these great prizes just tell us what time Olympia Leisure Centre now opens? (For a hint see page 15)

Answers on a postcard to: Belfast City Council, FREEPOST BEL4010, Belfast BT1 5BR by 6 April 2007.

Your rates explained



Spring 2007

Council rates below inflation but central government rates will rise

The domestic rating system in Northern Ireland is changing. The old way of working out your rates was based on how much it would have cost you to rent your home 30 years ago. This needed to be modernised, so from April 2007 there will be a new system.

There are two main stages to this:

- **Revaluation of households** - the Valuation and Lands Agency carried out a revaluation of all homes to establish the up-to-date capital value (the amount a property could reasonably have sold for on the open market on 1 January 2005).
- **Recalculation of rates** - from April 2007 the Rate Collection Agency will calculate your rates bill based on the capital value of your home.

Your rates bills is made up of two main elements:

- a **district rate** which is decided by each district council, and
- a **regional rate** which is decided by central government.

The district rate accounts for 40% of you rates bill, whilst the regional rate accounts for 60% of your rates bill.

We set the district rate which helps fund council services including:

- waste management,
- street cleansing,
- waste disposal,
- environmental health services,
- parks,
- recreation grounds,
- cemeteries,
- the Ulster Hall and Waterfront Hall,
- community services,
- economic initiatives, and
- the zoo.

In 2007-08 the district rate will rise by 2.83%.

Central government sets the regional rate which helps fund services such as:

- education,
- housing,
- personal social services,
- roads and agriculture, and
- rural development.

Your rates will increase significantly in 2007-08 but we are only responsible for 1.14% of this. Any increase above this level is due directly to central government's increase in the regional rates and its review of the rating system.

Over the past number of years, we've worked hard to minimise the rate burden for our ratepayers. But central government's failure to mirror our efficiency drive is continually undermining our efforts.

It's important that you distinguish between our efforts to keep our rates increase below inflation and the central government increases.

This pull-out explains:

- what we are doing to minimise your tax burden,
- the financial pressures that we're facing, and
- what services you actually pay for.

We also highlight some of the projects we will carry out in the coming year.

What we are doing

We've started an efficiency agenda. The aim of this is to provide excellent customer services with a strong focus on value for money through a coordinated programme of improvements.

Our target is to save £1 million per year for the period 2006-09

We'll save a total of £1.15 million in the current financial year and we've identified savings of £1.5 million for 2007-08. This is £650,000 above our target for the first two years of the three year period. We're currently looking at where we can save money in 2008-09. This has helped us to keep this year's rate increase below inflation. We're committed to achieving further efficiency savings, improving our overall approach to customer care, and building our capacity to change and improve.

Council faces government funding cuts

We are making these savings against a backdrop of central government cuts in funding to local government.

Last year we received £5.75 million but that has now been reduced to £4.49 million. The government has also withdrawn £1 million of European funding for the marketing of the Regional Tourism Partnership.

This comes at a time when central government's portion of the rates (regional rate) has increased from 48% in 2001-02 to 54% in 2007-08. With our rate pegged back to 2.83% and the regional rate set to increase significantly, it is clear that this trend will continue.

Rates information

For up to date rates information visit www.belfastcity.gov.uk/rates

For information on the capital value of your property visit www.mycapitalvalueni.gov.uk or if you want more information about the changes to the rating system visit www.ratingreviewni.gov.uk

Information on the rental value of your non-domestic property can be found at www.vla.nics.gov.uk

A new Rate Relief scheme is being introduced from 1 April 2007 to provide additional help for low income households. The scheme is particularly targeted towards those who are receiving either partial Housing Benefit or no Housing Benefit at all. To find out more call free phone 0800 587 7477 or visit www.ratecollectionagencyni.gov.uk

Vital work increases financial pressures

As well as government cuts, we face a number of financial pressures including:

- **Closing our Dargan Road landfill site**
When our landfill site closes this month, waste will go to new private sector landfill sites in Lisburn and Newtownabbey. Although it will cost around £20 million to close the site, we've been setting money aside for this over the past few years and have already saved £9.5 million. See page 18.
- **Meeting other waste management costs**
The Dargan Road closure combined with other waste management costs mean that we have to double our expenditure in this area from £11 million last year to £20 million by 2009-10. You'll be relieved to know that we have a financial strategy in place to gradually meet these increased costs to prevent you facing big hikes in a single year.
- **Extending our cemeteries**
We'll be extending Roselawn Cemetery which will cost £1.7 million. We're also looking at options for locating an additional cemetery or crematorium at a further cost of £11.7 million.
- **Refurbishing the City Hall**
We face a £13.9 million bill to refurbish the City Hall and relocate staff (see page 20).
- **Annual pay increases and superannuation costs**
The employer's contribution has increased from 11% in 2006-07 to 13% in 2007-08. This will require additional funding of £1.2 million.
- **Single status**
Over £1 million will be spent on implementing the legislation which harmonises pay and conditions for all staff.

What the future holds

- The government is bringing local taxation levels into line with those in England, Scotland and Wales, so this will also increase your tax burden.
- Financial pressures will continue to grow over the coming years with the planned changes in local government and the introduction of water charges.
- The Review of Public Administration will increase the size of Belfast City Council's geographical area and result in us having a new range of extra responsibilities like roads and planning. This means our staffing levels will double and our budget will increase by two or three times the current level. We will have responsibility for funding and delivering to this new agenda.

