

Luas Life

One year on from its launch, take a journey on the Red and Green lines and discover how Luas has changed the way we think and move about the city





LUAS





One year on, Luas is right on track

By Frank Allen, Chief Executive of the Railway Procurement Agency (RPA)

The year under review was a historic one, not just for the Railway Procurement Agency, but for public transport in Ireland. The enthusiastic response of the public to the launch of Luas service on the Green Line on 30 June, 2004 took many people by surprise. We estimate that Luas provided some 455,000 free trips to people who waited patiently to take their first journey on Luas over that weekend. RPA engineers, architects and accountants were pressed into service to supervise crowds and answer questions about the new service. While those associated with planning and implementing the project had been confident that the public would appreciate the new service, it was heartening to receive such a resounding endorsement from the launch date.

We are pleased that interest in Luas has not waned after the novelty of trying the new service. The successful launch of the Green Line in June was followed by the introduction of the Red Line service in September. Total trips on both lines in 2004 came to around 6.2 million and patronage has continued to grow in 2005.

The pattern of Luas usage continues to evolve, particularly on the Red Line where it has taken longer to achieve target frequency and journey times due to safety considerations. However, some interesting trends are emerging.

Infrastructure providers such as RPA often struggle to meet capacity demands in the morning and evening peak periods but have relatively few passengers in the off-peak periods. We are very pleased that Luas is used consistently throughout the day. In addition to commuter travel to work and school, there is very high usage of Luas for shopping and evening entertainment with Saturday being one of the busiest days. This trend is confirmed by city centre traders who report an increase in foot-fall of up to 25% since the commencement of passenger service.

The first months of light rail service in Dublin confirm that investment in high quality public transport can be seen not just as a means of addressing traffic congestion in the morning and evening peak periods, important as that is. Public transport should also be seen in the context of enhancing the quality of life for the people of Dublin and influencing the type of urban environment we want to develop for the future. Commuters who live within the catchment area of Luas lines are now offered the option of walking to a light rail stop and being assured of a consistent and comfortable journey time into or out of town.

The attractiveness of this choice for many people helps to control development sprawl and restricts the spread of the morning and evening peak to longer periods from year to year. It also reinforces the work of planning authorities who endeavour to promote commercial and residential development in a sustainable way.

In planning the launch of Luas services, RPA gave priority to ensuring that the highest standards of safety prevailed and that the public was fully informed about all relevant aspects of safety. Our safety programmes were informed by other cities' experience of introducing light rail and we launched advertising and educational programmes targeted at pedestrians, cyclists, school children, motorists and those

who live near the lines. We are pleased that, in general, the safety message was heard and that the initial safety record of Luas has been very good, relative to light rail schemes in other countries. There have however been a worrying number of incidents at a few road junctions on the Red Line between Heuston and Connolly stations. RPA has analysed the exact circumstance of the incidents and we have taken steps to reinforce the safety message for all road users at these locations.

We appreciate the support of the Gardaí and Dublin City Council in making these changes. However, the safe oper-

ation of Luas in city streets also requires the co-operation of other street users and in particular requires motorists to observe red lights and to drive with due care.

The Railway Procurement Agency has prepared detailed plans for other rail projects including a Metro from St Stephen's Green to Dublin Airport and Swords and extensions to Luas. Some of those responsible for these projects have outlined the present position elsewhere in this publication.

When RPA has surveyed Luas passengers to find out what they find attractive about the service and how it could be improved, the public demand for integrated transportation is clear. For example, one in eight Luas passengers reported that they travelled to the Luas stop by bus and we expect this proportion to increase over time. RPA has a separate mandate to develop an integrated ticketing project to facilitate trips that include different modes of transport such as bus, Dart and light rail and different operators.

Good progress was made in designing the integrated transport scheme and in discussions with public transport operators. As part of the scheme a Proof of Concept for Integrated Ticketing was launched on Mortons Coaches in 2004 and more recently, a smartcard was launched on Luas. The attractiveness and accessibility of public transport internationally has benefited from technological innovation in areas such as ticketing, information and service reliability.

The major investment that is underway in transport in Ireland gives us the opportunity to offer the public a genuine choice of quality public transport rather than increased congestion.



Frank Allen

Chat lines hum on the red and green

Travelling on Luas can be as much about meeting people as arriving at your destination



The aspect of Luas that I find most appealing is that people talk. When travelling home in the evening, I chat to neighbours who I have never spoken to before and I see strangers strike up conversations as if they had known one another for ages. It appears that travelling by light rail adds to a sense of community that travelling by car or even walking along a street cannot match.

