



An Roinn Tithíochta,
Pleanála agus Rialtais Áitiúil
Department of Housing,
Planning and Local Government

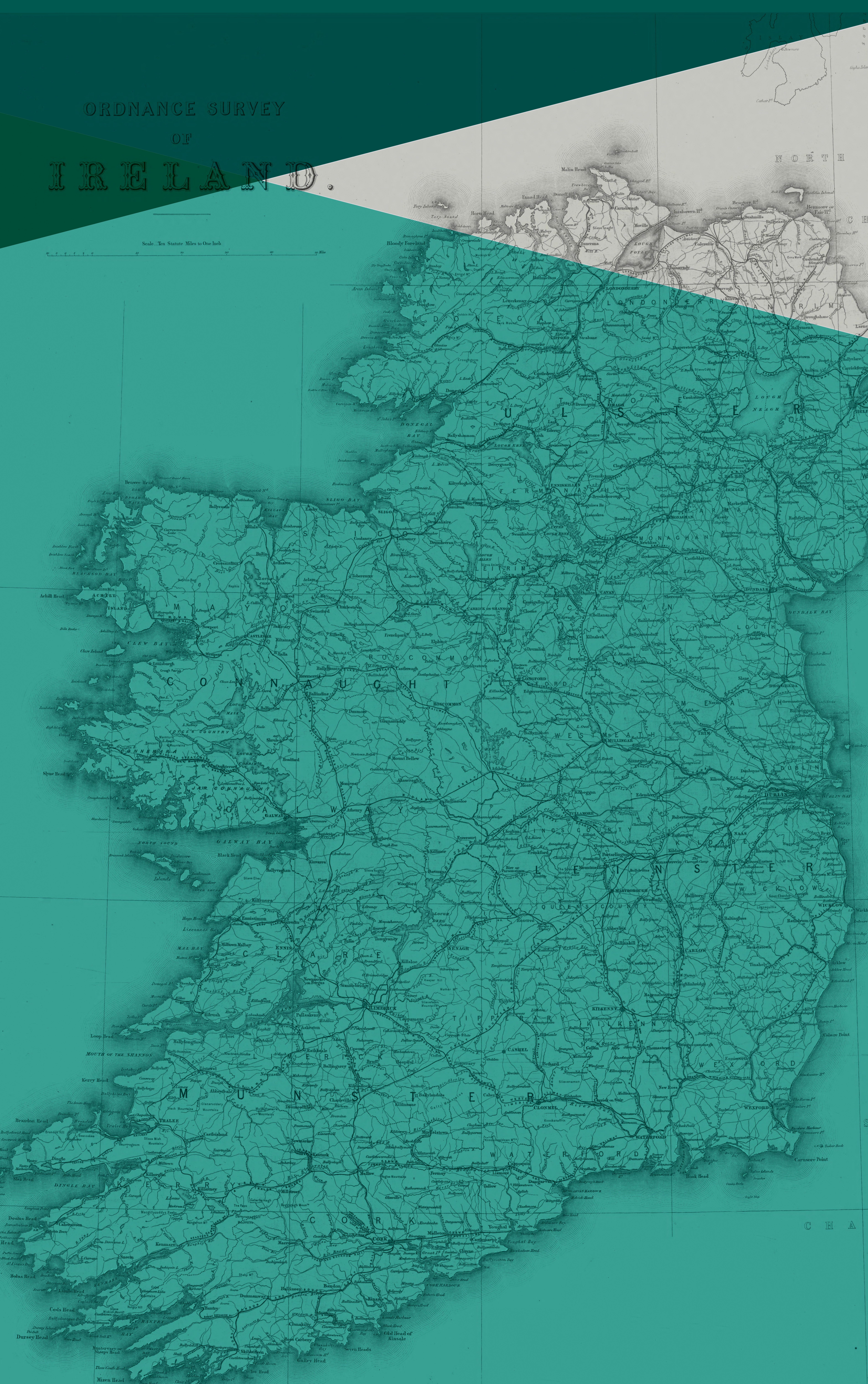
Cartlannaithe agus Bainisteoirí Taifead an Rialtais Áitiúil
Local Government Archivists and Records Managers

Celebrating the history of Irish Local Government

Ag ceiliúradh stair
Rialtas Áitiúil na hÉireann

ORDNANCE SURVEY
OF
IRELAND.

Scale. Ten Statute Miles to One Inch.





1

Early forms of Local Government Cineálacha luatha Rialtais Áitiúil

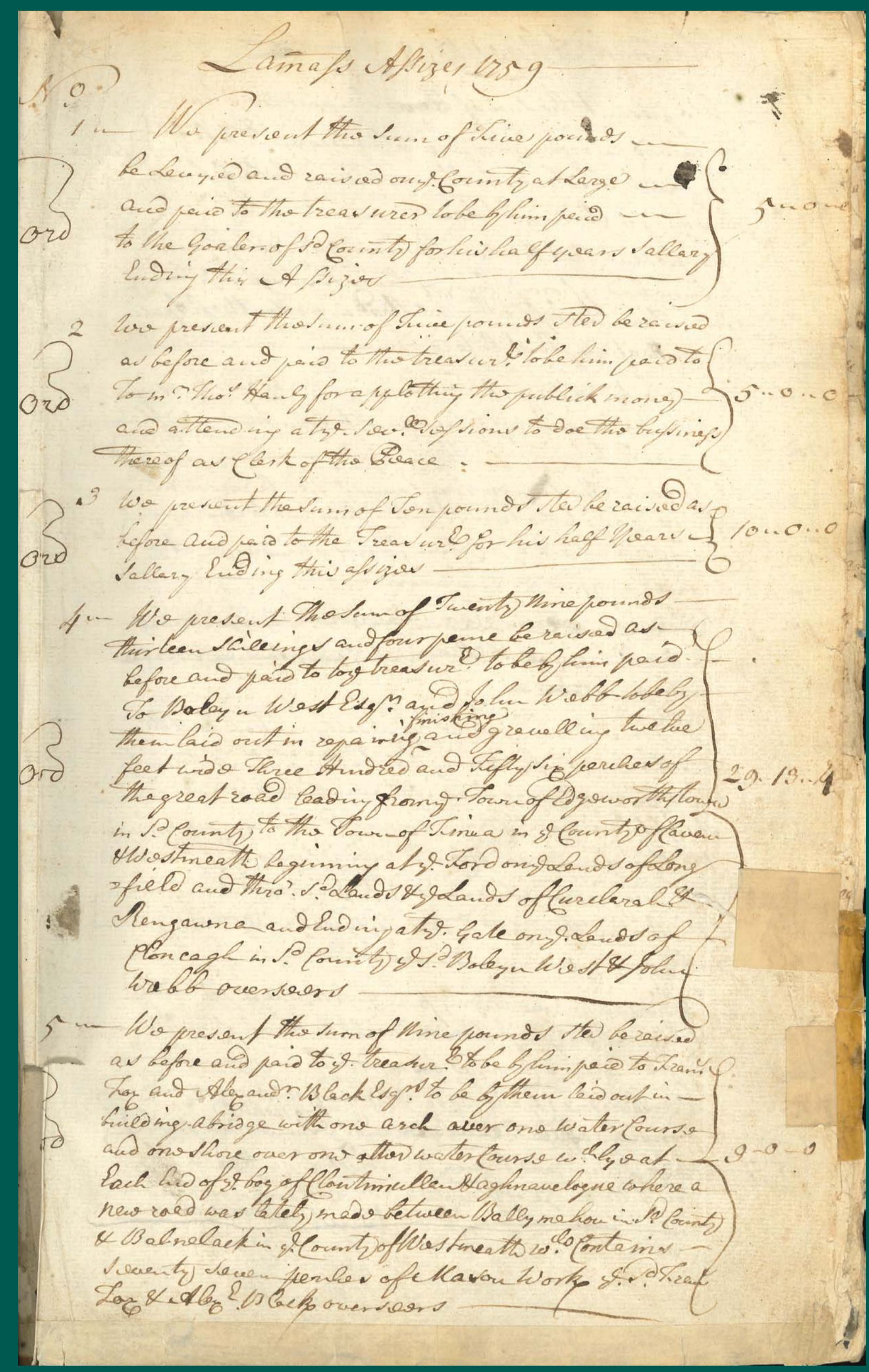
The earliest form of local government began after the arrival of the Anglo-Normans in the 12th century. These were borough corporations, granted to certain cities and towns, generally by royal charter. From 1828 onwards, municipal government was partially democratised with the establishment of town commissions in many places.

Grand Juries

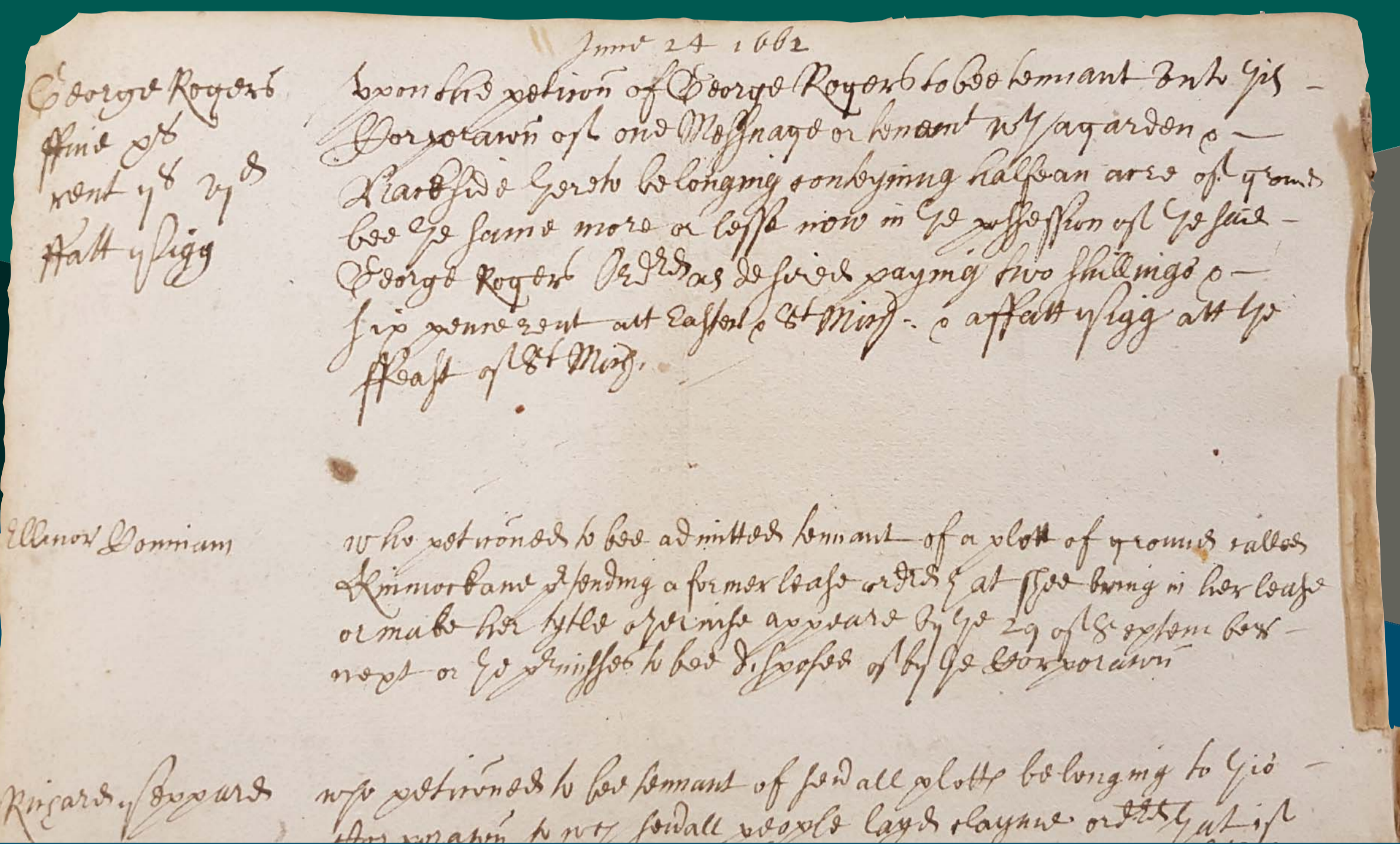
Local government at county level developed with the expansion of the functions of the grand jury. Its members were landowners, summoned by the high sheriff twice yearly – Lent and summer. Its role was to decide which cases were referred to the assize courts. Later, it was granted authority to collect rates and approve various works, such as road and bridge repairs, and the building and maintenance of courthouses and county gaols.

Poor Law Guardians

Boards of poor law guardians were established under the Poor Relief (Ireland) Act 1838. There were eventually 163 Poor Law Unions based around market towns throughout Ireland. They were responsible for the operation of the system that included the workhouses and other relief work. Some guardians were elected by rate-payers, making the system partly democratic. Significantly, women could serve as guardians from 1896.



Page from County Longford Grand Jury Book, 1759
(Longford County Library and Archives)
Leathanach ó Leabhar Mhór-Giúiré Chontae Longfoirt, 1759
(Leabharlann agus Cartlanna Chontae Longfoirt)



Extract from Wicklow Borough Corporation Book, 1662 (Wicklow County Archives)
Sliocht ó Leabhar Bhardas Buirge Chill Mhantáin, 1662 (Chill Mhantáin gContae Cartlanna)

Thosaigh an cineál is luaithe rialtais áitiúil i ndiaidh theacht na nAngla-Normannach sa 12ú haois. Bardais bhuirge a bhí iontu sin, a thugtaí do chathracha agus do bhailte áirithe, le cairteacha ríoga de ghnáth. Ó 1828 i leith, bhí an rialtas bardasach daonlathaithe i bpáirt le bunú coimisiún baile ina lán áiteanna.