Where your money goes

We've just completed one of our largest logistical exercises by providing recycling bins or boxes to almost every household in Belfast.

We expect our recycling rate to reach the target of 18% for 2006-07 and hope to exceed our target the following year as more people use their bins and boxes. The opening of the new recycling centre off the Ormeau Road will mean we have modern recycling facilities in each area of the city (see page 6).

Other initiatives, some of which are detailed throughout this edition, include:

- our Community Safety Warden scheme in the Holylands which provides a high visibility patrol service during peak daytime and night-time hours;
- the Community Safety Small Grants scheme, which allocates funding to community groups to help improve community safety and deal with anti-social behaviour;
- additional neighbourhood watch schemes and comprehensive training courses for scheme coordinators;

- Safety of Seniors events to tackle fear of crime among older people;
- expanding our Night Time Noise Service;
- working with other agencies through the Resilience Forum for Belfast to develop plans that will reduce the impact of any disaster;
- support for businesses to provide smoke-free environments in line with new regulations;
- a scheme which publishes food hygiene information on the web and provides businesses with certificates to promote food safety (see page 20);
- over £1 million in financial support for community initiatives such as summer schemes, community buildings and advice services;
- rebuilding Ardoyne and Woodvale Community Centres;
- developing the Grove Well Being Centre (a one stop shop for health, leisure and exercise) in partnership with the North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust and Belfast Education and Library Board. The new Falls Leisure Centre is providing an excellent service to 250,000 customers each year; and
- transforming the 330 acre North Foreshore site into a major environment business location and public park (see page 18).



Total spend by Belfast City Council 2007-08

Gross Expenditure £140.7m

Financed by:

District rates £102.4m

Grants £11.2m

Fees and charges £27.1m



Making Belfast Brighter

Since 2003, we've spent £4.3 million on our 'Brighter Belfast' programme, plus £7 million of funding from our partners and other groups. The Brighter Belfast budget is used to complement the core work already being done by our cleansing and parks services.

The Brighter Belfast campaign aims to make the city cleaner and more attractive. We want to create a city where:

- the clean, attractive and safe environment is a source of pride and pleasure;
- there is clear responsibility for, and commitment to, maintaining streets and public spaces;
- cultural diversity is celebrated; and
- open spaces are continually improved.

We've already been working to meet these aims and will be spending another £600,000 this year to continue with Brighter Belfast projects, including:

- £180,000 on encouraging tourists, residents and shoppers to come into the city after 5pm. More than 100 shops in the city centre are now open to 7pm during the week, and restaurants are offering special early evening menus.
- £25,000 on a Neighbourhood Officer scheme (with the Housing Executive) to address residents' concerns such as housing defects and environmental issues.
- £100,000 for art projects to help increase pride in the appearance of local environments. Thirteen projects are under way and we are planning to carry out five more in the next year.
- £150,000 on further environmental improvements in deprived communities. We're consulting closely with the communities involved to help improve community safety and relations. We've finished 19 projects in four areas of the city,

and will be working in more areas over the next year.

- £25,000 on a zero tolerance approach to fly posting and graffiti in the city centre. A dedicated team has helped reduce reports of illegal fly posting by 80% in the last year. We are working with the Planning Service and other interested parties to develop a long-term solution to the problem.
- £40,000 on expanding our successful 'Belfast in Bloom' project. We hope to get even more community and commercial involvement with more floral displays.

 For more on Brighter Belfast visit www.belfastcity.gov.uk/brighterbelfast



What are rates?

In Northern Ireland, rates are a property tax based on the capital value of household properties. The income from this tax contributes towards the cost of providing local and central government services.

Where do we get our money from?

- **Rates** – from householders (domestic) and business. This is our main source of income.
- **Grants** – for example from central government
- **Fees and charges** – money received for services like leisure services, waste disposal and building control.

Who sets the rates?

A **district rate** is set by individual councils and a **regional rate** is set by central government. Your annual rates bill will show the combined cost of the district and regional rates.

Who collects the rates?

The **Rate Collection Agency** – an agency within the Department of Finance and Personnel.

You can call them on 9025 2757 for any account enquiries or log on to www.ratecollectionagency.ni.gov.uk

 For more information, contact Heather Loudon, Head of Financial Services on 9037 3001 or email loudenh@belfastcity.gov.uk

WIN!



Remembering George

George Best will always be remembered throughout the world as perhaps the greatest footballer of all time. The George Best Memorial Trust was set up in October 2006 by the Best family, Belfast City Council, the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, the Northern Ireland Office, the Irish Football Association and the Sports Council for Northern Ireland.

Representatives from each group met shortly after George's untimely death in November 2005 to discuss a lasting memorial. They agreed to place a permanent statue of George Best in Belfast city centre.

The Best family wanted the memorial to be funded through public subscription to make sure that only those who wanted to contribute would do so. Any money left over will be used to create a living memorial of George, through soccer schools of excellence across Northern Ireland.

You can be part of remembering George, by contributing towards the statue. You can make a contribution at any Ulster Bank branch. Use the account number 00145409 and sort code 98-00-60. Or contribute online at www.georgebesttrust.com

For your chance to win a football or t-shirt signed by Northern Ireland footballer and champion of the George Best Memorial fund, David Healy, log on to www.georgebesttrust.com

We have two signed t-shirts and two signed footballs up for grabs. Ten runners-up will receive a signed copy of *City Matters* featuring David on the front cover. Closing date: 11 April 2007.