Long after we will have grown accustomed to the sleek image of the tram emerging from around Adelaide Road onto Harcourt Street or travelling down Steeven's Lane towards Heuston, I think that we will enjoy the sense of a shared journey on Luas.

Public transport is a lifestyle choice and the last 12 months of Luas operations suggests that for all the frenzy of modern life, many of us relish the experience of travelling to town on the tram, seeing who we may meet for a coffee and staying for a show later in the evening.

This is good news for romantics but just as importantly, it is good news for the economic vitality of the heart of Dublin and the sustainable development of our capital city.

The passenger numbers and pattern of travel that we have observed on the Green Line since its launch suggests that when given a real transport alternative, we are drawn to the city centre rather than negotiate the M50 and shop in suburban malls. The 25 kilometres of Luas Red and Green lines is probably the most complex large infrastructure project that has been undertaken in the history of the state and it is no surprise that everyone has his or her own view of what should have been done differently. It is too early to reach firm conclusions about the merits of the various arguments and what long-term contribution Luas will make to Dublin.

We know that a large proportion of Luas customers are new recruits to public transport and that Luas has added comfort and predictability to their journey. We know that the city centre has experienced sustained improvement in business through the year, which traders attribute to Luas. The proportion of Luas customers who are buying weekly and monthly tickets is steadily increasing suggesting that people are committing to regular use of public transport rather than make an occasional trip.

The pattern of usage throughout the day is not typical for public transport, which usually suffers from capacity constraint in the commuting period and limited passenger numbers in the off-peak. The Luas Green line has been attracting a consistently high number of passengers throughout the day and we attract the biggest crowds on Saturdays, which is largely discretionary travel.

The line from Tallaght to Connolly serves some of the most important institutions and centres of population in the Capital. A light rail line that has stops at two mainline railway stations, the country's largest provincial bus station, two large hospitals (Tallaght and St James's), shopping centres (The Square and Jervis) and major centres of population such as Kingswood, Bluebell and Rialto is certain to meet the needs of large numbers of people.

But again, public transport is not just about getting people from home to work as quickly as possible. By improving accessibility for large numbers of people to work, entertainment and shopping, Luas is helping to sustain the economic life of the heart of Dublin and improving the quality of life for those who live and visit here.

Anyone who doubts the urban renewal impact of public transport should pay attention to the revitalisation of the corridor from the Museum stop at Collins Barracks to Abbey Street. That will keep them chatting along the way.

Frank Allen





Huge demand for a link between red and green

Dublin's first two Luas lines have proved to be a dramatic success story. Since their launch last year passenger numbers have grown to about 60,000 per day and in 2005 these two lines are expected to carry over 20 million passengers.

The popularity of the two lines has been matched by a clear customer desire to see the two lines linked in the city centre. A city centre link would not only allow areas along its length to be served by Luas but would open up a range of possibilities for customers wishing to travel from areas along the Red line to areas along the Green Line and vice versa.

On a daily basis over 22,000 people use the St. Stephen's Green stop on the Green Line. Coupled with the large increases in footfall on Grafton Street after the opening of the Line, the need for transporting these large numbers of people further into the city via a Luas link is evident.

Earlier this year the Railway Procurement Agency carried out surveys of its existing customer base to determine their preference or otherwise for a link between the two lines. A clear customer preference for this connection emerged with over 90% of respondents expressing themselves in favour. The reasons for the positive response filtered down largely to three reasons – a desire to get further into the city centre via Luas, the wish to make a trip that involved travel on both Luas lines; and the access offered by such a link to the mainline railway stations of Connolly and Heuston.

Responding to this customer demand RPA has commenced a pre-feasibility study out of which will emerge a series of routing options for a public consultation phase all where comment and opinion will be invited on the proposed link-up.

The future vision of Luas is a network for the city of Dublin where customers can travel with reliability and comfort to where they want to go. The link up between the Red and the Green Lines is the first step in the creation of this network which we believe will enhance the quality of life of the city's inhabitants for generations to come.

Jim Kilfeather

Connolly to Point will go along Mayor Street

Following extensive public consultation the RPA has decided to proceed with the routing of Line C1 (Connolly to the Point Depot) via Mayor Street. The line will be a mixture of shared running and segregated double track and includes the upgrading of the existing



bridge at Georges Dock (Mayor Street bridge) and a new bridge over Spencer Dock. The line will feature four stops conveniently located at Georges Dock (at CHQ), Mayor Square, Spencer Dock and The Point. The scheme

includes a full delta track arrangement at Connolly thereby allowing operational flexibility and will facilitate through running services should the demand exist.