A 'grotesque' (a rat emerging from a man's mouth) from the Dublin City Treasurer's Accounts, 1540-1613 (Dublin City Library and Archive)
Rud 'anchúinseach' (luchóg mhór ag teacht amach as béal fir) ó Chuntais Chisteoir Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath, 1540-1613 (Leabharlanna agus Cartlann Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath)

Ard-Ghiúiréithe

Forbraíonn rialtas áitiúil ar an leibhéal contae le méadú ar fheidhmeanna an ard-ghiúiré. Tiarnaí talún ba iad a bhaill, ar a scartheadh an tsirriam dhá uair sa bhliain – Ag an gCarghas agus sa samhradh. Ba é a ról na cásanna a bhí le cur le hatreorú chuig na cúirteanna seisiúin a chinneadh. Níos déanaí, tugadh údarás dó chun rátaí a bhaillú agus oibreacha éagsúla a chheadú, amhail deisiúcháin bhóithre agus droichead, agus tógáil agus cothabháil tithe cúirte agus príosún contae.

Bardaigh Dhlí na mBocht

Bunaíodh boird bardaigh dhlí na mbocht faoin Poor Relief (Ireland) Act 1838. De réir a chéile bhí 163 Aontas Dhlí na mBocht bunaithe thart ar bhailte margaidh ar fud na hÉireann. Bhí siad freagrach as oibriú an chórais ina raibh tithe na mbocht agus obair faoisimh eile. Thoghfhad iocóirí rátaí roinnt bardach, rud a rinne an córas daonlathach i bpáirt. Go suntasach, d'fhéadadh mná fónamh mar bardaigh ó 1896 i leith.



Last Grand Jury of Donegal, 1899 (Donegal County Archives)
Mór-Ghiúiré deireanach Dhún na nGall, 1899, (Cartlanna Chontae Dhún na nGall)





2

The Local Government (Ireland) Act 1898 An tAcht Rialtas Áitiúil (Éire) 1898



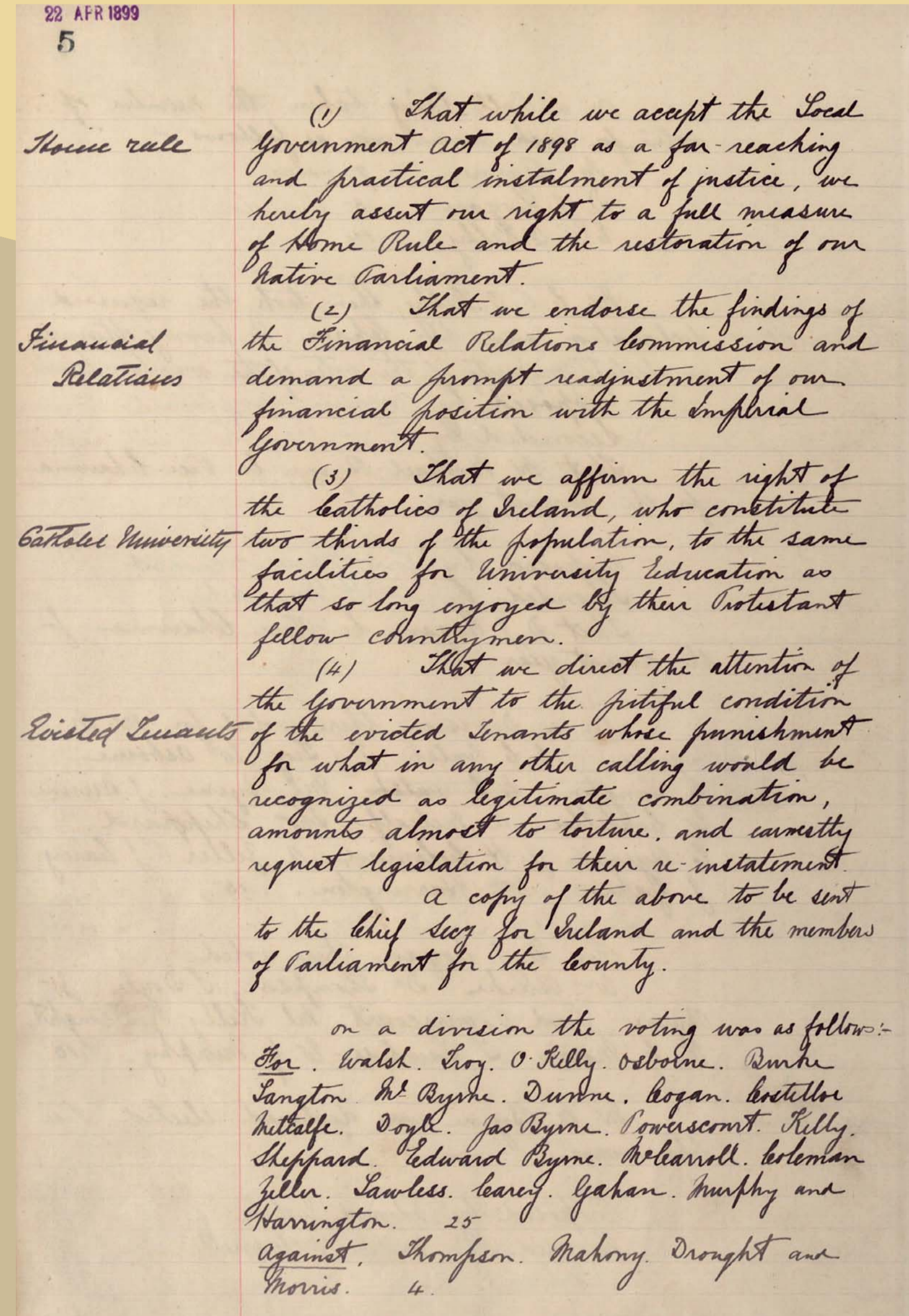
The first members of Galway County Council, with others, 1899 (Galway County Council Archives)
Chéad chomhairle Chomhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe, le daoine eile, 1899 (Cartlanna Chomhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe)

The Local Government (Ireland) Act 1898 completely changed local government. It created three new forms of local authority: county councils, rural district councils and urban district councils. The law established democratic local government at county level, with county councils taking over the administrative functions previously exercised by the grand juries.

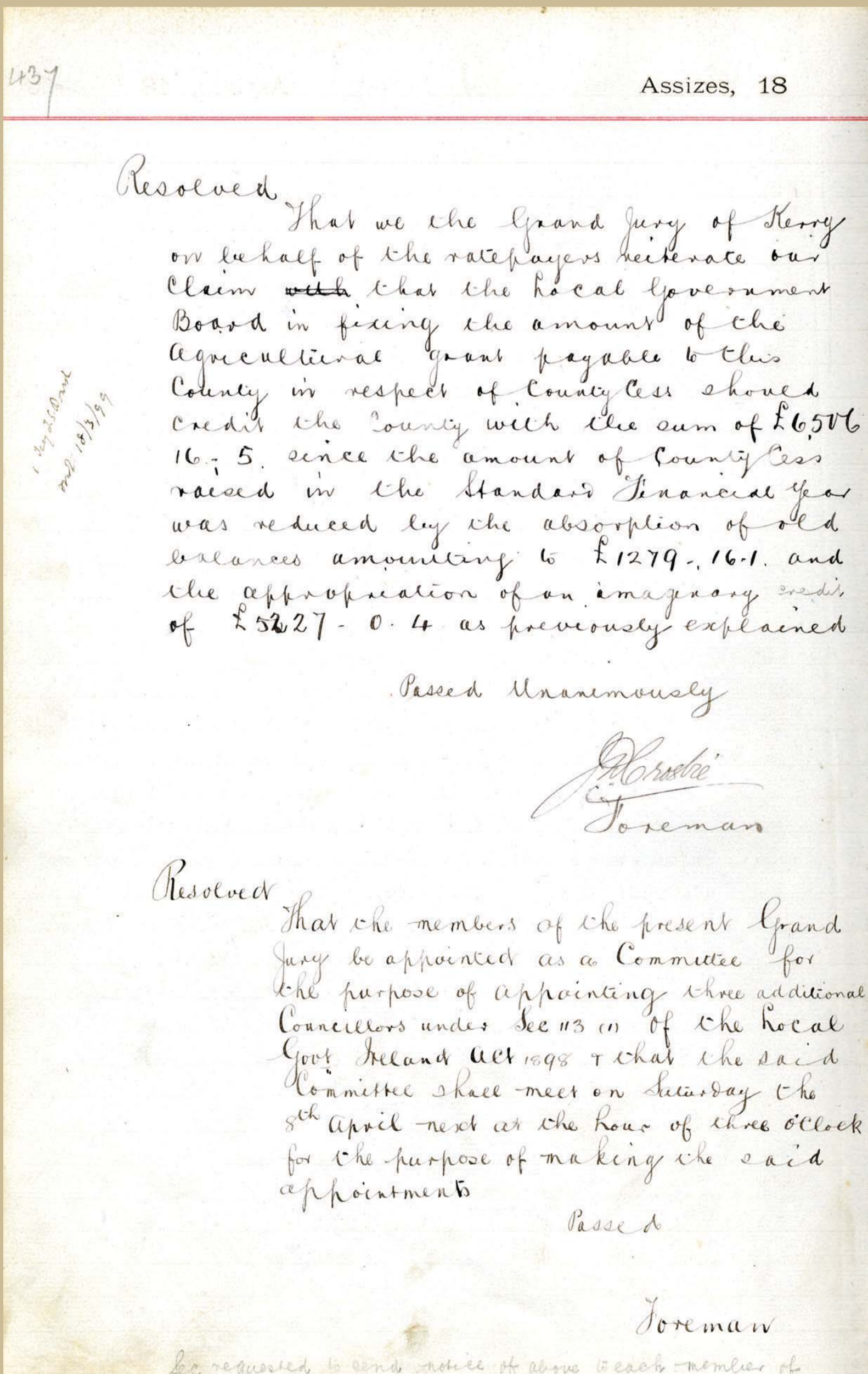
The right to vote

A revolutionary aspect of the new system was that it created a broader franchise. Men over 21 years who were householders, or who rented a portion of a house, valued at a minimum of £10 per year could vote, as could women over 30 years of age who met the same criteria. Women could also contest both rural and urban district council seats. The average annual wage for agricultural labour in Ireland at the time was only £25, so most people could not vote.

Initially the Irish Parliamentary Party was sceptical about the new legislation, seeing it as part of the British policy of 'killing Home Rule with kindness', yet nationalists benefitted from it. Many future parliamentary politicians served as local councillors and built up valuable experience and support networks as a result.



Resolutions passed by Wicklow County Council at its first meeting, 22 April 1899 (Wicklow County Archives)
Rúin a rith Chomhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin ag a céad chruinniú, 22 Aibreán 1899 (Cartlanna Chontae Chill Mhantáin)



The last resolutions passed by County Kerry Grand Jury in the spring of 1899 (Kerry County Archives)
Na rúin dheireanacha a rith Mór-Ghiúire Chontae Chiarraí in earrach 1899 (Cartlanna Chontae Chiarraí)

Athraíodh an rialtas áitiúil go hiomlán leis an Acht Rialtas Áitiúil (Éire) 1898. Cruthaíodh trí chineál údaráis áitiúil leis: comhairlí contae, comhairlí ceantair thuaithe agus comhairlí ceantair uirbigh. Bunaíodh leis an dlí rialtas áitiúil daonlathach ar an leibhéal contae, agus na feidhmeanna riaracháin a rinneadh mór-ghiuiréithe roimh seo á nglacadh ag na comhairlí contae.

Ceart vótála

Gné réabhlóideach den chóras úr ba ea gur cruthaíodh saincheadúnas níos leithne leis. D'fhéadadh fir os cionn 21 bliain d'aois arbh shealbhóirí tí iad, nó a raibh cion de theach á fháil ar cíos acu, dar luach £10 ar a laghad in aghaidh na bliana vóta chaitheamh, agus d'fhéadadh mná os cionn 30 bliain d'aois a chomhlíon na critéir chéanna vóta a chaitheamh. D'fhéadadh mná dul san iomaíocht chomh maith i suíocháin comhairlí ceantair thuaithe agus uirbigh araon. Ní raibh sa mheánphá bliantúil d'oibrí talmhaíochta in Éirinn ag an am ach £25, mar sin ní raibh an chuid is mó de na daoine ábalta vótáil.

Ar dtús bhí Páirtí Parlaiminteach na hÉireann sceiptiúil faoi reachtaíocht, agus d'fhéach siad air mar chuid de bheartas na Breataine 'deireadh a chur le Rialtas Dúchais go cineálta', ach bhí leas á fháil ag náisiúnaíthe as. D'fhóin a lán polaiteoirí parlaiminteacha níos déanaí mar chomhairleoirí áitiúla agus d'fhorbair siad taithí luachmhar agus gréasáin tacaíochta mar thoradh air sin.

Extract from the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898 (Longford County Library and Archives)
Sliocht ón Acht Rialtas Áitiúil (Éire), 1898 (Leabharlann agus Cartlanna Chontae Longfoirt)

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Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898.

A.D. 1898.

PART II.

District Councils and Guardians

Chairman of rural district council or guardians and additional councillors and guardians.

Constitution of chairman of district council and of Town commissioners as justice of the peace.

(e) an elector shall not at the same election vote for the members, whether district councillors or guardians, of a board of guardians for a union in more than one district electoral division in that union.

25.—(1.) The district council of every rural district—

(a) may choose from persons qualified to be councillors of the district not more than three persons, who shall be additional councillors during the term of office of the council by whom the choice is made; and

(b) may annually choose a chairman, and if they think fit a vice-chairman, from among the councillors.

(2.) The first business of the council after any triennial election shall be the consideration of the question of choosing additional councillors.

(3.) A person so chosen by a district council from outside their body as additional councillor shall be a member of the council, and also of the board of guardians of the union comprising the district.

(4.) Nothing in this section shall alter the power of guardians to choose their chairman and vice-chairman.

26.—(1.) Where an urban or rural county district in any county contains a population, according to the last published census for the time being, exceeding five thousand, the chairman of the council for the district shall, unless a woman or personally disqualified by any Act, but subject as hereafter provided by this Act, be during the term of and by virtue of his office a justice of the peace for the county, but, except when sitting as such, shall not be a member of the council.

61 & 62 Vict., c. 37

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A.D. 1898.

PART II.

District Councils and Guardians.

