**News from the PCA**

**Portmarnock Tidy Towns**

At the time of writing summer weather has not yet arrived on our shores .The Met Office has revealed it was the wettest July in 50 years. It’s sweltering all over Europe but Hibernia is still waiting for some of this sunshine to visit us. All we can hope for at this stage is a taste of an Indian summer! Hopefully it will have arrived by the time you read this item. The unseasonal weather or typical ‘Irish Summer ‘has meant that our Velvet Strand has not had as many visitors as in previous years. At least on the positive side we haven’t had any outbreaks of antisocial behaviour that made national headlines in previous years. However we noticed that our dunes were being seriously damaged by youths on certain days using them as playgrounds! The storm damage and erosion in recent years has already removed a lot of them. If we want to preserve them and allow the marram grass to grow they should probably be out of bounds for everybody.

We do hope that you had an enjoyable holiday be it at home or away.

In the last edition of Progress we encouraged all in our community to get behind our Tidy Towns effort this year. Various ways were suggested as to how people could in their own communities improve their environment. It is clearly evident from walking around Portmarnock that there has been a positive response. The village never looked so good with plenty of planters all blooming and most estates have now flower beds around their entrance signage. Weeds have been removed from the sides of the roads, grass margins neatly trimmed and lovely flower displays around trees. Our thanks to Fingal for planting flowers at the entrance to Wendell Avenue and to the volunteers who kept them weeded and watered over the summer. Ardilaun has set a very high standard followed closely by St Anne’s and Carrick Court. A huge step forward has been made in making Portmarnock a litter free zone. Well done to all our volunteers who turned out every fortnight to do a clean-up of the beach/dunes and other black spots and to everbody else who helped out in this community effort. Our thanks to Portmarnock Hotel and Golf Links for continuing to provide refreshments after our Saturday clean-ups.

Judging for Tidy Towns takes place from June to August. As yet we don’t know how we were rated. We are not expecting to win any major award this year but we will seriously take on board the remarks of the adjudicators and aim to do better in future years.

**Lidl Planning Application**

On the 29th July Fingal Planning Department made a decision to seek **Additional Information** from the applicant. All residents who send in submissions were informed in writing a few days later of this decision. What was most surprising about the remarks made by FCC was that very little consideration was given to the concerns residents have about several aspects of this development. There were numerous submissions from residents as well as submissions from our councillors and the PCA. The two public meetings held in the Parish Centre were packed to capacity. There was unanimous agreement that the site needed to be developed and most felt that a supermarket and some other retail units would enhance our village. What was of major concern to all in attendance at the meetings as well as from reading their submissions was the scale of the Lidl development. It simply was too large as well as too high for this site. Traffic congestion, already a daily problem, would be substantially increased by this large store. The safety of children going to and from the schools as well as other pedestrians was also of serious concern to residents There was strong opposition to the under croft car parking at the back of the store with parking facilities for only 75 cars and this includes staff car parking as well. Residents in St Anne’s felt that shoppers would use their estate for parking. Access to Strand Rd from the supermarket would be a nightmare .Ironically Aldi, when refused permission by on Board Pleanala to build a store in the grounds of White Sands Hotel felt the old tin church site was not a suitable alternative location for their store!

We are in no doubt that Fingal will grant permission (as happened with Aldi) as soon as the applicant complies with the conditions set out in the Additional Information. However there will be another opportunity for all who send in submissions to comment on this **Additional Information**. There is no doubt it will go to An Board Pleanala for a final ruling. You can read all the documentation including all the submissions by logging in to FCC website and the reference for this development is **F15A/0265**. There will be an opportunity for all who made a submission to make a written appeal to ABP if permission is granted by FCC.

**Community Employment Scheme**

Paul has left us after completing almost four years here. We are very grateful for his work in our community and we wish him well in whatever job he takes up in the future. I am glad to report that we still have Imelda and we are confident that Paul will be replaced by another community worker in the not too distant future. Our community workers are doing excellent work in keeping the litter under control as well as supporting our Tidy Town effort this year

**Sewage Treatment Plant and Portmarnock Outfall**

Residents will probably have noticed over the summer the investigative marine survey being carried out by Greater Dublin Drainage in preparation for the marine outfall pipeline in Portmarnock from the proposed giant sewage plant at Clonshaugh.Members of the PCA attended a public information event held by GDD in Portmarnock Hotel and Golf links on Wednesday 15th July. We questioned representatives from GDD about this work as well asking them why the sewage would not be treated to tertiary standards at Clonshaugh. This plant will cover 56 acres and will be no more than 800 metres from residential areas. The project will go to An Board Pleanala in 2016.

**Contacting the PCA**

**If you wish to contact the PCA on any issues in our community or volunteer for any of our committees why not call us 087 3858254 (leave a message) or email** **portmarnock1@gmail.com****. You can visit our website/Facebook at www.portmarnock.org**