The consultation process included the assessment of alternative alignments with suggested routes from third parties included. After careful consideration the Mayor Street route was selected as it offered the best overall fit with the many criteria governing the choice of alignment. Extensive survey work has been carried out on services and utilities in the docklands area and the use of innovative ground radar technology has offered the opportunity for a much clearer understanding of the extent of diversions required. This is the first time that this new technology has been used in Ireland. The works will involve permanent changes to traffic routing and parking on Mayor Street and some adjacent streets.

Development of the Spencer Dock site is well underway and planning is in progress for future developments around the proposed Point Village area. Coupled with the imminent opening of the Port Tunnel and the future construction of the Macken Street bridge as well as such projects as the new mainline Railway station and Interconnector the construction of Luas Line C1 will add another strand to the new transport infrastructure network for Dublin Docklands.

Jim Quinlan

Save your money and don't stay single

When you go and buy your ticket on the Luas, do you think about what ticket you buy? If you are going to be coming back the same day, a return ticket will not only save you money but also save you having to queue up again at the vending machine. Indeed, the main reason that we have congestion at some vending machines is that we did not anticipate the Luas users attachment to the single ticket. The old "one and one" is alive and well on the Dublin trams!

This surprised us because returns, weekly and monthly tickets really are better value but the penny does not seem to have dropped as almost half the tickets we sell are singles.

If you travel 8 times or more in a seven day period, then rather than buying a ticket every day, you will save money by buying a 7 day ticket, which gives you unlimited travel within the specified zones for seven days. We know that many people are hopping in and out of town by Luas for all sorts of reasons and are no longer dreading the trip. So even if there is a Bank Holiday or you take an odd day off, you are still better off with a 7 day ticket than buying separate tickets every day. And the seven days can start on any day of the week.

You don't have to buy the ticket on a Monday. 30 day tickets offer even better value, and also qualify for tax savings under the 'benefit in kind' legislation. You can save up to 40% of the cost of the ticket through tax savings. Monthly and annual tickets are also available from Connex.

And then again if you travel less often, but still want to avoid queuing at the vending machines or rooting around for cash the Luas smartcard offers complete flexibility. All you have to do is top up your card with credit, then pay-as-you-go, tagging on and off at the platform validators every journey. It couldn't be easier! Cards are available from Luas agents or by post (see www.luas.ie for details).

Luas machines take banknotes, and credit and debit cards for transactions over €5. They also give change, so you don't need to worry about having the exact fare in coins.

So think again next time you travel – do you really want to be single?

When you return to Luas, think about buying a return or a weekly ticket or indeed cut your own tax bill by going for a monthly or annual ticket.

Luas – a good partner for the Arts along the lines

A coherent and meaningful arts plan was top of the agenda from the very beginning of the Luas project. Local communities and arts groups have been at the centre of this process which has already paid dividends..

Luas may be a new icon for 21st century Dublin but the Railway Procurement Agency is conscious that the light rail service must be part of the communities through which it runs. We have set out to develop a sense of ownership amongst our communities and there is certainly a growing body of evidence which suggests that we are succeeding.

For instance, passengers along the Red Line can see how stops at Drimnagh, Belgard and Smithfield have been enhanced through Arts initiatives. We have been delighted with the co-operation and support that we got from people like the St. John Bosco Club in Drimnagh where



students developed a very ambitious scheme to enhance the nearby stop at Drimnagh. The artist John Carpenter worked with young adults from the

Tallaght area to create a mural in the style of L.S. Lowry painting scenes of city life. There is little doubt that projects like this contribute to a sense of ownership amongst communities and we are absolutely convinced this approach has contributed to the remarkably low levels of vandalism along the Lines.

There are a range of initiatives which are being pursued at present. Arts projects are currently being finalised for Fatima, Connolly and adjacent to Dundrum and these are expected to come to fruition during the summer. Watch that space.





Redrawing Dublin

Not just a flagship transport project, Luas has given us a new way to see ourselves and the city. **By Kieran Fagan**

The map of Dublin has been redrawn. The new suburbs and industrial estates to the south west are now linked into the capital by a modern tram service which will improve the quality of life of hundreds of thousands of its citizens. That's one way of putting it. There's a better way. This is my city. Come with me, we'll jump on the shiny new tramcars of the Luas Red line at Connolly station, or I'll see you at

Busaras, and we'll take a trip up Abbey Street along the edge of the Henry Street-Mary Street shopopolis bandit country for anyone with a retail habit.