These three students are so keen to get to the gym early, they've turned up in their pyjamas

Wake up early and keep fit!

Imagine being able to lose weight, tone up and get fit while avoiding the dreaded rush hour traffic. From April 2007 you can do exactly that, because most of our leisure centres will open at 7.15am.

Since March 2006, hundreds of people every week use the 7.15am start at Falls Leisure Centre to remove the cobwebs before going to work or to relax after finishing a night shift.

Now all across the city you can choose between enjoying a relaxing swim, sharpening your senses in

our refurbished fitness suites or jumping into action in a wide range of coached classes.

Andersonstown, Avoniel, Olympia and Shankill Leisure Centres will be open at 7.15am Monday to Friday, while Ballysillan and Whiterock Leisure Centres will open at 7.15am every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

i To get more information on opening times, activities and our great value BOOST membership contact your local leisure centre, or visit www.belfastcity.gov.uk/leisure

Leisure centre refurbishments

The Indoor Tennis Centre and Olympia Leisure Centre were the final two centres to be refurbished during our two year building upgrade programme. Both reopened in January and like the other centres, they have benefited from new state of the art fitness suites, with cardio theatre and upgraded changing facilities.

Whiterock Leisure Centre has recently opened a new third generation FIFA and UEFA approved 3 star turf pitch, and

Olympia Leisure Centre's synthetic grass 2 star pitch has just opened. These pitches are ideal for competitive soccer, Gaelic and rugby training and can be used in all weather conditions. They play and feel like grass.

The pitches can be hired as a full pitch for competitive soccer matches and training or they can be hired as half pitches. Grass is hard to beat, but we think you'll be impressed. Contact your local centre to make a booking (numbers on the back page).

Consumer advice

Our Consumer Advice Centre is at 14 Wellington Place - between Oyster House (the old YMCA building) and Pronuptia Bridal Shop. We offer help and advice on consumer-related problems to both traders and consumers.

Our advisers will make you aware of your legal rights and are happy to act as mediators on your behalf. All enquiries are treated seriously and no complaint is considered too trivial. Here, we look at your rights when a new appliance stops working.

Q I bought a new chest freezer in December 2006 for Christmas. I was expecting a lot of family over and I knew that I would need extra freezer space for food.

In February 2007 I went on holidays for a few days. When I returned I discovered that the freezer had stopped working and that all the food that had been in the freezer was spoiled. Can I ask the shop for a replacement freezer and what are my rights for the spoiled food?

A You have rights under The Sale of Goods Act 1979 as amended by The Sale and Supply of Goods to Consumer Regulations 2002. These rights are against the shop and not the manufacturer.

This law says that if something is wrong with the goods within the first six months from when you bought it you can assume that the goods are faulty. You can then ask the shop to do something for you.

The shop has the right to argue that the freezer is not faulty, but it is then up to them to prove that the freezer was not faulty when you bought it. The shop may want to send an engineer out to inspect the freezer to check that it is faulty and not damaged. This is reasonable. If the freezer is faulty and is less than six months old you are within



your rights to ask the shop for either a repair or replacement. This repair or replacement is the shop's choice to make and not yours. However, to make sure that you are treated fairly the law says that any repair or replacement must be of satisfactory quality. It should also be carried out within a reasonable period of time. These are your rights in consumer law and are in addition to any manufacturer's warranty or guarantee.

Now about the spoiled food. It is obvious that if a freezer is faulty then it will damage food. This spoiled food is a loss you have suffered as a result of the freezer being faulty. This is known as foreseeable consequential loss and you are within your rights to ask the shop for compensation. The shop can ask you for the receipts or the packaging that the food came in as proof of what has been spoiled. A good idea would be to take some photographs of the spoiled food.

Need help with a consumer problem?

If you have a consumer problem and would like some specialist advice, simply visit the Consumer Advice Centre at 14 Wellington Place, Belfast.

You can pick up information on consumer issues from here. We are closed at weekends.

Opening times:

Monday	9.30am - 4.30pm
Tuesday	9.30am - 4.30pm
Wednesday	9.30am - 2.00pm
Thursday	9.30am - 4.30pm
Friday	9.30am - 4.15pm

You can also telephone 9032 8260 or email your query to consumeradvice@belfastcity.gov.uk

Vote for Fairtrade



We are holding the first ever Fairtrade Awards in May.

The awards are designed to reward shops, cafés and other outlets for their commitment to Fairtrade in the city.

Categories are:

- Best Small or Independent Retailer
- Best Multiple Retailer or Supermarket
- Best Café
- Best Bar or Restaurant.

i For more information, visit www.fairtradebelfast.com

Frequently Asked Questions

Q I am going to replace my old central heating boiler. Do I need permission from anybody?

A Yes. You must make a building regulations application to Building Control. A 'Building Notice' application would be best and the fee will be based on the estimated cost of the work. The new boiler must have an efficiency of at least 86%. Condensing boilers can be even more efficient than this and will help reduce your fuel costs and reduce carbon emissions. You should think about upgrading the controls on your heating system to current standards.

Q Why can't I recycle glass in my blue bin?

A The blue bin is emptied into the back of the recycling lorry so any glass would smash. The broken glass would contaminate other materials and could cut the people employed to separate the items.

You can recycle glass at our recycling centres, civic amenity sites and 'glass bring sites' throughout the city.

Log on to www.belfastcity.gov.uk/wasteitsnotrubbish to find out more.