17 & 18 Vict., c. 108.

like manner as if he had been appointed by the Lord Chancellor under section twenty-nine of the Towns Improvement (Ireland) Act, 1854.

(3.) A chairman before acting as justice under this section shall, if he has not already done so, take the oaths required by law to be taken by a justice of the peace.

(4.) The power of the Lord Chancellor under section twenty-nine of the Towns Improvement (Ireland) Act, 1854, to select a commissioner to act as justice of the peace shall cease.

(5.) This section shall apply to a borough not having a separate commission of the peace with the substitution of mayor for chairman, but shall not apply to any other borough.

Powers of District Councils and Guardians.

27.—(1.) Subject to the provisions of this Act there shall be transferred—

(a) to the district council of every county district, the business of any baronial presentment sessions so far as respects their district; and

(b) to the district council of every urban county district, so far as respects their district, the business of the grand jury of the county in relation to public works, the expense of the maintenance of which is not wholly or partly leviable off the county at large; but the said transfer shall only operate so far as the business is not already the business of the district council.

Transfer to district councils of business of baronial presentment sessions and grand jury and extension of powers of urban district councils as to roads.



3

Local Elections Toghcháin Áitiúla

KENNY'S P.R. FRAMES FOR RETURNING OFFICERS' TABLES

MADE OF SELECTED TIMBER, HIGHLY FINISHED AND VARNISHED,
AND FITTED WITH WIRE-HOLDERS FOR REMOVABLE CARDS.



One compartment should be provided for each Candidate whose votes are to be concurrently analysed. 12 compartments are shown in illustration.

Useful for office equipment when not required for election purposes. Each compartment 8 inches deep and 7½ inches wide. 10 inches from front to back.

For each Section of Six Compartments £2 : 5 : 0
Carriage and Packing Extra.

Advertisement for frames for tables for returning officers, 1920 local elections (Donegal County Archives)
Fógra le haghaidh frámaí le haghaidh táblaído chinn chomhairlir, toghcháin áitiúla 1920
(Cartlanna Chontae Dhún na nGall)

The first elections to the county councils and rural district councils took place on 6 April 1899. County councils met for the first time on 22 April of that year. Nationalist candidates won about 75% of the county council seats. Local elections were required to be held every three years, changing to every five years since 1953. However, there were several postponements through the years.

Proportional representation was introduced for the 1920 local elections, with the expectation that it would dilute Sinn Féin support. However, achieving widespread electoral success, the party took control of 25 of the 33 county councils. At the same time, Unionists consolidated their control in north-eastern areas.

The right to vote

In 1935, the franchise was reformed when all men and women over 21 years were granted the right to vote, without any qualification.

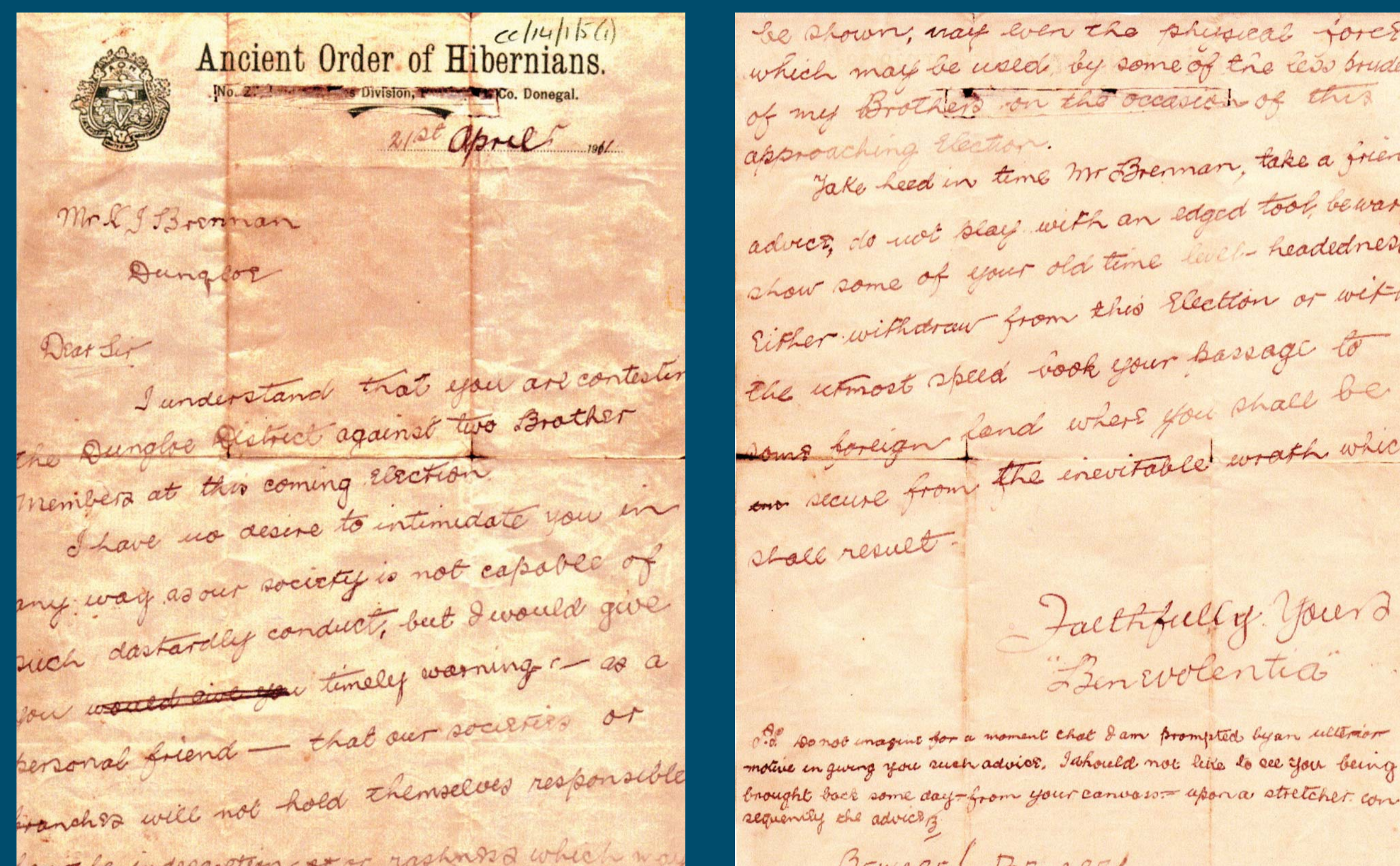
In 1999, the electorate approved a referendum providing constitutional recognition of local government and guaranteeing elections at intervals of five years.

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CORK MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS,
JANUARY, 1920.

Men of Rebel Cork, remember those who died to save our land
Neath the Flag of Pearse and Connolly, prepare to take your stand
Has the blood of Irish Martyr's for your sake been shed in vain
Will the name of good old Rebel Cork be'er disgraced again?
Will you shame the Irish Nation, Ireland's tricolour haul down?
Like the dirty Corporation who brought Asquith to our town
Are the murders of brute Maxwell, cowardly Colthurst's all forgot?
Or George Crosbie's famous plea "only two more to be shot!"
Those false creatures you elected, never voiced the least protest
When the fiends incarnate murdered, Ireland's bravest, and her best
All election's were suspended, for our British tyrants knew
That our people were disgusted with the rotten servile crew
Now the time has come to deal with all the foul and loathsome pack
They have clung to office too long, give the whole damn lot the sack

Sinn Féin leaflet used in 1920 municipal elections in Cork City (Liam de Róiste Papers, Cork City and County Archives)
Bileog de chuid Shinn Féin a úsáideadh i dtoghcháin bharrdasacha 1920 i gCathrach Chorcaí (Páipéir de chuid Liam de Róiste, Cartlanna Chathair agus Chontae Chorcaí)



Ancient Order of Hibernians.
17th April 1911

Dear Sir,
I understand that you are certain the O.A.H. will be against the O.A.H. members at the coming election. I have no desire to intimidate you in any way as our society is not capable of such despicable conduct, but I would give you a timely warning as a personal friend - that our success at the polls will not hold themselves responsible for the introduction of a rotten pack.

It is my hope that you will be able to get some of your O.A.H. members either withdrawn from the election or vote the rotten pack with your passage to some foreign land where you shall be safe from the inevitable wrath which shall result.

Faithfully Yours
Liam de Róiste

Letter from the Ancient Order of Hibernians to J.K. Brennan, Dungloe, County Donegal, a candidate in the 1911 local elections, threatening him if he did not withdraw from the contest. (Donegal County Archives)
An chéad leathanach de litir ó Ord Ársa na nIbiermeach chuig J.K. Brennan, an Clochán Liath, Co. Dhún na nGall, iarrthóir i dtoghcháin áitiúla 1911, inar cuireadh bagairt air gan tarraingt siar ón iomaíocht. (Cartlanna Chontae Dhún na nGall)

Electoral Roll, 1899 (Dublin City Library and Archive)
An Rolla Toghthóirí (Leabharlanna agus Cartlann Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath)

BOROUGH OF THE CITY OF DUBLIN.

Register of Parliamentary and Local Government Voters, 1899-1900.

Division I.—College Green.

Rated Occupiers and Inhabitant Householders.

Arran Quay Ward Electoral Division—No. 1.

Name or Description of Premises rated, Street, Lane, or other like Place in the Borough, and No. (if any) of the House where the Property is situate.	Nature of Qualification, whether Rated Occupier or Inhabitant Householder, and Rated Value of Premises.	Surname and Christian Name.	No.
A			
Aberdeen street	Inhabitant Householder	Edward Spear	1
house and yard	Inhabitant Householder	John Yangan	2
house from house, 20 Finglatter st.	Inhabitant Householder	Patrick Nevin	3
house and yard	Inhabitant Householder	Mathew Doran	4
house and yard	Inhabitant Householder	John Quish	5
top back room	Inhabitant Householder	James Fox	6
house and yard	Inhabitant Householder	Laurence Conroy	7
house and yard	Inhabitant Householder	Alexander Sharpe	8
house and yard	Inhabitant Householder	Joseph Delamore	9
house and yard	Inhabitant Householder	John Moore	10
house and yard	Inhabitant Householder	John Savage	11
house and yard	Inhabitant Householder	John Savage	12
house and yard	Inhabitant Householder	William Fagan	13

Tionóladh na chéad toghcháin chun na gcomhairlí contae agus na gcomhairlí ceantair thuaithe an 6 Aibreán 1899. Thiocfadh formhór na gcomhairlí contae le chéile den chéad uair ar an 22 Aibreán den bhliain sin. Bhuaiigh iarrthóirí arbh náisiúnaigh iad thart ar 75% de shuíochán na gcomhairlí contae. Bhíodh gá le toghcháin áitiúla a thionóil gach trí bliana, ag athrú ansin go gach cúig bliana ó 1953 i leith. Mar sin féin, cuireadh na toghcháin siar roinnt uaireanta le linn na mblianta.

Tugadh ionadaíocht chionmhar isteach le haghaidh na dtoghcháin áitiúil in 1920, ag súil go laghdófaí tacaíocht Shinn Féin leis. Agus rath toghchánach forleathan baínte amach acu, áfach, ghlac an páirtí ceannas ar 25 ceann den 33 comhairle contae. Ag an am céanna, chomhdhlúthaigh na hAontachtaithe a smacht i limistéir thoir thuaidh.

Ceart vótála

In 1935, rinneadh an saincheadúnas a athchóiriú nuair a tugadh an cheart chun vótála do gach fear agus bean os cionn 21 bliain d'aois, gan cáilíocht ar bith.

In 1999, d'fhaomh na toghthóirí reifreann inar soláthraíodh aitheantas ar an rialtas áitiúil sa bhunreacht agus inar ráthaíodh toghcháin ag eitraimh cúig bliana.



5

Women in Local Government Mná sa Rialtas Áitiúil



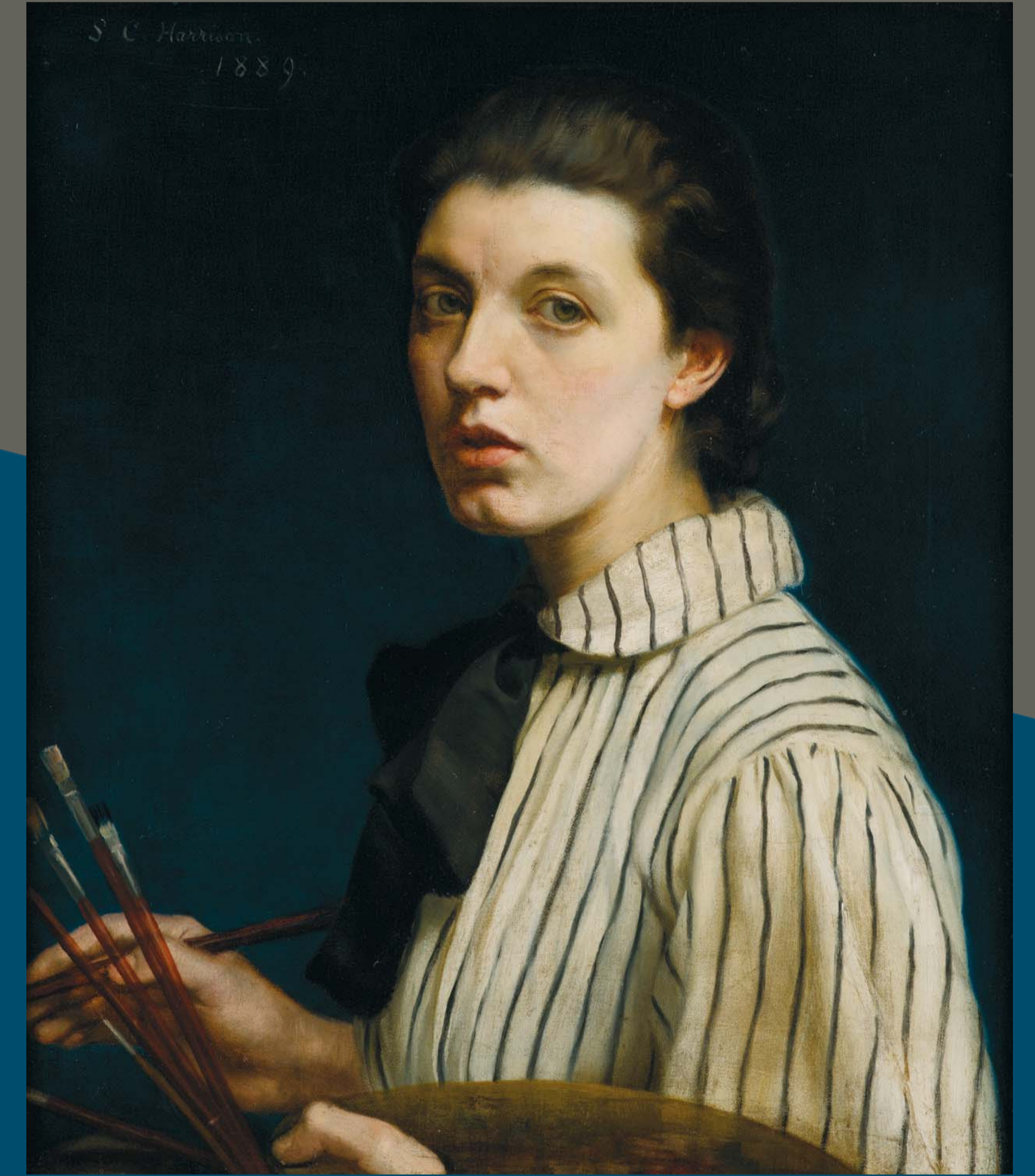
The Honourable Albinia Broderick at the 1923 general election count in Tralee (The Kerryman Photographic Archive, Kerry County Archives)
An Duine Uasal Albinia Broderick ag áireamh olltoghchán 1923 i dTrá Lí (Cartlann Ghrianghrafadóireachta The Kerryman, Cartlanna Chontae Chiarraí)