We cross O'Connell Street – now being remade into the broad city promenade originally envisaged by Luke Gardiner in the 18th century – and move swiftly west, parallel with the Liffey quays, with stops at Jervis and Smithfield. Our route skirts the wholesale fruit and vegetable market, where traditional communities have lived for centuries, now overlaid by the renewal projects of the new Dublin of the 21st century.

You see restored streetscapes and modern apartment blocks. I see my aunt and my granny in headscarves hurrying along Little Mary Street in the 1940s, on their way to Mass in Halston Street.

Passing behind the Four Courts we reach the Museum stop, and I insist we visit the National Museum's decorative arts and history section. If you haven't see the wide open space of the old Collins Barracks square, you have a treat in store.

Our next short hop takes us south across the Liffey to Heuston, the railway station my generation will always know as Kingsbridge. The vista opens out with the plaza in front of the station building, the elegance of the former Dr Steeven's hospital. We may pick up some mainline rail passengers from the south and west and take off smartly up Steeven's lane, around by St Patrick's hospital, which Jonathan Swift endowed for the people of Dublin in 1745.

Now we are briefly back into the thick of traffic as we cross into St James's hospital, undistinguished architecturally, there's been a hospital on the site since Swift's time, and the modern version is close to Dubliners' hearts. Look at the name of the stop, simply James's. Look at the names of the stops which follow – Fatima and Rialto. We are citizens of the world, and like St Paul, we are citizens of no mean city.

After this, the second hospital of three on our route, we are moving quick-

ly along the abandoned spur which once linked the Grand Canal to the Guinness brewery, and the smell of hops lies heavy on the air. Then we join the canal proper at Suir Road and tram, waterway and road make a three-stripe ribbon to the south westerly approach to the city.

A family of swans has colonised one section of the glistening canal, ducks have taken over another. An old man looks up from his morning walk to watch our tram glide by. The lock gates remind us of earlier industrialisation. This is a calming stage on our 2005 version of Leopold Bloom's wanderings through our city and our consciousness on June 16, 1904.

By the time we get to Inchicore, we have left Swift's Dublin behind, though Joyce would approve of the bridge at Tyrconnell Road giving its name to the Blackhorse Luas stop, the last one before we move into the new industrial Dublin.

Bluebell is where Dublin's Motown begins, and here Volkswagen sits cheek-by-jowl with Nissan as we make our way along the central reservation of the old Naas Road. Cars appear alarmingly on the top of buildings, parks are filled with snub-nosed trucks and earth moving equipment for sale.

We climb towards the Red Cow roundabout, and pass through it without bringing civilisation as we know it to a grinding stop. Up ahead lies the ancient settlement – and new town – of Clondalkin, but we veer off left to the Luas depot, and the park-and-ride facility passing through some fairly open country on our approach to Tallaght, through Belgard and Kingswood, and to Tallaght, our third hospital on this route. And here we encounter the most dramatic change – a new town of more than 100,000 souls overlaying what was a rural village of 700, with its own local "country" accent, barely 40 years ago.

The terminus is the Square shopping centre, which surely should have been called the Pyramid which it resembles. Here you can indulge your shopping habit before we begin our return. On the way back, we see a hundred things we missed on the way out. We need another Joyce to remap the imagination of our city and citizens.

If the past is a reliable guide, Luas to Tallaght will bring another swathe of outlying Dublin within the ambit of the city. Every generation, if it is lucky gets to leave its mark. This Luas line is more closely enmeshed with life on the streets than the Green line opened this summer, which follows the course of an old railway track.

And it too is more than a flagship transport project, it gives us a new way of getting to see our city and ourselves.



Panoramic vision

French photographer Dominique Davoust's unique take on life around the Luas lines is full of colour, atmosphere and subtle detail

Luas has become a photographer's delight since the Green Line opened in 2004. Our sleek trams are now regularly used for fashion shoots by some of Ireland's leading photographers. At the same time the arrival of both Luas lines has brought a whole new set of vistas and views to Dubliners as the trams open up areas previously lost to the general public appreciation. Now comes an intriguing new look at the Luas and the way it has shaped the city through the lens of French photographer, Dominique Davoust. Dominique, an Irish resident having moved here from Paris with his Irish-born wife, Grainne, and their two young boys, produced a series of photos along a line of the famous Paris Metro some years ago. He staged an exhibition of his Metro work in Paris which proved very popular and won wide acclaim. An Irish friend suggested he should do the same with Luas as it was now such an integral part of Dublin life.