Q What is the council going to do about the increase in cigarette litter when Northern Ireland goes smoke-free this April?

A We are employing extra litter wardens for a one year period to address the anticipated upsurge in on-street littering, particularly outside restaurants, pubs and clubs.

Our street cleansing staff are already working very hard to keep our city streets clean and these additional staff will support their efforts. We issued over 1,500 £50 fines last year for littering.

Once the smoke-free legislation is in place we will take a proactive and targeted approach to cigarette litter and will be issuing fines to those who flout the law.

Our officers have been speaking to businesses to encourage good practice in dealing with increased litter outside their premises.



Change in law for tenants and landlords

The law relating to privately rented houses is changing on 1 April 2007.

Landlords who rent out a house on or after that date will require a Certificate of Fitness from the council if the house was built before 1945. We will issue certificates if the house passes an inspection by one of our Environmental Health Officers. It will be an offence for a landlord not to apply for a Certificate of Fitness. Certain properties are exempt – details can be found at the web address below.

The new law 'Private Tenancies (NI) Order 2006' aims to improve the quality of rented houses and protect tenants' rights. As a tenant, you will be entitled to have a written tenancy statement from your landlord. We're also getting new legal powers to deal with any unfit privately rented houses.

i For more information see www.dsdni.gov.uk/private_rented_sector or call 9027 0428.

Written in stone

A recently published book provides a fascinating history of Belfast through the gravestones of Belfast City Cemetery, which opened on 1 August 1869.

Today there are over a quarter of a million people buried there. Its occupants reflect the complex social and political history of Belfast, and our

sense of humour! The inscription on the base of Gerald Duffy's headstone reflects the great humour and humanity of Belfast people: 'I told you's I was sick.' And from a Star Trek fan - 'beam me up Lord'.

i Written In Stone by Tom Hartley is published by Brehon Press and is priced at £14.99 hardback.



Belfast's sense of humour reflected in our gravestones



Enjoying the craic at last year's parade

The welcome mat is out for St Pat

Come along and enjoy the fun! That's the St Patrick's Day message we're sending out this year. The 2007 celebrations promise a carnival atmosphere, offering fun for all the family.

Events on Saturday 17 March will kick off at 12.30pm with a colourful carnival featuring a giant St Patrick, flying angels and dancing serpents winding their way through the city centre streets.

The procession will set off from City Hall and travel down Donegall Place, turning right onto High Street, before making its way to Custom House Square. Once there, the celebrations will continue with two hours of fabulous music from 1pm.

Musical entertainment is also planned for that evening courtesy of 'Phil Coulter and Friends', with the Ulster Orchestra, at 8pm in the Waterfront Hall. This concert is organised with BBC Northern Ireland and is sold out.

Other celebrations are also planned across Belfast. More than a hundred community groups and organisations will be marking the special date in their own locality thanks to funding from our Good Relations Fund.

i Get more information by contacting the Belfast Welcome Centre on 9024 6609 or email info@belfastwelcomecentre.com. To take part in the carnival visit www.belfastcity.gov.uk/events

Giant fun in the Giant's Park



Giant support for Giant's Park plans: Belfast Giants stars, Leigh Jamieson and George Awada, make an early start to the redevelopment of the North Foreshore

It's a giant project – and you can help it take shape! We have secured £250,000 in Big Lottery funding to boost our bid to develop the Giant's Park at the North Foreshore.

And the good news is that if we're successful, it will mean £25 million for completion of the project. At 200 acres the park has the potential to become one of the biggest parks in Ireland – and a unique attraction for both locals and tourists.

We're in the process of drawing up dynamic plans to develop the former wasteland at Dargan Road and are eager to get your input. All ideas and suggestions on what you would like to see included are welcome.

Current ideas include an education centre, sports arena, sculptures, cycle

paths, skateboarding park, a children's playground and equestrian centre. Do you have any ideas?

We are hosting an afternoon of public site visits on Sunday 25 March so that you can see first-hand the potential that the site has. A special bus will be leaving from the front of the City Hall at 2pm, 3pm and 4pm. Already ice hockey stars from the Coors Belfast Giants team have pitched in with their support.

"We think it's awesome that this land is just sitting here ready and waiting for the suggestions of local people about what you want to do with it," said George Awada.

Added team-mate, Leigh Jamieson: "This is a fantastic opportunity to help shape the future of your own area. Go for it!"

i More details and an online suggestion form where you can send us your ideas can be found on www.belfastcity.gov.uk/giantspark You can also email giantspark@belfastcity.gov.uk or contact Barry Rolston on 9032 0202 ext 3618.



Residents of Lower Windsor are delighted with their new alley-gates

Get your alley-gating manual

We're using the experience of our pilot alley-gating scheme to launch a manual for communities who want to erect alley gates.

The scheme, led by Belfast Community Safety Partnership, is almost finished and over 120 alley-gates have been erected in five areas:

- Little Americas;
- Lower Windsor;
- The Mount and Willowfield;
- Beechmount; and
- Woodvale.

i To get a copy of the manual, contact Heather Horner on 9032 0202 ext 3394 or mobile 078 2514 0523. Or visit www.saferbelfast.org to download a manual and see what else the Community Safety Partnership is up to.

Residents in these areas are experiencing benefits such as reduction in antisocial behaviour, burglaries and fear of crime. A resident from Beechmount said: "I haven't felt as safe in years, the gates make a real difference to security around here."