Women over 30 years, who were householders or who rented a portion of a house, valued at a minimum of £10 per year could vote in local elections under the 1898 Act and could stand for election to district councils. In 1899, 31 were elected to rural district councils and 4 to urban district councils. It was not until 1918 that women could vote in national elections.

The earliest woman elected to Dublin City Council was the artist and suffragist, Sarah Cecilia Harrison in 1912. Also in 1912, Dr Mary Strangman, another activist, was elected to Waterford Corporation.

In the early years, some of the women elected to local authorities were members of Cumann na mBan and passionate campaigners. Lady Albinia Broderick, the first woman elected to Kerry County Council in 1920, was a republican and radical. One of the longest serving female prisoners of the 1916 period, Ellen Ryan from Tomcoole, Taghmon was the first woman elected to Wexford County Council in 1928. Caitlín Bean Uí Chléirigh, widow of Tom Clarke (executed leader of the 1916 Rising) became the first female Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1939.

The number of female councillors has been low over the years. Provisions in the 2012 Electoral Amendment (Political Funding) Act ensure that more female candidates are nominated for election.



Sarah Cecilia Harrison, 'Self Portrait', 1928-54 (The Martin Ryan (Taghmon) Collection, Wexford County Archive)
Sarah Cecilia Harrison, 'Féimphortráid' (Uimh. chlárálthe 1604, bailiúchán & © Hugh Lane Gallery, Baile Átha Cliath)

D'fhéadadh mná os cionn 30 bliain d'aois arbh shealbhóirí tí iad, nó a raibh cion de theach á fháil ar cíos acu, dar luach £10 ar a laghad in aghaidh na bliana vótáil i dtoghcháin áitiúla faoi Acht 1898 agus d'fhéadfadh siad seasamh sna toghcháin do na comhairlí ceantair. In 1899, toghadh 31 bean i gcomhairlí ceantair thuaithe agus 4 bhean i gcomhairlí ceantair uirbigh. Ní raibh cead ag mná vótáil sna toghcháin náisiúnta go dtí 1918.

Ba í Sarah Cecilia Harrison an chéad bhean a toghadh chun Chomhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath in 1912. In 1912 chomh maith, toghadh an Dr Mary Strangman, gníomhaí eile, chun Bhardas Phort Láirge.

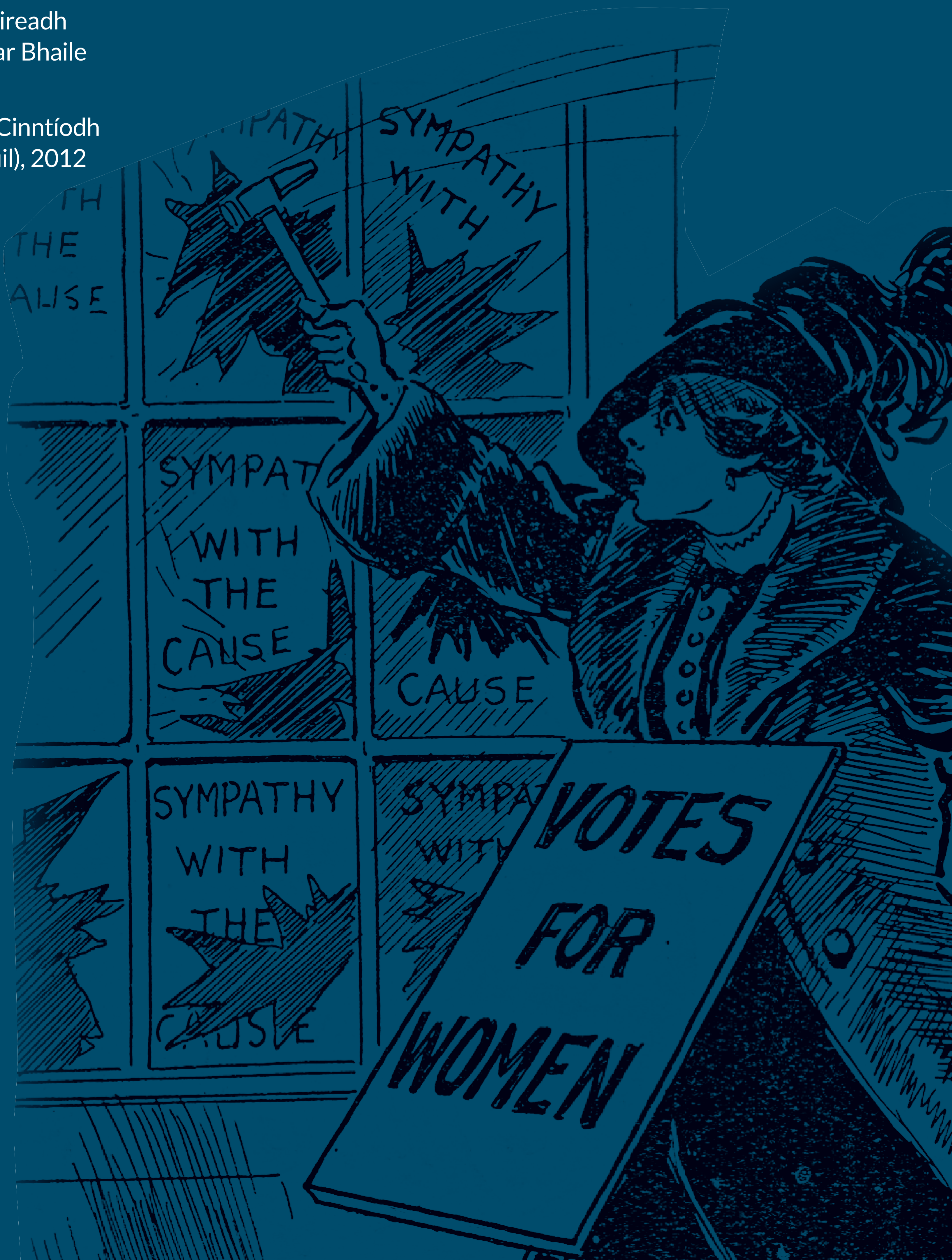
Sna luathbhlianta, ba chomhaltaí de Chumann na mBan agus mná feachtais paiseanta iad cuid de na mná a toghadh chun na n-údarás áitiúil. Poblachtach agus radacaí ba ea an Bhean Uasal Albinia Broderick, an chéad bhean a thoghadh ar Chomhairle Contae Chiarraí in 1920. Ba í Ellen Ryan ó Thuaim Chúil, Teach Munna, duine de na ban-phríosúnaigh is faide sa phríosún ó ré 1916, an chéad duine a toghadh chun Chomhairle Contae Loch Garman in 1928. Ba í Caitlín Bean Uí Chléirigh, baintreach mná Thomáis Uí Chléirigh (ceannaire Éirí Amach 1916 a cuireadh chun báis) an chéad bhean a ndearnadh Ard-Mhéara ar Bhaile Átha Cliath di in 1939.

Bhí líon na mban-chomhairleoirí íseal thar na blianta. Cinntíodh leis na forálacha san Acht Toghcháin (Maoiniú Polaitiúil), 2012 go ndéantar níos mó ban a ainmniú lena dtoghadh.



Ellen Ryan, member of Wexford County Council, 1928-54 (The Martin Ryan (Taghmon) Collection, Wexford County Archive)
Ellen Ryan, an triú duine ar chlé, comhalta de Chomhairle Contae Loch Garman, 1928-54 (Bailiúchán Martin Ryan (Teach Munna), Cartlann Chontae Loch Garman)

Nothing for their Panes - Votes for Women (Dublin City Council Library and Archive)
'Nothing for their Panes - Votes for Women' (Leabharlanna agus Cartlann Chomhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath)





6

Borough and District Councils Comhairlí Buirge agus Ceantair



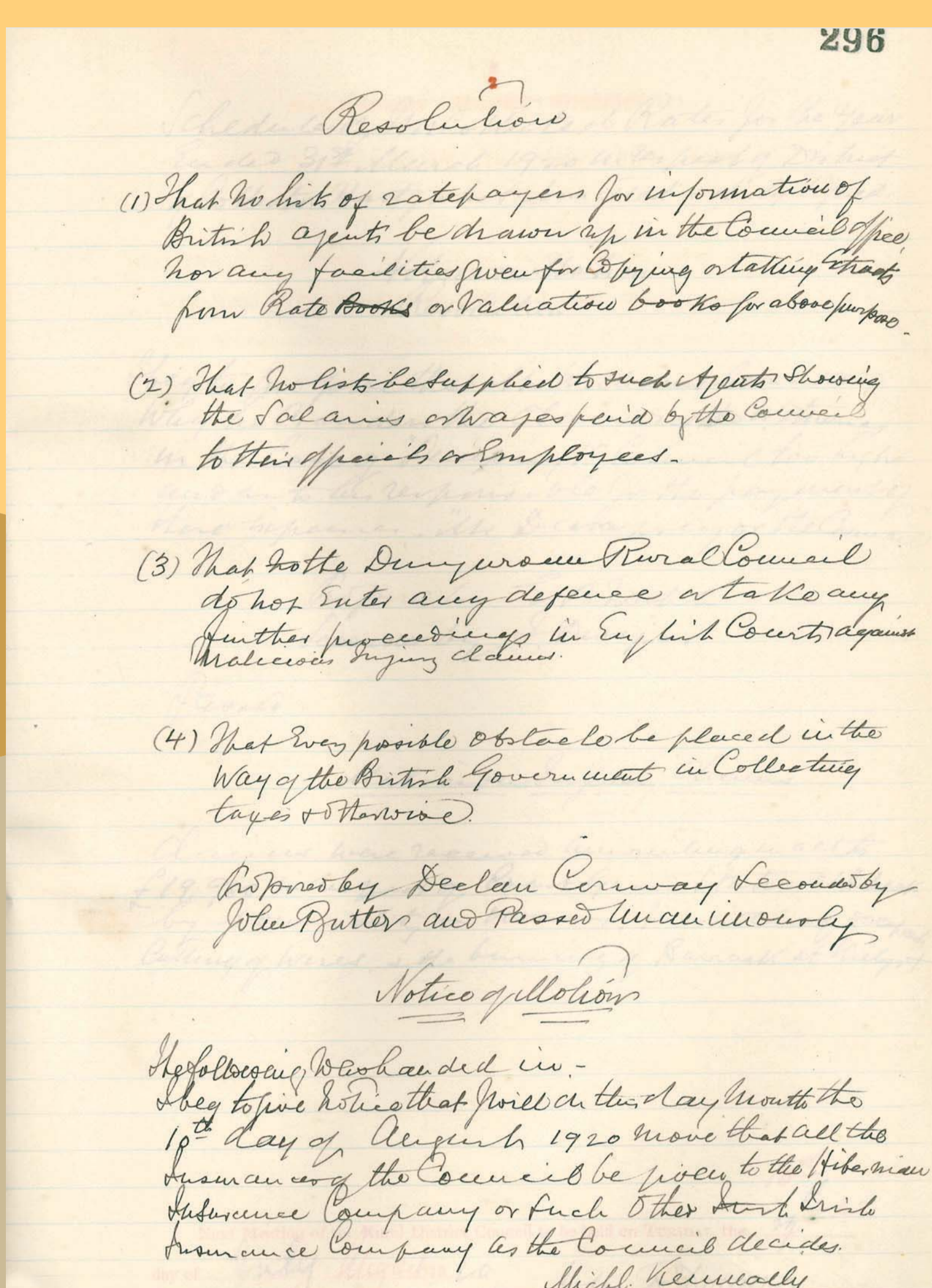
Charter of King James II to Drogheda Corporation, 1687 (Louth County Archives)
Cairt a bhronn Rí Shearlais I ar Bhardas Phort Láirge, an 26 Bealtaine 1626 (Cartlanna Chontae Phort Láirge)

Many towns in Ireland were administered by a borough council or corporation, which dealt with sanitation, lighting, roads and public amenities. There were also five royal boroughs: Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick and Waterford. These had corporations that were granted under royal charters.

Changes

The Municipal Corporations (Ireland) Act, 1840 dissolved 58 corporations and 38 boroughs. The Towns Improvement (Ireland) Act, 1854 introduced town commissions with expanded responsibilities for sanitation and other improvements. The Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878 gave the poor law unions and town commissions the status of sanitary authorities.