"I started the project in June of 2004 and call it 'The Luas Chronicle'", explains Dominique, "It is a form of diary of Luas, not a scientific or engineering record." He goes on: "You need a lot of time and patience to do something like this. You might only get one good shot a day. I have taken perhaps 1,000 shots but the exhibition will only show about 50 or 60 of those."

Dominique's work is atmospheric, capturing subtle and unusual of visions of Luas and its new presence on the streets of Dublin.

"You don't always see the Luas trams as such in my pictures but you see things happening around the tracks. The idea is more the tracks than the trams themselves. It is like walking along the tracks," he says.

"The Luas has brought together new parts of Dublin", adds Dominique, "The great thing about traveling by tram from Abbey Street to the Naas Road is that you travel through such very different parts of the city."

Luas also allows new vistas for passengers that they would otherwise miss. "The trams give you a whole new view of the city, people in their cars never see these things," he says.

Of the Luas Chronicle, he says: "It is a work in progress and my ambition is to produce a book." Dominique is a very successful creative advertising photographer and worked with some big names and brands while in France.

From his Dublin base he is still asked to complete international assignments and recently worked with actress Angeline Jolie on a project in the Sahara desert.

He works with Irish companies as well, including assignments for Image magazine, and some of his photos will be used in the annual report of the Railway Procurement Agency due to be published shortly.

The Railway Procurement Agency is lending its support to Dominique's project and will help mount an exhibition of his Luas work – called The Luas Chronicle – at the Tallaght Civic Centre at the end of July.

Tony O'Brien





Back to the future

The return of trams has created a whole new outlook over the city's historic streets and has revitalised many areas. In words and illustrations **Pat Liddy** salutes Luas and throws light on how some of the key landmarks on the line came into being

Sipping a cappuccino under the classical canopy of the old Harcourt Street Station, one can't help but feel a tingle as a sleek lilac-coloured Luas tram glides by, clanging its soft warning chimes. I first encountered street trams (apart from my occasional childhood experiences on the enchanting Howth open-topped double-deckers which were sadly withdrawn by 1959) during a visit to Rome in 1964 when, on my way back to my lodgings, I used to enjoy waiting for the No. 5, destination Aventino, to curve its way out through an archway set into a monumental classical edifice. Something was fired in me then which convinced me that sophisticated and well-run cities of the future, Dublin included, would all have to have trams as part of their traffic solution.

I was, therefore, delighted to have been asked in 1989 to join the People First - Dublin Initiative committee, set up by the Dublin City Business Association to lobby for investment in public transport. One of our main proposals was for a light rail system. The work of the group led to the formation in 1990 of the Dublin Transport Initiative and ultimately to the approval of an investment of over €5 billion in roads and public transport in and around Dublin including Luas.

From the 1830s the impact of the new railway systems on the Dublin and Irish landscape was both immense and generally beneficial. Intriguing cuttings and multi-arched embankments, elegant bridges and impressive viaducts, grandiose terminals and quaint country stations, graceful steam-engines and varied rolling stock were all supplied to a high standard of practical and aesthetic design. Memories of the trains from the steam-powered era still engender nostalgia in most people who once travelled on them or are now involved in their preservation.

Each railway company could often be identified by its own distinctive style of architecture and by the nature of the stone and bricks used in the building of stations and employees' houses. The best architects and engineers of the day were usually engaged to oversee construction. Organised landscaping, self seeding and natural selection all combined to provide linear green belts alongside the rural and suburban trackways. In short the railways have left behind a rich and varied heritage that today we may take somewhat for granted.

Over a century has since passed with little or no new impact on the built and natural environment being contributed by the railways. However, the introduction of a light rail system into Dublin has once more afforded exciting new opportunities for creating a whole new urban ambience and the Railway Procurement Agency (RPA) has not been slow in recognising this.

In perhaps the single largest landscaping project ever seen in Dublin, spread over three council regions (Dublin City, South Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown), the 25km of track will be enhanced by a very varied and comprehensive planting programme using mainly native species. Formal tree arrangements, subject to road space and clearance for the overhead lines, will generally pertain in the built-up areas.

In segregated off-street locations such as cuttings, reserves, council lands and open fields, where previously there was either dereliction or sparse, unattractive and unstable vegetation, intensive sowing of saplings, bushes and wildflowers will return the areas to lush greenery and seasonal colour. Natural hedgerows and their accompanying insect and wildlife will flourish again and will be hardly disturbed by the movement of the almost silent trams. Attractive and inviting schemes of mixed planting will enhance the approaches and surroundings of several of the suburban stops.