The new alley-gating manual provides step-by-step guidelines on how to install gates in your community.

Putting up gates involves a complicated legal process so communities considering this should contact us at an early stage.

New High Sheriff

The 'swearing in' of the new High Sheriff of Belfast, Councillor Jim Kirkpatrick, took place in January.

Councillor Kirkpatrick is the first person to have served as High Sheriff on two occasions, having also fulfilled the role in 1990.

The position of High Sheriff is one of the oldest secular offices in the British Isles and dates back to Saxon times. Appointments to the position of High Sheriff are made by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland usually upon the recommendation of the council.

His term of office runs from January to December and while the role is now largely a ceremonial one, he will provide support to the Lord Mayor during the year.



Community Safety Roaming Wardens

From May 2007 we are deploying Community Safety Roaming Wardens to respond to problems such as antisocial behaviour.

The new Community Safety Roaming Wardens will act as a deterrent and provide a targeted response in identified areas - north, south, east and west of the city. The Roaming Wardens will complement the Community Safety Wardens who are permanently based in the Holylands area.

When a problem has been identified, one of four small teams of wardens can be deployed and will work with the community for up to two months with the aim of 'nipping the problem in the bud'. Early intervention is recognised as having a major influence on a long-term successful outcome.

Residents should continue to make their initial complaint to PSNI, NIHE or Belfast City Council. These bodies will meet regularly to determine the best use of the Roaming Wardens.

Residents will be notified in advance of the wardens appearing in their community and, where possible, will be invited to become involved.

The Community Safety Roaming Wardens will become a positive presence throughout Belfast as we strive to make it a safer city.

i Contact Margaret McLarnon on 9032 0202 or email mclarnonm@belfastcity.gov.uk Or for more information visit www.saferbelfast.org

Closed for renovation

Belfast City Hall will close at the end of June 2007 for a £10 million upgrade. The much needed maintenance and renovation work on the 100 year old building will take a maximum of 22 months. City Hall will be completely closed for the duration of the work but will reopen to the public once the repairs have been completed. Council employees and services normally based in the City Hall will move to the newly built Adelaide Exchange in Adelaide Street.

Wedding and civil partnership ceremonies (and all other events) scheduled to take place at City Hall before 1 July 2007 will go ahead as planned.

Marriages and Civil Partnerships: 1 July 2007 and beyond

People interested in marrying or registering a civil partnership after 1 July 2007 will have three options. They can either:

- use our ceremony room in the new offices, in Adelaide Street
- use one of our approved venues
- apply to use a temporary approved venue of their choice.

All registry services are subject to availability.



Registration Services

The closure will mean changes to the location of many of our services, including marriage and civil partnership ceremonies which will be held in a special ceremony room at Adelaide Exchange.

There will be no changes to the actual service provided by Registration after the move to the new building. Hours of business will also remain the same: Mondays to Thursdays 9.30am to 4.30pm and Fridays 9.30am to 4pm.

The new ceremony room will seat

70 people. After 1 July 2007 you will be able to view the room between 9am and 9.30am on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

i If you have a query about the registration of births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships during our refurbishment programme, contact the Registrar's office on 9027 0274 or email registrar@belfastcity.gov.uk

Ulster Hall refurbishment plans

The Ulster Hall will close in April 2007 for major refurbishment works.

New facilities will include:

- internal redecoration;
- new downstairs seating;
- installation of new high-specification sound, lighting and air-conditioning systems;
- new roof and floors; and
- upgraded toilet facilities.

There are also plans to create a new five-storey building at the rear of the Ulster Hall. This will include modern dressing rooms and meeting facilities and will be used as a permanent home for the Ulster Orchestra.

The Hall will reopen in 2008.

i Call 9032 3900 or visit www.ulsterhall.co.uk

Competition winners

Details of the **SamSara**, **Classical Arts NI** and **Enduring City** winners from the last edition of *City Matters* can be found on our website at www.belfastcity.gov.uk/citymatters

Scores on the doors

Over 65 per cent of food places in Belfast are serving up good, very good or excellent standards of food safety. We want to make this information available to you by publishing the results of our food safety inspections online. You will be able to log on and check the rating of your local

restaurant, take-away or even your corner shop.

Eventually all 2,800 food businesses in the greater Belfast area will be awarded one to five stars based on conditions found during the most recent food hygiene inspection. The stars will be awarded based on the degree of legal compliance with food hygiene legislation – five stars being the highest standard possible.

Food businesses include everything from

supermarkets, to hotels and fast food restaurants. All inspected premises will be invited to display their star rating in a prominent position so you can see at a glance the standard they're meeting.

The scheme is part of a UK wide pilot by the Food Standards Agency and is based upon a risk rating system used throughout the UK.

i Email scoresonthedoors@belfastcity.gov.uk or visit www.belfastcity.gov.uk/scoresonthedoors

what's on



Your essential guide to Belfast City Council events

For more information on events go to www.belfastcity.gov.uk/events

March

St. Patrick's Day Carnival and Concert

17 March 12.30pm

City centre

See page 18 for more details. Call Belfast Welcome Centre on 9024 6609 or visit www.belfastcity.gov.uk/events

Community Safety Event for young people in North Belfast

21 March 6.30pm - 9pm

Belfast Castle

There will be a number of community safety information stands, discussion workshops, film, graffiti art and holistic therapies. Pre-registration only. Call Concorde Community Centre on 9071 2450.