The 1898 Act sought to rationalise the system of local government. Rural district councils were established and included towns that did not have urban sanitary authorities. Some town commissions became urban district councils. Further rationalisation was introduced under the Local Government Act, 1925 which abolished rural district councils. The most recent reforms came in 2014 when 80 town councils were abolished.



Resolutions refusing to co-operate with the British government passed by Dungarvan Rural District Council, 13 July 1920 (Waterford City and County Archives)
Rith Comhairle Ceantair Thuaithe Dhún Garbháin rúin lenar diúltaithead comhoibriú le rialtas na Breataine, an 13 Iúil 1920 (Cartlanna Chontae agus Chathair Phort Láirge)



Drogheda Corporation c. 1900 (Louth County Archives)
Bardas Dhroichead Átha c. 1900 (Cartlanna Chontae Lú)

Bhíodh a lán bailte in Éirinn a riar ag comhairle nó bardas buirge, a dhéileádh le sláintíocht, soilsiú, bóithre agus taitneamhachtaí poiblí. Bhí cúig bardas ríoga ann chomh maith: Baile Átha Cliath, Corcaigh, Gaillimh, Luimneach agus Port Láirge. Bhíodh bardais acu siúd a thugtaí faoi chairteacha ríoga.

Athruithe

Leis an Municipal Corporations (Ireland) Act, 1840 rinneadh 58 bardas agus 38 buirge a lánscóir. Leis an Towns Improvement (Ireland) Act, 1854 tugadh isteach coimisiúin bhaile lenar bhain freagrachtaí leathnaithe maidir le sláintíocht agus feabhsuithe eile. Leis an Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878 tugadh an stádas um údarais sláintíochta d'aontais dhli na mbocht agus do choimisiúin bhaile.

Féachadh in Acht 1898 leis an gcóras rialtais áitiúil a réasúnú. Bunaíodh comhairlí ceantair thuaithe agus áiríodh leo bailte nach raibh údarais sláintíochta uirbigh iontu. Rinneadh comhairle ceantair uirbigh de roinnt coimisiún baile. Tugadh réasúnú breise isteach faoin Acht Rialtais Áitiúil, 1925 lenar cealaíodh comhairlí ceantair thuaithe. Rinneadh na hathchóirithe is déanaí in 2014 i gcás gur cuireadh 80 comhairle baile ar ceal.

Fingal County Council Chamber, Swords (Fingal County Council)
Disheomra Chontae Fhine Gall, Sord (Mar chúirtéis ó Chomhairle Contae Fhine Gall)





7

Administration and Finance Riarachán agus Airgeadas



Management and staff of Donegal County Council, 1960s (Donegal County Archives)
Lucht bainistíochta agus Bailí Foirne Chomhairle Contae Dhún na nGall, 1960í (Cartlanna Chontae Dhún na nGall Chontae)

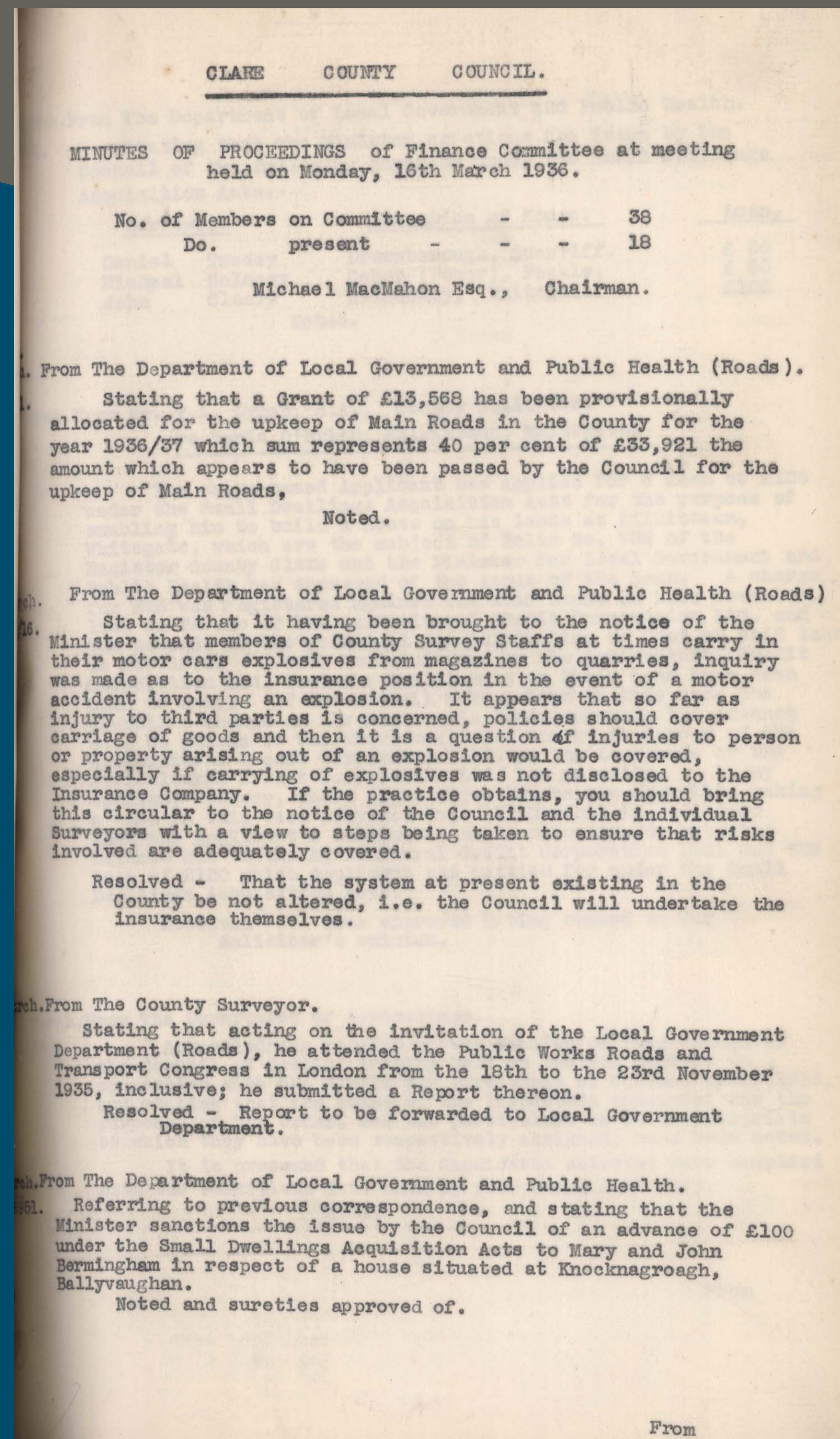
Following the 1899 elections, county councils' monthly meetings were, for the first time, held in public, providing a firm basis for democracy. The new councils were financed by means of rates levied equally across all parts of the county, a fair determination which helped to gain support for the new system of local government.

Administration was needed to implement the council's decisions, and paid officials were recruited for this purpose. For instance, by 1900 Galway County Council had 21 paid officers – all men – headed by the county secretary and including a sheriff and sub-sheriff; 8 surveyors; 4 coroners; 4 clerks; and 2 solicitors. As local authorities evolved over the years and acquired more functions, additional staff were recruited; the 1963 Planning Act created a need for planners for example.

Administration in both city and county councils was consolidated under the City and County Management Acts, 1929-40, leading to a defined partnership between elected councillors and officials.



Sir Henry Campbell, Town Clerk of Dublin, 1893-1920. He is mentioned in James Joyce's Ulysses. (Dublin City Library and Archive)
Sir Henry Campbell, Cláireach Baile Bhaile Átha Cliath, 1893-1920. Tá sé luaite in Ulysses le James Joyce. (Leabharlanna agus Cartlann Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath)



Extract from the minutes of the Finance Committee, Clare County Council, 18 March 1936. Note the reference to explosives being carried by staff in their cars! (Clare County Archives)

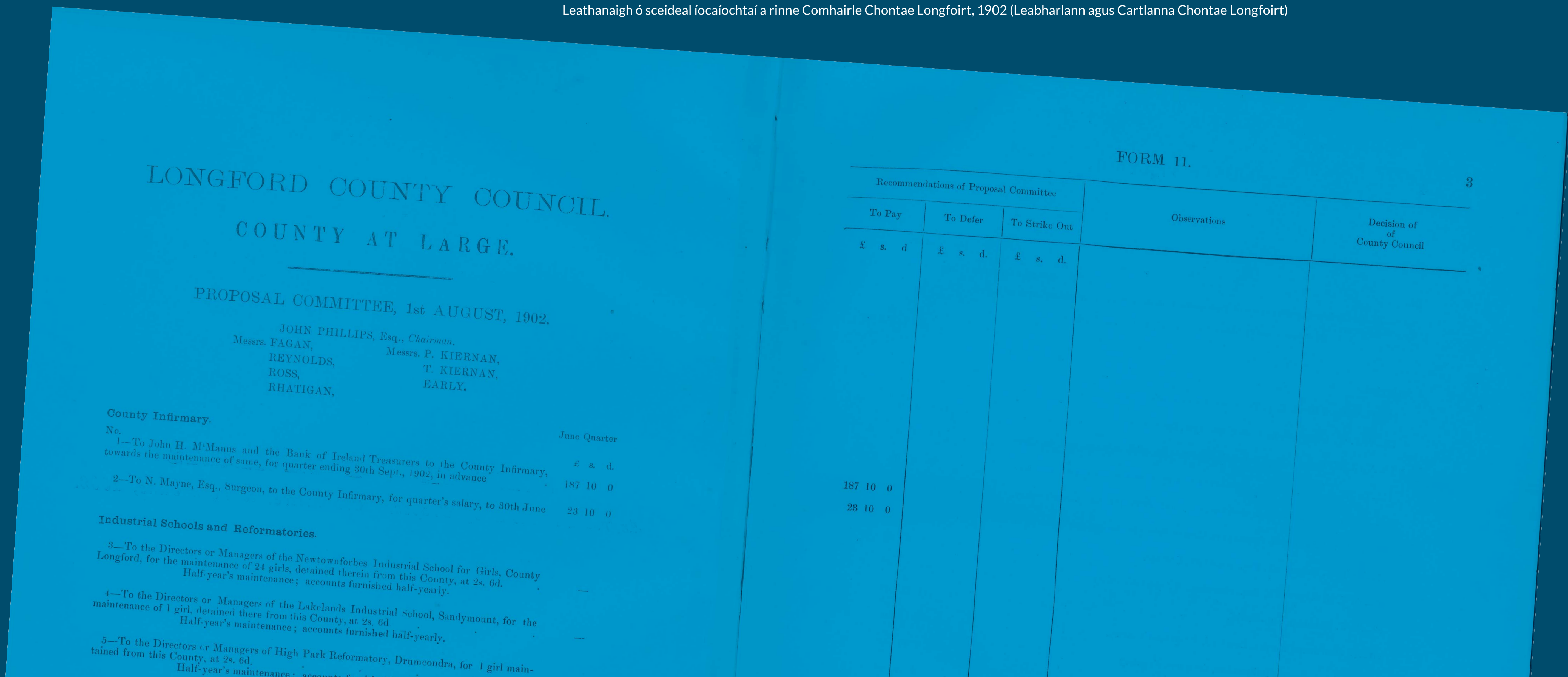
Leathanach ó mhiontuairiscí an Choiste Airgeadais, Comhairle Contae an Chláir, an 18 Márta 1936. Tagraítear sa nóta do pléascáin a biodh á n-iampar ag bailí foirne ina gcaranna! (Cartlanna Chontae an Chláir)

I ndiaidh thoghcháin 1899, thionóladh cruinnithe míosúla comhairlí contae go poiblí, den chéad uair, rud a sholáthar bonn daingean don daonlathas. Bhíodh na comhairlí úra maoinithe trí bhíthin rátaí a thabhaí go cothrom ar gach cuid den chontae, cinneadh cóir a chuidigh le tacaíocht a fháil don chóras úr um rialtas áitiúil.

Bhíodh lucht riaracháin de dhíth chun cinntí na comhairle a chur chun feidhme, agus dhéantaí oifigigh íoctha a earcú chun na críche sin. Mar shampla, faoi 1900 bhí 21 oifigeach íoctha ag Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe – fir ar fad – faoi stiúir an rúnaí contae agus ar a raibh sirriam agus foshirriam; 8 suirbhéir; 4 chróinéir; 4 chléireach; agus 2 atur na ina measc. Mar gur fhorbair údarás áitiúla thar na blianta agus go bhfuair siad níos mó feidhmeanna, earcaíodh bailí foirne bhreise; le hAcht um Pleanáil 1963 cruthaíodh riachtanas le haghaidh pleanálaithe mar shampla.

Bhí cúrsaí riaracháin sna comhairlí cathrach agus contae araon comhdhlúite faoi City and County Management Acts 1929-40, rud a raibh compháirtíocht sainithe idir comhairleoirí tofa agus oifigigh mar thoradh air.

Pages from a schedule of payments made by Longford County Council, 1902 (Longford County Library and Archive)
Leathanaigh ó sceideal íocaíochtaí a rinne Comhairle Chontae Longfoirt, 1902 (Leabharlann agus Cartlanna Chontae Longfoirt)



LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL,
COUNTY AT LARGE.

PROPOSAL COMMITTEE, 1st AUGUST, 1902.
JOHN PHILLIPS, Esq., Chairman,
Messrs. FARAN, Messrs. F. KIERANAN,
REYNOLDS, T. KIERANAN,
ROSS, C. KIERANAN,
RHATHGAN, EARLY.