The large Park and Ride facilities at Sandyford, Stillorgan and the Red Cow will be transformed by the addition of semi-mature trees and low shrubs. Bordering walls will be planted with climbers and apart from their pleasing effects they will also discourage or hide existing graffiti. It is planned to incorporate into the landscaping some 3,000 semi-mature trees and over 200,000 saplings, shrubs and herbaceous plants. In time all of these diverse improvements will soften the intrusion of the Luas network and will hugely and positively impact on the urban landscape while creating strong local identity characteristics. The overall result will provide visual stimulation and enjoyment to Luas passengers and resident populations alike.

The RPA has also engaged in a very extensive and ongoing arts programme which will involve collaboration with artists and local communities, county and city councils, art institutions, the Arts Council and the corporate sector. Projects already underway or being considered include temporary and permanent artworks, memorials and sculptures along the lines and at halts, approved graffiti sites, sculpture trails, music compositions, poetry and literary works and the funding of artists-in-residence. Communities will be asked



to Adopt a Stop, a concept that will encourage the input of their own creative ideas around the given parameters of modular halt construction. As Luas is further extended over the coming years so too will the public art agenda expand to the enrichment of the city and of its individual neighbourhoods.

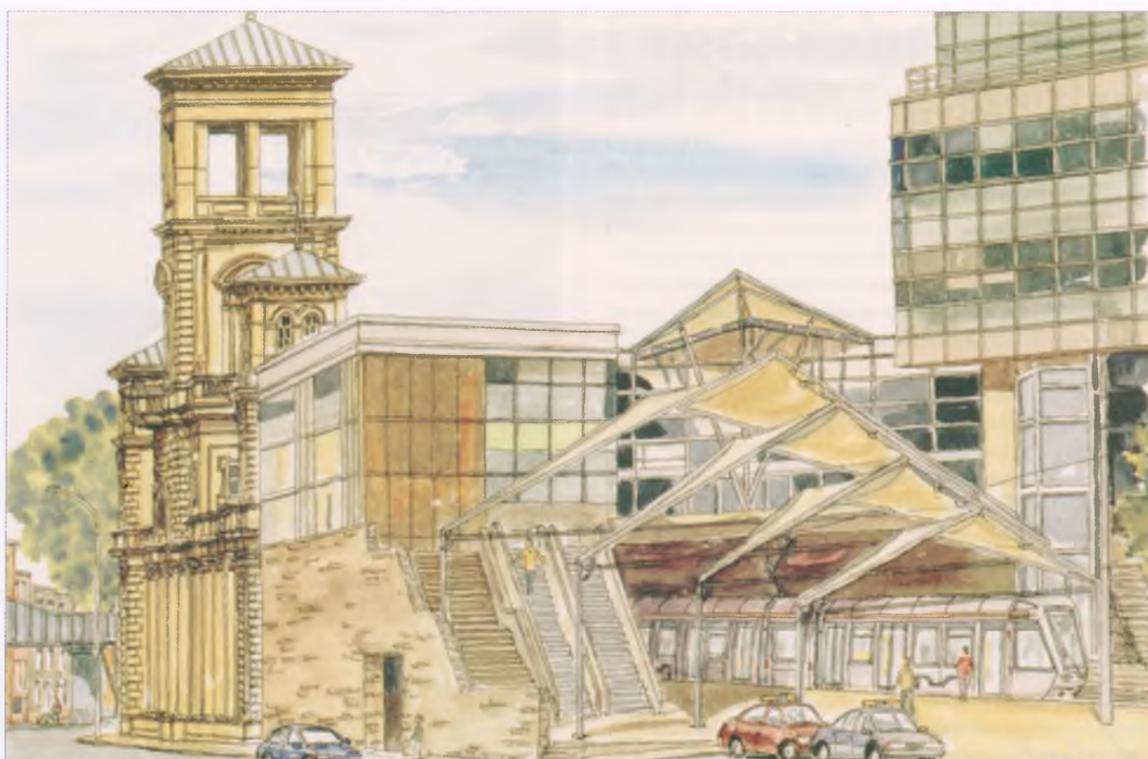
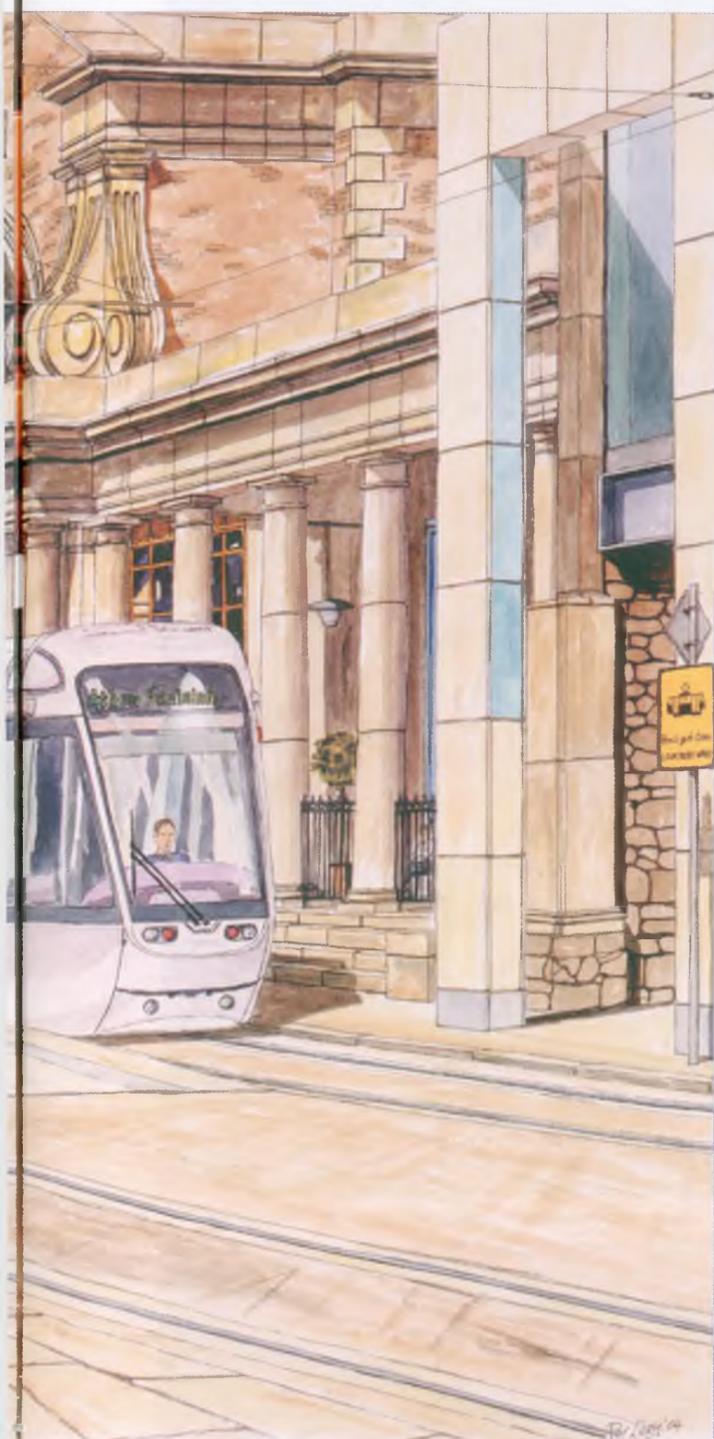