7th Belfast Film Festival £

22 March - 1 April

Citywide

A must for film buffs...this citywide 11 day event boasts over 130 films and cinematic events from across the globe. Tickets range from £4-£10. Call 9032 5913 or visit www.belfastfilmfestival.org

April

Titanic Made in Belfast Festival

7 - 14 April

City Hall & Titanic Quarter

A week long festival of Titanic tours and special exhibitions held in City Hall. Call Belfast Welcome Centre on 9024 6609 or visit www.belfastcity.gov.uk/events

Spring Fair £

21 - 22 April 1.30pm - 5.30pm

Malone House and Barnett Demesne

A family event featuring the annual spring flower show and including a range of environmental activities, wildlife, demonstrations and entertainment. Adults: £2, senior citizens: £1, accompanied children: free. Call 9027 0467 or visit www.belfastcity.gov.uk/parks



Belfast Ulster Scots Festival / Tha Ulstèr-Scotch Gaitherin o Bilfawst

25 - 29 April

A mix of traditional and contemporary culture ranging from music and dance to historical drama and literary readings, and culminating in a Family Fun Day. Call 9074 6939 or email info@ulster-scots.com

Centenary of the Dockers Strike Exhibition Launch

30 April 7pm

Banqueting Hall, City Hall

Launch of exhibition relating to the dockers strike, followed by a lecture. John Gray will base his talk on the images from the exhibition, and George Dawson will focus on the role the Independent Orange Order

No Mean City Photographic Exhibition

Until 30 June Mon-Fri 9.30am - 5.30pm

City Hall

'No Mean City' celebrates our famous and not so famous citizens who have made their contribution to society over the past hundred years. Call 9027 0507.

Lord Mayor's Carnival

26 May 12pm

City centre

A colourful carnival to celebrate the end of the Lord Mayor's term in office. This year's theme will be 'Love and Friendship' in conjunction with Belfast Children's Festival.

Free Admission.

Contact Belfast Welcome Centre on 9024 6609 or visit www.belfastcity.gov.uk/events

had during this strike.

Tickets are free and available from Belfast Welcome Centre (call 9024 6609).

May

Festival of Fools £

3 - 7 May

City Centre

Five days of the highest quality international street theatre seen in Ireland this year. Family entertainment at its best.

Call 9023 6007 or visit www.foolsfestival.com

Cathedral Quarter

Arts Festival £

3 - 13 May

City Centre

Filled with alternative, cutting edge entertainment, the 8th Cathedral Quarter festival is the most ambitious and culturally diverse to date. Call 9023 2403 or visit www.cqaf.com

Lord Mayor's Charity Gala £

12 May

Waterfront Hall

See page 4 for more details. Visit www.waterfront.co.uk



Belfast Children's Festival £

25 May - 3 June

Quirky arts performances, workshops and exhibitions for little ones throughout Belfast.

Book online at www.youngartart.co.uk
Call 9023 0660.

June

Waste Fair

6 - 9 June

Front lawn of City Hall

Fair to promote waste awareness in a fun and interactive way. Featuring market stalls and exhibitors as well as an interactive touch screen information zone.

Call 0800 0328100 or visit www.belfastcity.gov.uk/wasteitsnotrubbish

Beat Initiative Summer Festival

9 - 23 June

Drumming, dance and costume making workshops throughout the city leading up to a free Carnival extravaganza for all the family on 23 June.

Call 9046 0863 or visit www.belfastcarnival.org

Opera in the Gardens

13 June 7pm

Botanic Gardens

The Royal Opera's production of Don Giovanni broadcast live via screen relay to Botanic Gardens. This event grows in popularity each year and is a great event in one of the city's grandest parks.

Contact Belfast Welcome Centre on 9024 6609 or visit www.belfastcity.gov.uk/events



One of the fossas at Belfast Zoo

Events at Belfast Zoo £

RepTAILS

17 - 18 March

Slithering into March brings the reptile display to the Education Centre.

Mother's Day

18 March

Treat your mum to a visit where you can follow a special trail of our mothers and babies. A complimentary tea or coffee will be offered to each mum in the Ark Café.

24th Annual Photographic Competition

sponsored by HB Walls

April - September

Attention all budding photographers! Submit your photos by 28 September to win our photographic competition.

Easter

EGGstravaganza

6 - 10 April

Follow the specially laid out Easter Trail.

Baby Trail

21 April - 1 May

See all the new arrivals in the Zoo.

Zoo admission prices

Adults: £7.80
Children (4 -17 years): £4.10
Family Day Ticket (2 adults and 2 children): £21.00
Senior Citizens: Free

For reasons of child safety, no children under the age of 16 are allowed into the zoo, unless accompanied by an adult.



Call 9077 6277 or check the website on www.belfastzoo.co.uk

Remember to check all events in advance by contacting the venue and booking well ahead.

'Aladdin' Winner

Congratulations go to Helen Clarke who won the Family Ticket for the 'Aladdin' Pantomime production in the Waterfront Hall, in our free draw as part of our Best Practice Day in November.



The handy guide **whatabout?** gives details of events taking place throughout Belfast – from theatre and exhibitions to comedy and festivals.

Pick up your free copy from the Belfast Welcome Centre at 47 Donegall Place or call 9024 6609. You can also go online at www.gotobelfast.com



Get Belfast Waterfront Hall's new entertainment guide **waterfront** by calling the box office on 9033 4455. Visit www.waterfront.co.uk

Please note all events are free unless you see the £ symbol. All details are correct at time of going to press, but we advise you to call in advance to check the details.