County Infirmary. June Quarter

1.—To John H. McManus and the Bank of Ireland, Debtors to the County Infirmary, towards the maintenance of same, for quarter ending 30th Sept., 1902, in advance. 187 10 0

2.—To N. Mayne, Esq., Surgeon, to the County Infirmary, for quarter's salary, to 30th June. 28 10 0

Industrial Schools and Reformatories

3.—To the Directors or Managers of the Newtownforbes Industrial School for Girls, County Longford, for the maintenance of 24 girls, detained therein from this County, at 2s. 6d. Half-year's maintenance; accounts furnished half-yearly. —

4.—To the Directors or Managers of the Laleham Industrial School, Slough, for the maintenance of 1 girl, detained there from this County, at 2s. 6d. Half-year's maintenance; accounts furnished half-yearly. —

5.—To the Directors or Managers of High Park Reformatory, Drogheda, for 1 girl detained from this County, at 2s. 6d. Half-year's maintenance; accounts furnished half-yearly. —

FORM 11.

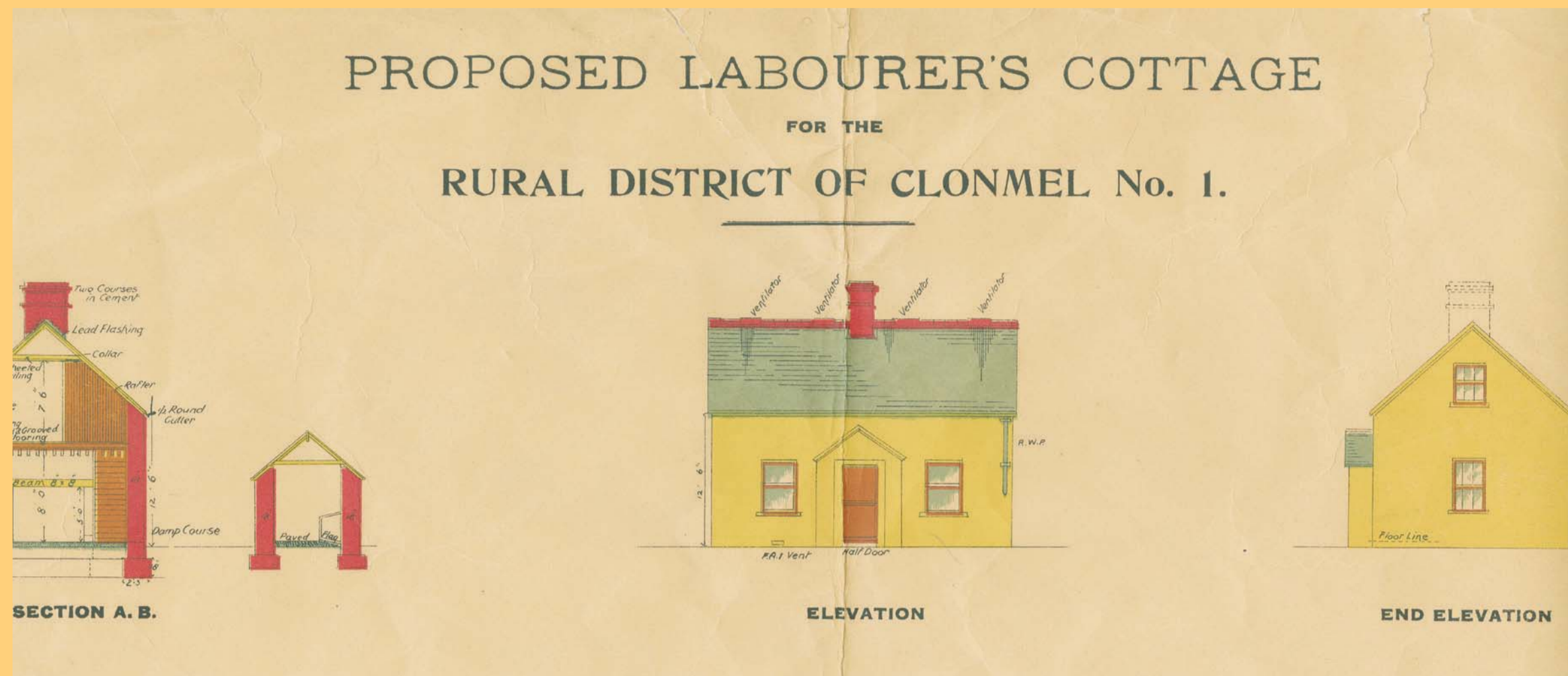
Recommendations of Proposal Committee

To Pay	To Debit	To Strike Out	Observations	Division of County Council
£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		



8

Roads, Housing, Motoring and Emergency Services Bóithre, Tithíocht, Gluaisteánaíocht agus Seirbhísí Éigeandála



Plans for a labourer's cottage in Clonmel Rural District (Tipperary County Archives)
Pleananna le haghaidh teachín oibrí i gCeantar Tuaithe Chluain Meala (Cartlanna Chontae Thiobraid Árann)

A primary function of county councils has been to build and maintain roads and associated infrastructure, such as piers and bridges. They also provide street lighting, road safety measures and the winter road gritting programme, together with a range of related ancillary services.

Laws enacted between 1868 and 1890 provided for the construction of local authority housing. It was originally the responsibility of borough councils and poor law guardians. Later, rural district councils and after them, county councils, took on the design, construction and maintenance of social houses. Councils also administer a range of government schemes providing mortgages, loans, grants and financial assistance to those with a variety of complex housing requirements.

Under the Motor Car Act, 1903 local authorities were given responsibility for motor vehicle registration, the administration of motor tax and the issuing of driver's licenses. With computerisation and legislative changes, they no longer have responsibility for the latter.

Since legislation in 1940, local authorities have provided essential fire-fighting, fire safety, fire prevention, building control and emergency services. Services range from dealing with simple chimney fires to major environmental disasters.



Thomas Brannigan with Merryweather fire engine, Dundalk, 1930s (Louth County Archives)
Thomas Brannigan, inneall dóiteáin Merryweather, Dún Dealgan, 1930í (Cartlanna Chontae Lú)



Building local authority housing in Dundalk, 1950 (Louth County Archives)
Ag tógáil tithé údaráis áitiúil i nDún Dealgan, 1950 (Cartlanna Chontae Lú)

REGISTER OF COUNTY (or County Borough)		MOTOR CARS	
No. of Motor Car	Name of Proprietor	Make	Year
TI 351	Liam O'Connell, 100 St. Mary's St. Dundalk	Private car	1915
TI 352	James O'Connell, 100 St. Mary's St. Dundalk	Private car	1915
TI 353	James O'Connell, 100 St. Mary's St. Dundalk	Private car	1915
TI 354	James O'Connell, 100 St. Mary's St. Dundalk	Private car	1915
TI 355	James O'Connell, 100 St. Mary's St. Dundalk	Private car	1915
TI 356	James O'Connell, 100 St. Mary's St. Dundalk	Private car	1915

Extract from a register of motor cars, Limerick City Council, 1915 (Limerick Archives)
Sliocht ó chlár mótar, Comhairle Contae Luimnigh, 1915 (Cartlanna Luimnigh)

Ba é ceann de na príomhfheidhmeanna a bhí ag comhairlí contae bóithre agus bonneagar gaolmhara, anmhail piaraí agus droichid a chothabháil. Soláthraíonn siad soilsiú sráide, bearta sábháilteachta bóithre agus clár leata grin don gheimhreadh, mar aon le réimse seirbhísí coimhdeacha gaolmhara.

Rinneadh foráil i ndlíthe a achtaíodh idir 1868 agus 1890 i leith tithíocht údaráis áitiúil a thógáil. Ba fhreagracht de chuid na gcomhairle bardais agus na bhardaigh dhlí na mbocht é ar dtús. Níos déanaí, ghlac comhairlí ceantair tuaithe agus ina dhiaidh sin, comhairlí contae, freagracht as tithé sóisialta a dhearadh, a thógáil agus a chothabháil. Riarann comhairlí réimse scéimeanna rialtais chomh maith lena soláthraítear morgáistí, iasachtaí, deontais agus cúnaimh airgeadais dóibh siúd ag a bhfuil riachtanais chasta éagsúla tithíochta.

Faoin Motor Car Act, 1903 tugadh an fhreagracht do na húdaráis áitiúla as mótarfeithiclí a chlárú, mótarcháin a riar, agus ceadúnais tiománaithe a eisiúint. Leis an ríomhairiú agus athruithe reachtacha, níl an fhreagracht acu a thuilleadh as ceadúnais tiománaithe a eisiúint.

Ó reachtáíocht in 1940, sholáthair údaráis áitiúla seirbhísí riachtanacha comhraic dóiteáin, sábháilteachta dóiteáin, coisc dóiteáin, rialaithe foirgníochta agus seirbhísí éigeandála. Tá raon na seirbhísí ó bheith ag débileáil le tinte simplí simléir go mórtubaistí comhshaoil.

Rucky Hill, Dundalk - Carrickmacross Road improvement scheme, 1938 (Louth County Archives)
Rucky Hill, Dún Dealgan - Scéim feabhsúcháin Bhóthar Charrraig Machaire Rois, 1938 (Cartlanna Chontae Lú)