The construction of the two lines has involved the re-evaluation or the restoration of elements of our built heritage and items of historic interest. Motorists travelling along the M50, just after the Red Cow interchange and before the Embankment Road slip road, would be unaware that the parallel Luas line, hidden behind the trees and hedging, is passing the ruins of Ballymount Castle, once one of the largest medieval castles in south County Dublin. In due course, landscaping and protection of the ruins will restore what was virtually a forgotten but important legacy from our past. The elegant nine-arched viaduct at Milltown, fortunately left standing when the Harcourt Street to Bray line was closed, was completely revamped as was the solitary old chimney stack, the only remains of the former Milltown Laundry, standing beside it. The original Dundrum Station building, dating from the 1850s, will also be restored. Many inner city streets have been repaved around the tracks with stone sets, altogether a finer alternative to concrete or tarmacadam and more in tune with our heritage.

Once the epitome of graceful 18th century travelling, the Grand Canal has not been overlooked by the RPA. Jetties have been constructed at various points near Luas stops in a deal with the Inland Waterways Association. The new Suir Road Bridge, built over the canal to specifically carry Luas, has been named after Robert Emmet's housekeeper, the brave Anne Devlin, who remained faithful to the doomed rebel despite years of torture by the vengeful authorities. In excavations close to the bridge pike heads believed to be from the 1803 rebellion were uncovered and these finds were an apt connection to the naming of the bridge.

Lovely views of the canal can be appreciated by passengers who will ride beside it along Davitt Road to the Suir Road Stop (Red Line) or who will cross over it at the Charlemont Stop (Green Line). Would that some entrepreneur operated a fast passenger boat service to connect the two canal stops of the as yet unlinked lines!