Full details of all events are available on www.belfastcity.gov.uk/events or call Belfast Welcome Centre on 9024 6609.

Members of Belfast City Council

(showing political affiliation as elected in May 2005)

ALL - Alliance DUP - Democratic Unionist Party IND - Independent PUP - Progressive Unionist Party
SDLP - Social Democratic and Labour Party SF - Sinn Féin UUP - Ulster Unionist Party

Balmoral Electoral Area

(comprising Blackstaff, Finaghy, Malone, Musgrave, Upper Malone, Windsor Wards)

Cllr Thomas Ekin	ALL	Tel: 028 9020 1714
Cllr Carmel Hanna	SDLP	Tel: 028 9068 3535
Cllr Bernie Kelly	SDLP	Tel: 028 9068 3535
Cllr Jim Kirkpatrick, High Sheriff	DUP	Tel: 028 9045 7341
Cllr Ruth Patterson, Deputy Lord Mayor	DUP	Mob: 078 1012 0553
Cllr Bob Stoker	UUP	Tel: 028 9032 1472

Castle Electoral Area

(comprising Bellevue, Castleview, Cavehill, Chichester Park, Duncairn, Fortwilliam Wards)

Cllr David Browne	UUP	Tel: 028 9077 1757
Cllr Patrick Convery	SDLP	Tel: 028 9028 9380
Cllr Ian Crozier	DUP	Mob: 077 7165 7704
Cllr Tierna Cunningham	SF	Tel: 028 9074 0817
Cllr Nigel Dodds OBE	DUP	Tel: 028 9077 4774
Cllr Cathal Mullaghan	SDLP	Tel: 028 9032 0202

Court Electoral Area

(comprising Crumlin, Glencairn, Highfield, Shankill, Woodvale Wards)

Cllr Diane Dodds	DUP	Tel: 028 9074 4008
Cllr William Humphrey	DUP	Tel: 028 9074 4008
Cllr Frank McCoubrey	IND	Tel: 028 9032 0202
Cllr Elaine McMillen	DUP	Tel: 028 9074 4008
Cllr Hugh Smyth OBE	PUP	Tel: 028 9032 0202

Laganbank Electoral Area

(comprising Ballynafeigh, Botanic, Rosetta, Shaftesbury, Stranmillis Wards)

Cllr Alex Maskey	SF	Tel: 028 9024 3194
Cllr Patrick McCarthy, Lord Mayor	SDLP	Mob: 077 1164 4275
Cllr Michael McGimpsey	UUP	Tel: 028 9024 5801
Cllr Peter O'Reilly	SDLP	Tel: 028 9064 6622
Cllr Christopher Stalford	DUP	Mob: 07791 597918

Lower Falls Electoral Area

(comprising Beechmount, Clonard, Falls, Upper Springfield, Whiterock Wards)

Cllr Janice Austin	SF	Tel: 028 9050 8989
Cllr Máire Cush	SF	Tel: 028 9050 8989
Cllr Tom Hartley	SF	Tel: 028 9050 8989
Cllr Francis McCann	SF	Tel: 028 9050 8989
Cllr Marie Moore	SF	Tel: 028 9050 8989

Oldpark Electoral Area

(comprising Ardoyne, Ballysillan, Cliftonville, Ligoniel, New Lodge, Waterworks Wards)

Cllr Fred Cobain	UUP	Tel: 028 9032 0202
Cllr Daniel Lavery	SF	Tel: 028 9074 0817
Cllr Alban Maginness	SDLP	Tel: 028 9022 0520
Cllr Nelson McCausland	DUP	Tel: 028 9071 7072
Cllr Margaret McClenaghan	SF	Tel: 028 9071 3272
Cllr Carál Ní Chuilín	SF	Tel: 028 9074 0817

Pottinger Electoral Area

(comprising Ballymacarrett, Bloomfield, Orangefield, Ravenhill, The Mount, Woodstock Wards)

Cllr May Campbell	DUP	Tel: 028 9087 8587
Cllr Sir Reg Empey OBE	UUP	Tel: 028 9065 8217
Cllr Máire Hendron	ALL	Tel: 028 9065 0052
Cllr Margaret McKenzie	DUP	Mob: 077 0251 3287
Cllr Sammy Wilson	DUP	Tel: 028 2826 7722
Cllr John Kyle	PUP	Tel: 028 9022 5040

Upper Falls Electoral Area

(comprising Andersonstown, Falls Park, Glencolin, Glen Road, Ladybrook Wards)

Cllr Tim Attwood	SDLP	Tel: 028 9024 7700
Cllr Michael Browne	SF	Tel: 028 9080 8404
Cllr Paul Maskey	SF	Tel: 028 9080 8404
Cllr Christine Mhic, Giolla Mhín	SF	Tel: 028 9080 8404
Cllr Gerard O'Neill	SF	Tel: 028 9080 8404

Victoria Electoral Area

(comprising Ballyhackamore, Belmont, Cherryvalley, Island, Knock, Stormont, Sydenham Wards)

Cllr Ian Adamson OBE	UUP	Tel: 028 9042 1005
Cllr Wallace Browne, Lord Browne of Belmont	DUP	Tel: 028 9065 8301
Cllr Mervyn Jones	ALL	Tel: 028 9047 3420
Cllr Naomi Long	ALL	Tel: 028 9047 2004
Cllr Robin Newton	DUP	Tel: 028 9045 9500
Cllr Jim Rodgers OBE	UUP	Mob: 078 0188 2478
Cllr David Rodway	DUP	Tel: 028 9032 0202



Visit www.belfastcity.gov.uk/councillors for more information on your local councillors.