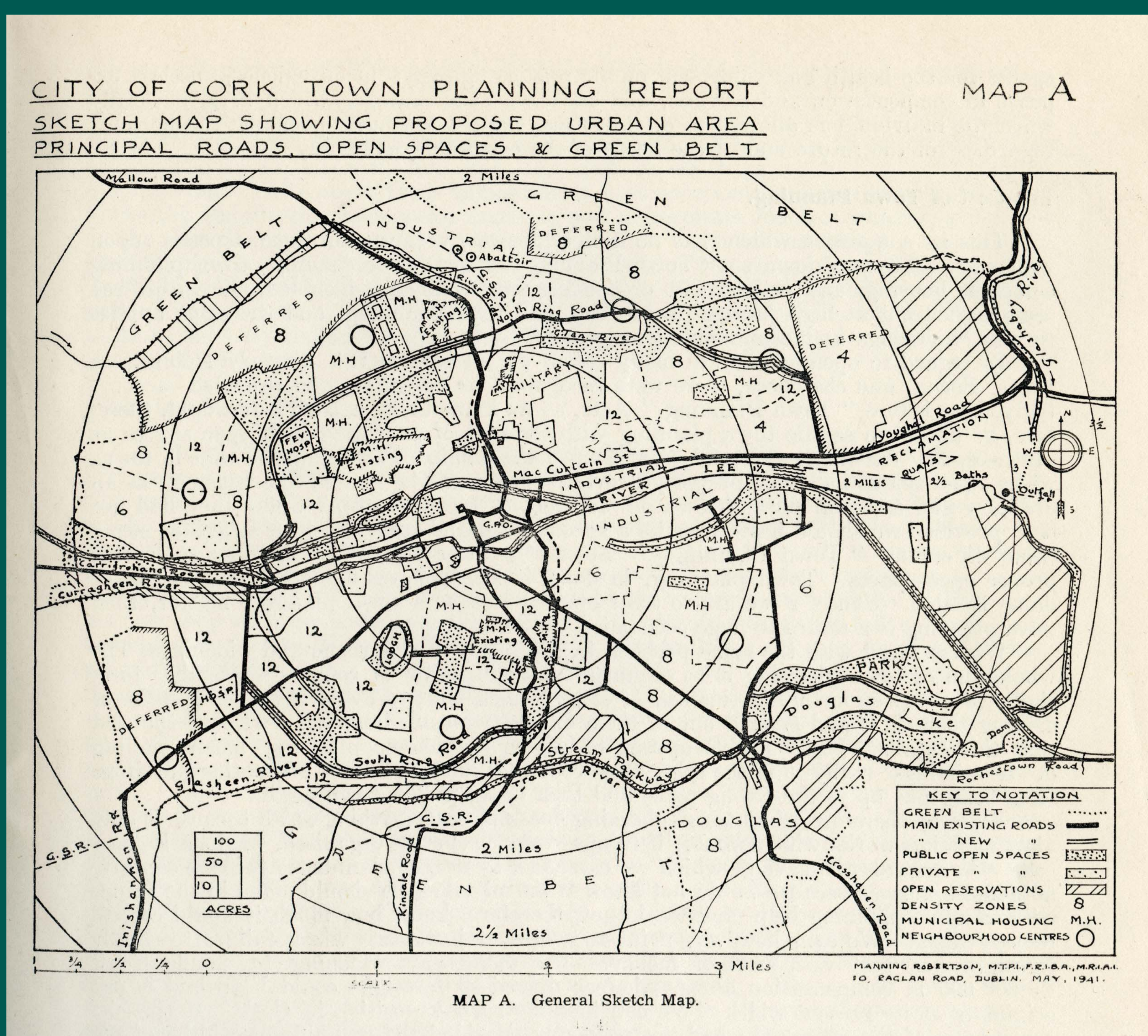
9

Environment and Planning Comhshaol agus Pleanáil

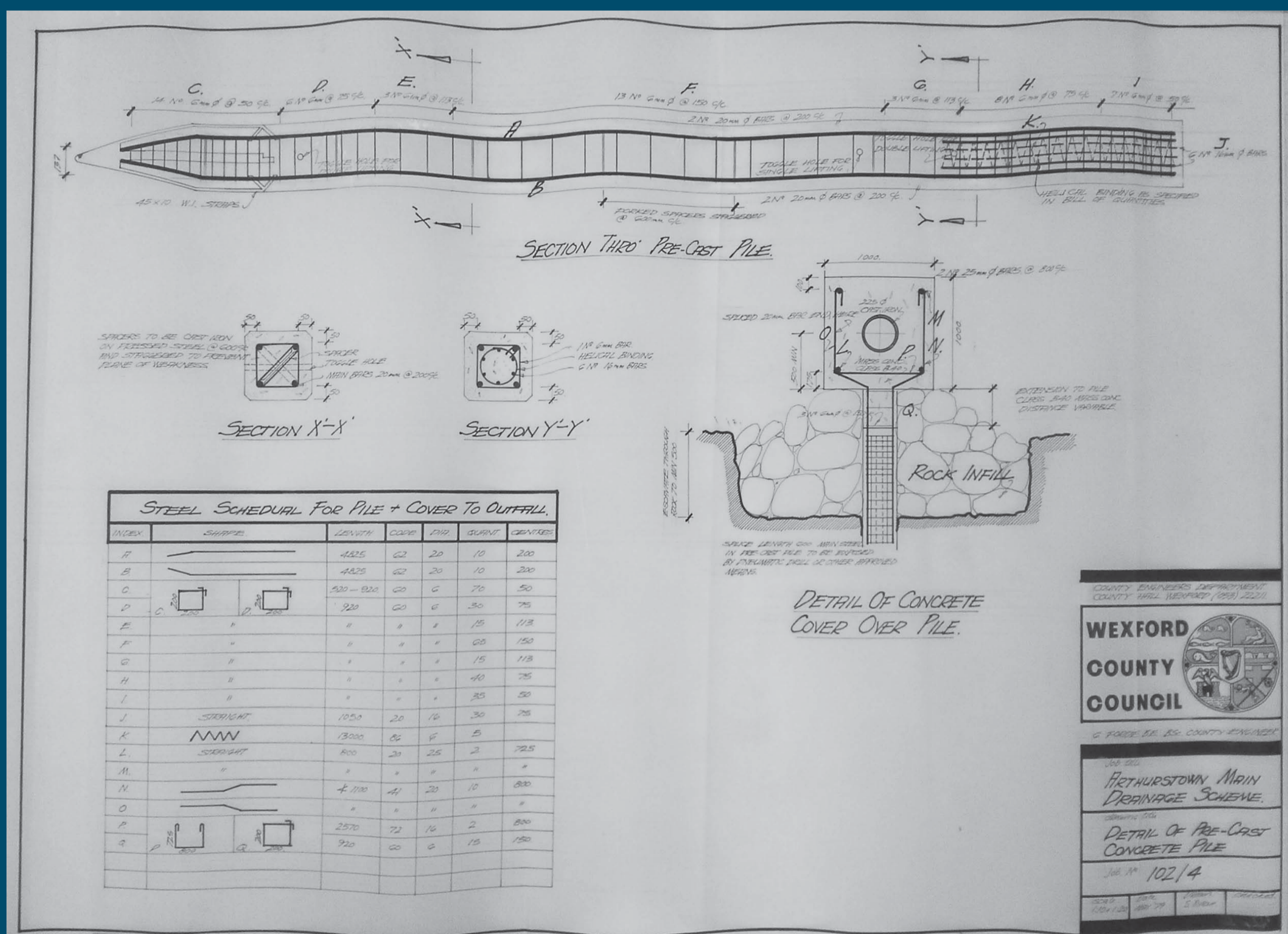
Widespread disease led to the introduction of the Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878. It aimed to improve living conditions, sanitation and water quality and required enormous effort from local authorities in the early years. The services it created have evolved into the sanitary and environmental services which we take for granted today.

Activities progressed from originally addressing water supply, sewerage, infectious diseases, nuisances, overcrowded houses and burial grounds to eventually include functions relating to monitoring water quality, water conservation, pollution control, waste management, recycling, beaches and water safety. Since 2014 the provision and maintenance of public water and waste water services have been transferred to the national water utility, Irish Water.

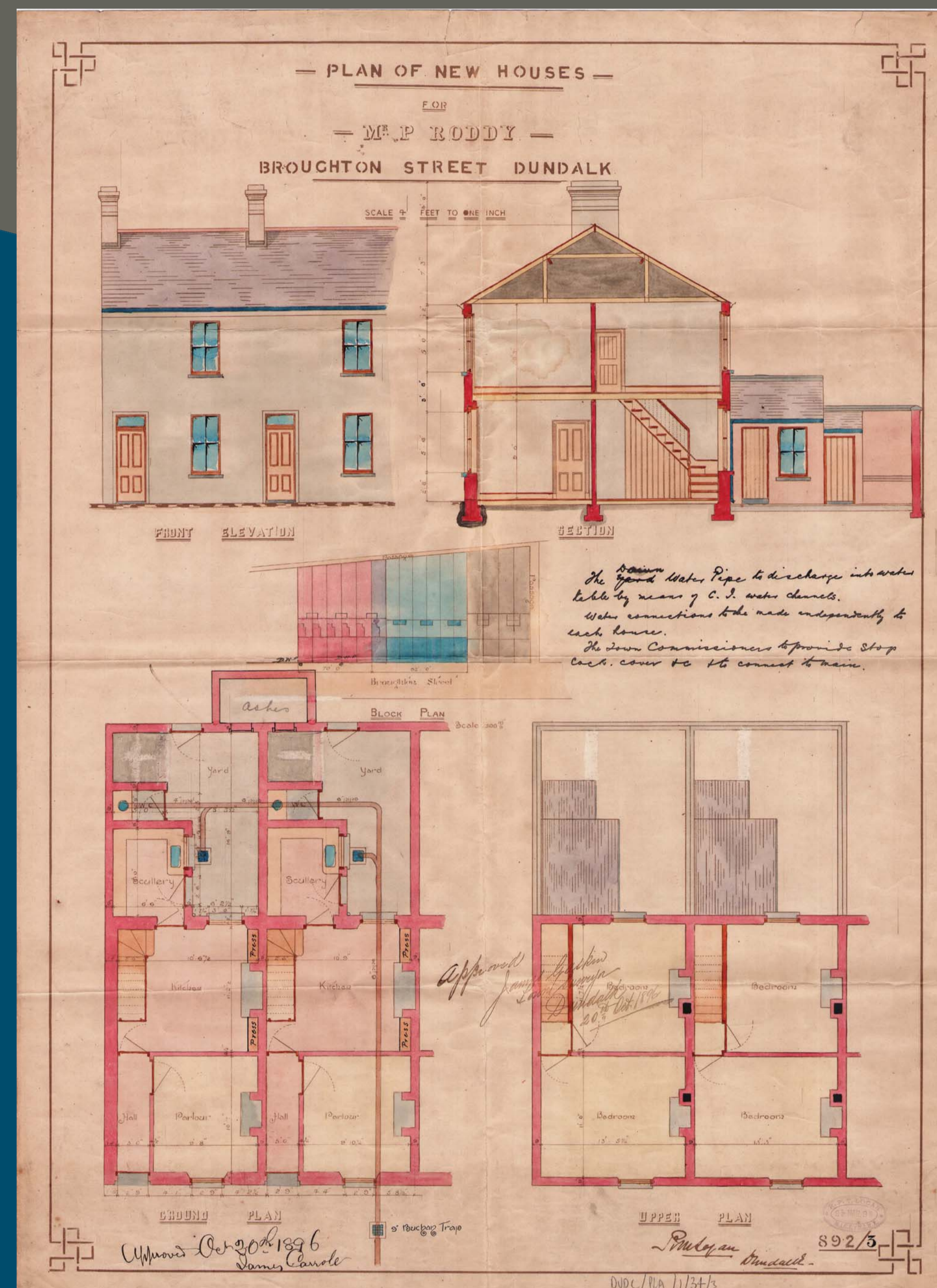
While several planning measures existed under the Public Health Acts and Housing Acts, the 1934 Town and Regional Planning Act was the first legislation dedicated solely to planning. Not considered a success, it was eventually replaced by the Planning and Development Act, 1963 and again by the Planning and Development Acts and Regulations 2000-2018. Planning has evolved from the early concerns of locating houses on busy roads to regulating complex and sustainable developments.



Cork City town planning report, 1941 (Cork City and County Archives)
Tuarascáil pleanála baile Chathair Chorcaí, 1941 (Cartlanna Chathrach agus Chontae Chorcaigh)



Drawing of part of Arthurstown Main Drainage Scheme, County Wexford, 1979 (Wexford County Archive)
Líniócht de chuid de Phríomhsceim Drainála Cholmáin, Co. Loch Garman, 1979 (Cartlann Chontae Loch Garman)



Plans for new houses in Dundalk, 1896 (Louth County Archives)
Pleananna le haghaidh tithe úra i nDún Dealgan, 1896 (Cartlanna Chontae Lú)

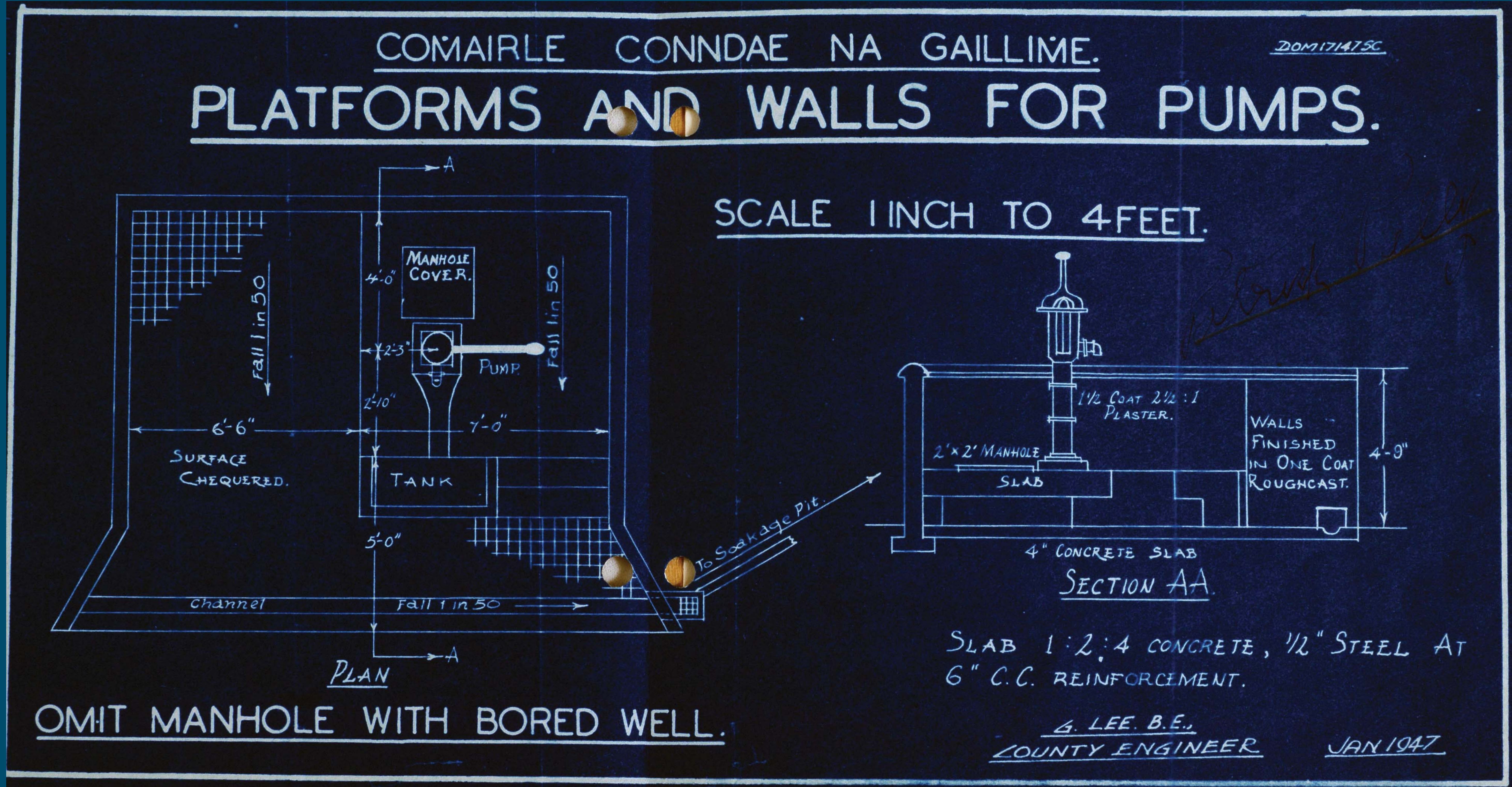
Mar gheall ar ghalair forleathan tugadh isteach an tAcht Sláinte Poiblí, 1878. Bhí sé mar aidhm leis feabhas a chur ar dhálaí maireachtála, ar shláintíocht agus cháilíocht an uisce agus theastaigh iarracht mhór ó na húdaráis áitiúla sna luathbhlianta. Tháinig na seirbhísí a cruthaíodh leis chun chuig na seirbhísí sláintíochta agus comhshaoil a ndéanaimid talamh slán dóibh inniu.

Chuaigh gníomhaíochtaí chun cinn ó aghaidh a thabhairt i dtosach ar sholáthar uisce, séarachas, galair ionfhabhtáíoch, núiseanna, tithe róphlódaíthe agus reilig go dtí feidhmeanna a chur leis de réir a chéile i ndáil le monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar cháilíocht an uisce, caomhnú uisce, rialú truaillithe, bainistíocht dramhaíola, athchúrsáil, trána agus sábháilteacht uisce. Ó

2014 aistríodh soláthar agus cothabháil na seirbhísí uisce phoiblí agus fúilluisce chuig an bhfóntas náisiúnta uisce, Uisce Éireann.

Cé go bhfuil roinnt beart pleanála ann faoi na hAchtanna Sláinte Poiblí agus Tithíochta, ba é Town and Regional Planning Act 1934 an chéad reachtaíocht a bhaint go sonrach le pleanáil. Measadh nár éirigh leis, agus mar sin cuireadh an tAcht um Pleanáil agus Forbairt, 1963 ina áit sa deireadh agus na hAchtanna agus Rialacháin um Pleanáil agus Forbairt 2000-2018 ina dhiaidh sin. Tháinig pleanáil chun cinn ó na hábhair is cúram níos luaithe maidir le tithe a lonnú ar bhóithre gnóthacha chun forbairtí casta agus inbhuanaithe a rialáil.

Blueprint for Aughrim pump, 1947 (Galway County Council Archives)
Treoirphlean le haghaidh caidéal Eachroma, 1947 (Cartlanna Chomhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe)





10

Community, Enterprise, Cultural Services and Recreation Pobal, Fiontraíocht, Seirbhísí Cultúrtha agus Caitheamh Aimsire

Economic Development

Local economic development has been an important role of local authorities since the 1960s. County Development Teams were created, initially covering all or parts of 13 counties, mostly in the west, and later spreading countrywide.

In the late 1990s, *Better Local Government - A Programme for Change* led to a radical overhaul of structures, including the establishment of Community and Enterprise directorates within local authorities. Under the Local Government Reform Act 2014, County Enterprise Boards were replaced by Local Enterprise Offices within local authorities.