A-Z

A

Abandoned Vehicles	9027 0656
Asbestos	
Household collection	9027 0656

B

Bin/Container sales	9027 0656
Births - Registration	9027 0274
Blue Bin Enquiries	0800 032 8100
Building Control	
24 hour answer phone	9023 6672
Dangerous Structures	9027 0285
Entertainment Licensing	9027 0290
Postal Numbering	9027 0286
Street Naming	9027 0286
Technical helpline	9027 0432
Bulky Household Waste/ Special Collections	9027 0230

C

Cemeteries Office	
Mon-Thur 8.30am-5.00pm (Fri 4.30pm) Sat 8.30am-12.30pm	9027 0296
City Cemetery	9032 3112
City of Belfast Golf Course	9084 3799
Civic Amenity Sites	9027 0656
Civil Partnerships	9027 0274
Community Safety	9027 0469
Community Services	9027 0505
Complaints Helpline	9027 0270
Consumer Advice	9032 8260
Consumer Safety	9027 0428
Corporate Policy Unit	9027 0519
Crematorium	9044 8342
Culture and Arts	9027 0461

D

Dead Animal Removal	9027 0297
Deaths - Registration	9027 0274
Dog Warden Service	9027 0431
Dundonald Cemetery	9048 0193

E

Economic Development	9027 0482
Environmental Health	9027 0428
Equality Officer (Freefone)	0800 0855 412
Events	
Belfast Welcome Centre	9024 6609
Leisure and Sporting	9027 0345
Parks	9027 0467

F

Fly Poster Removal	9027 0230
Fly Tipping (Illegal dumping)	9027 0230
Food Safety	9027 0468
Forest of Belfast Officer	9027 0350
Freedom of Information	9027 0639

G

Good Relations	9027 0663
Graffiti Removal	9027 0230
Grounds Maintenance	9037 3031

H

Health and Environmental Services	
Emergency (after hours)	
Mobile number	07850 499622
Health Education/Promotion	9027 0469
Home Safety	9027 0469

I

Industrial Estates	9027 0510
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J

Jobline	9027 0481
www.belfastcity.gov.uk/jobs	

L

Landfill Site	9037 0301
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N

Noise Hotline	9037 3006
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P

Parks	9032 0202
Pest Control	9027 0431
Pollution Control	9027 0428
Port Health	9035 1199
Public Conveniences	9027 0656
Public Health & Housing	9027 0428

R

Recycling Centres	9027 0656
Recycling Helpline	0800 0328 100
Refuse Collection	
Customer Contact Centre	9027 0230
Registration of Births, Deaths, Marriages and Civil Partnerships	9027 0274
Regulatory Services	9027 0469
(Enforcement of alcohol, street trading and sale of tobacco and Sunday trading bye-laws)	
Roselawn Cemetery	9044 8288

S

Smoke Hotline	9027 0420
Street Cleansing	
Enquiries	9027 0230

T

Tourism	9027 0228
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U

Ulster Hall	9032 3900
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W

Waste Disposal	
Accounts	9027 0657
Waste Management Service	9032 0202
Waterfront Hall	
Administration/Enquiries	9033 4400
Box Office and bookings	9033 4455
Weddings	9027 0274
Workplace Health & Safety	9027 0428

Council venues and buildings

Belfast Castle	9077 6925
Belfast Welcome Centre	9024 6609
Cecil Ward Building	9032 0202
City Hall	9032 0202
City Hall (textphone)	9027 0405
City Hall Tours	9027 0456
Consumer Advice Centre, 14 Wellington Place	9032 8260
Malone House	9068 1246
Smithfield Market	9032 3248
St George's Market	9043 5704
Ulster Hall	9032 3900
Waterfront Hall	9033 4400
Zoological Gardens	
Information line	9077 6277

Leisure and recreation centres

Andersonstown Leisure Centre	9062 5211
Avoniel Leisure Centre	9045 1564
Ballysillan Leisure Centre	9091 8731
Beechmount Leisure Centre	9032 8631
Belfast Indoor Tennis Arena/ Ozone Leisure Complex	9045 8024
Falls Leisure Centre	9050 0510
Grove Leisure Centre	9035 1599
Loughside Recreation Centre	9078 1524
Olympia Leisure Centre	9091 8746
Shankill Leisure Centre	9024 1434
Whiterock Leisure Centre	9023 3239
Outdoor Pitch Hotline	9027 0677

Some other services for which the council is not responsible

Water

Department for Regional Development (DRD) Water Service	
Customer Service Enquiries	08457 440088
Leakline (water mains only)	08000 282011

Department of the Environment (DOE)

Water Pollution	0800 807060
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Libraries

Belfast Education & Library Board	9056 4000
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Planning

Department of the Environment Planning Service	9025 2800
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Social Housing

Northern Ireland Housing Executive	9024 0588
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Rate Collection

Rate Collection Agency	9025 2252
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Roads

DRD Roads Service	9054 0540
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Schools

Belfast Education & Library Board	9056 4000
Council for Catholic Maintained Schools	9042 6972

Street Lighting (Fault Reporting)

DRD	9025 3051
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