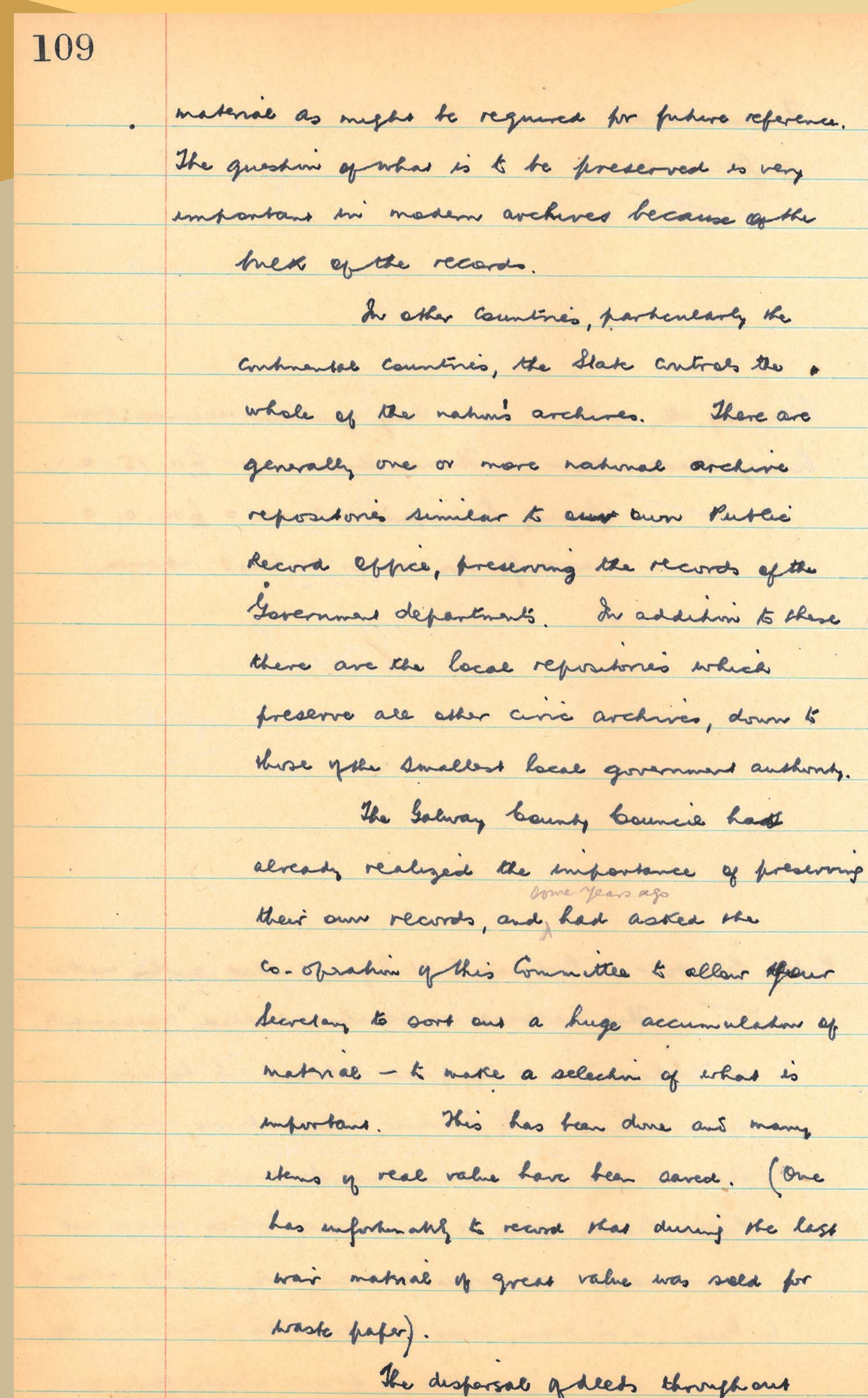
Cultural Services and Recreation

Councils provide a range of cultural services. Public libraries were first established under legislation of 1855. The post of Arts Officer was created in 1985. Heritage Officers, first appointed in 1999, promote all aspects of heritage within their areas. Most local archives services have been established since it became mandatory for local authorities to ensure the proper preservation and management of their archives under the Local Government Act of 1994.

There are local authority museums in many counties. Councils also provide parks, swimming pools, playgrounds and other amenities.



St John's Park, Waterford City, late 1960s (Waterford City and County Archives)
Páirc Eoin, Cathair Phort Láirge, deireadh na 1960í (Cartlanna Chathair agus Chontae Phort Láirge)



Page from the minute book of Galway County Library Committee, 26 July 1941, emphasising the importance of preserving local archives (Galway County Council Archives)
Sliocht ó leabhar miontuairiscí Choiste Leabharlann Chontae na Gaillimhe, an 26 Iúil 1941, ina gcuirtear béim ar an tábhacht a bhaineann le cartlanna áitiúla a chaomhnú (Cartlanna Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe)

Forbairt Eacnamaíoch

Bhí an fhorbairt áitiúil eacnamaíoch ina ról tábhachtach de chuid na n-údarás áitiúil ó 1960 i leith. Cruthaíodh Foirne Forbartha Contae, a chlúdaigh gach ceann de na 13 chontae nó cuid díobh ar dtús, san iarthar den chuid ba mhó, agus leathadh iad ar fud na tíre níos déanaí.

I ndeireadh na 1990í, rinneadh ollchóiriú radacach mar gheall ar Rialtas Áitiúil níos Fearr - Clár um Athrú, lena n-áirítear stiúirtheoireachtaí Pobail agus Fiontraíochta a bhunú laistigh de na húdaráis áitiúla. Faoin Acht Rialtais Áitiúil (Leasú) 2014, cuireadh Oifigí Fiontar Áitiúil in ionad Boird Fiontar Contae laistigh de na húdaráis áitiúla.



The Carnegie Library, Dún Laoghaire (Local Studies and Archives, dlr Lexicon)
Leabharlann Carnegie, Dún Laoghaire (Staidéir agus Cartlanna Áitiúla, dlr Lexicon)

Seirbhísí Cultúrtha agus Caitheamh Aimsire

Soláthraíonn comhairlí raon seirbhísí cultúrtha. Foilsíodh leabharlanna poiblí ar dtús faoi reachtaíocht in 1855. Cruthaíodh post an Oifigigh Ealaíon in 1985. Cuireann Oifigigh Oidhreacht, a ceapadh ar dtús in 1999, gach gné den oidhreacht ina gceantar chun cinn. Bunaíodh formhór na seirbhísí cartlainne áitiúla ó rinneadh éigeantach é do na húdaráis áitiúla caomhnú agus bainistíocht chuí a gcartlann a chinntiú faoin Acht Rialtais Áitiúil 1994.

Tá a lán músaeim údarás áitiúil ina lán contaetha. Soláthraíonn comhairlí páirceanna, linnte snámha, páirceanna súgartha agus taitneamhachtaí eile chomh maith.





11

Serving Local Communities Ag Freastal ar Phobail Áitiúla

At local level, councils led Ireland 2016, which commemorated the centenary of the Easter Rising. Central to its success were consultation and partnerships with community and voluntary organisations. Local authorities also administered a grant scheme which provided funding for community projects. To build on the achievements of Ireland 2016, Creative Ireland 2017-2022 was established as a national programme promoting creativity, the arts and heritage, with councils again having the leading role. Likewise, they are co-ordinating the Decade of Centenaries, which began in 2013.

The first Cruinniú na nÓg, an initiative of Creative Ireland aimed at young people, was held in 2018.



Members of Longford Comhairle na nÓg who participated in the commemorative weekend in Longford, 23-24 April 2016. They represented the local participants in the Easter Rising. (Longford County Council)

Comhaltai de chuid Chomhairle na nÓg i Longfort a ghlac páirt sa deireadh seachtain comórtha i Longfort, 23-24 Aibreán 2016. Rinne siad ionadaíocht ar son rannpháirtithe áitiúla ag Éirí Amach na Cásca. (Comhairle Contae Longfoirt)

Ar an leibhéal áitiúil, stiúir comhairlí Éire 2016, lenar ceiliúradh cothrom céad bliain an Éirí Amach. Lárnach dá rath bhí comhairliúcháin agus comhpháirtíochtaí le heagraíochtaí pobail agus deonacha. Riar údaráis áitiúla scéim deontas chomh maith trína soláthraíodh airgead i gcomhair tionscadail áitiúla. Chun forbairt ar Éire 2016, bunaíodh Éire Chruthaitheach 2017-2022 mar chláir náisiúnta lena gcuirtear chun cinn an chruthaitheacht, na healaíona agus an oidhreacht, agus arís bhí an príomhról ag na comhairlí. Mar an gcéanna, tá Deich mBliana na gComórthaí Céad Bliana, a tosaíodh in 2013, á chomhordú acu.

Tionóladh céad Chruinniú na nÓg, tionscnamh de chuid Éire Chruthaitheach a bhí dírithe ar dhaoine óga, in 2018.



Items from the collection of Gunner James Fitzhenry, New Ross, County Wexford, who served in World War I (Wexford County Archive)

Mireanna ó bhailiúchán an Ghunnadóra James Fitzhenry, Ros Mhíic Thriúin, Contae Loch Garman, a rinne seirbhís sa Chéad Chogadh Domhanda (Cartlann Chontae Loch Garman)



Leabh art workshop in schools, Louth Creative Ireland, 2018 (Louth County Council)
Ceardlanna ealaíne Leabh i scoileanna, Éire Chruthaitheach Lú, 2018 (Comhairle Contae Lú)



Marianne O'Kane Boal gives a creative writing workshop in Bundoran Library, for the children's festival of Cruinniú na nÓg, 23 June 2018. (Courtesy of Christina Irwin)

Tugann Marianne O'Kane Boal ceardlann i scríbhneoireacht chruthaitheach i Leabharlann Bhun Dhobhráin, le haghaidh fhéile pháistí Chruinniú na nÓg, an 23 Meitheamh 2018. (De chúirtéis ó Christina Irwin)



Carnegie Library detail, Dún Laoghaire (Local Studies and Archives, dlr Lexicon)
Sonra Leabharlann Carnegie, Dún Laoghaire (Staidéir agus Cartlanna Áitiúla, dlr Lexicon)





12

Serving Communities Ag Freastal ar Phobail

Local government has evolved remarkably since 1899. While most functions remain, some, such as water, have been transferred to other agencies or are now shared. Local authorities have also acquired new responsibilities. This is especially the case in the areas of Community and Enterprise and Cultural Services. Councils support the development of businesses in several ways. They also work with local communities in creating and maintaining amenities and visitor attractions. They actively facilitate community and voluntary bodies through Public Participation Networks.

Programmes such as Peace IV and Interreg are unique initiatives of the European Union designed to support peace and reconciliation. Various services within local authorities, particularly in border counties, have been involved in such EU-funded projects for over 20 years.



Reminiscence session in a railway carriage at Donegal Railway Museum for the Bealtaine Festival, 2018 (Donegal County Council)
Seisiún athchluimhne i gcarráiste traenach ag Músaem Iarnróid Dhún na nGall le haghaidh Fhéile na Bealtaine, 2018 (Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall)



Installation of footbridge at Tuam Road, Headford, 2018 (Galway County Council)
Suiteáil droichid choise ag Bóthar Thuama, Ath Cinn, 2018 (Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe)



Clare County Council officials and members of Feakle Community Council at the opening of Feakle Digital Hub 2018. It offers affordable office facilities and high-speed broadband. (Clare County Council)
Oifigí Chomhairle Contae an Chláir agus baill de Chomhairle Contae na Fiacail ag oscailt Mol Digiteach na Fiacail 2018. Tairgeann sé saoráidí oifige agus leathanbhanda ardluas inacmhainne. Comhairle Contae an Chláir)



Dundalk water treatment plant at Cavan Hill, Cavan, Co. Louth, 1990 (Louth County Archives)
Ionad cóireála uisce Dhún Dealgan, Cnoc an Chabháin, an Cabhán, Co. Lú, 1990 (Cartlanna Chontae Lú)



Clare County Council workers get on with Spring planting (Clare County Council)
Oibríthe Chomhairle Contae an Chláir ag obair ar phlandú an Earraigh (Comhairle Contae an Chláir)

Tá an rialtas áitiúil tagtha chun cinn go mór mó ó bhí 1899 ann. Cé go bhfuil formhór na bhfeidhmeanna fós ann, rinneadh cuid díobh, amhail uisce, a aistriú chuig gníomhaireachtaí eile nó tá siad á roinnt anois. Tá freagrachtaí úra faighte ag na húdaráis áitiúla chomh maith. Is é sin an cás go háirithe i gceantair Pobail agus Fiontraíochta agus Seirbhísí Cultúrtha Tacaíonn comhairlí le forbairt gnólachtaí ar roinnt bealaí. Oibríonn siad leis na pobail áitiúla chomh maith maidir le taitneamhachtaí agus nithe is díol cuairteoirí a chruthú agus a chothabháil. Éascaíonn siad comhlachtaí pobail agus deonacha go gníomhach trí na Líonraí um Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail.

Tá cláir amhail Síocháin IV agus Interreg ina dtionscnaimh uathúla de chuid an Aontais Eorpaigh a dearadh chun tacú le síocháin agus athmhúintearas. Bhí seirbhísí éagsúla laistigh de na húdaráis áitiúla, go háirithe i gcontaetha teorann, páirteach i tionscadail AE-mhainithe den sórt sin ar feadh breis agus 20 bliain.



Ballyvoile Viaduct on the Waterford Greenway, (Waterford City and County Archives)
Tarbhealach Bhaile Uí Bhaill ar Ghlashealach Phort Láirge (Cartlanna Chathair agus Chontae Phort Láirge)

Creative Spark's Community Tapestry Project, Louth Creative Ireland, 2018 (Louth County Council)
Tionscadal Taispéise Pobail Creative Spark, Éire Chruthaitheach Lú, 2018 (Comhairle Contae Lú)





An Roinn Tithíochta,
Pleanála agus Rialtais Áitiúil
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Local Government Archivists and Records Managers
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