For me, at any rate, one of the most welcome attributes of Luas is that travelling on it opens up vistas and panoramas hitherto denied, passed by or hidden from general view. The large side windows and an almost unrestricted visibility through the forward and rear driver's windscreens allow a 360-degree perspective of the passing scene. A whole new outlook over the city's historic

When Harcourt Street was first laid out around 1775 the only transport to trundle along the thoroughfare was horse-drawn. In 1859 a new railway terminus, designed by George Wilkinson, for the Dublin and South Eastern Railway Company was opened. Exactly one hundred years later the railway was closed down but the beautiful terminus, resplendent with its Tuscan pillars and an imposing arched entrance, was saved for other uses. Today the venerable station fittingly looks down upon the Luas halt and the gentle toing-and-froing of the trams. The short section from Peter Place to St Stephen's Green West is the only part of the Green Line to travel on city centre streets.



The first plan to build a railway between Dublin and Belfast was mooted as early as 1825, nine years before Ireland's first locomotive departed from Dublin to Kingstown (Dun Laoghaire). In the event it would be 1844 before the Dublin and Drogheda Railway commenced operations and work began on the Amiens Street terminus designed by William Deane Butler. The station was named in 1966 in honour of James Connolly, one of the leaders of the 1916 Rebellion. In 1875 a long ramp was built to allow cabs to access the elevated platforms. In 2003 this ramp was demolished to provide a terminus halt for the Luas Red Line. Steps and escalators have been provided to enable passengers reach the mainline trains and stylish canopies add a modern flourish. Connolly Station, now in the heart of the financial district, has become an important transport hub for Dublin and it is served by mainline rail, suburban rail services, frequent city bus services, provincial buses (from Busaras across the street) and, of course, Luas itself. Luas extensions, Metro and a dedicated line to Dublin Airport are possible additions for the future.



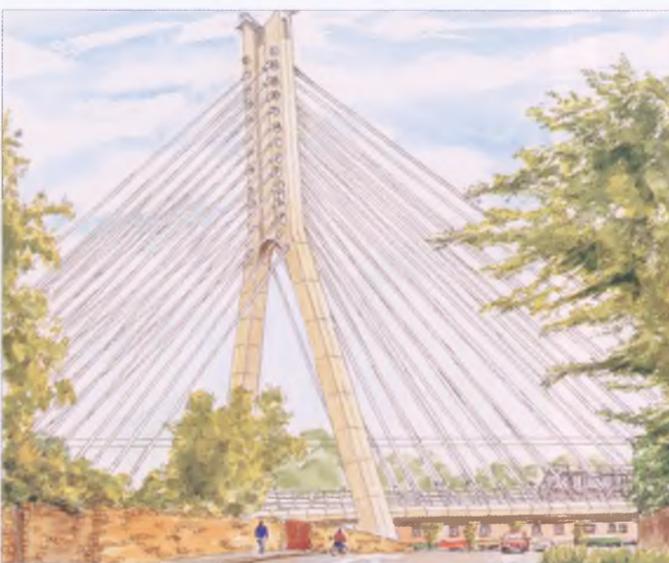
Heuston Station, originally known as Kingsbridge Station, was built as the Dublin terminus for the Great Southern and Western Railway in 1845. The architect was Sancton Wood. From the outset the remoteness of the station from the city centre was all too apparent and almost immediately plans were discussed to link it either by an overhead railway or a subway to the also not-so-central Connolly, Harcourt Street and Westland Row stations but none of these ambitious schemes came to anything. A rather circuitous route via a tunnel under the Phoenix Park was eventually laid to link Heuston with Connolly but it proved unpopular. Luas will provide the first direct rail link between these two stations and will be served by the Red Line. The concourse in front of the station is being magnificently upgraded by the RPA and, like the terminus at Connolly, constitutes a new civic space for the city. The 1825 metal bridge (Sean Heuston Bridge) over the River Liffey will be used exclusively by Luas and it too has been impressively restored by the RPA.

streetscapes, many of them until the arrival of Luas only secondary or back-water streets, offers fresh appeal to both commuters and visitors. For instance, along the Arran Quay Terrace to Chancery Street stretch (Red Line) there are unfamiliar snapshot views of Smithfield, the Four Courts and Christ Church. Following the introduction of Luas we can expect a renaissance in the appearance and condition of secondary and run-down streets over which it passes.

Experience from abroad has shown that in addition to the obvious transportation benefits of light rail such systems almost inevitably spur environmental and social revitalisation of the areas through which they serve.

In the Greater Dublin area where the population may soon exceed two million people and may double again over the next 30 or 40 years, even an extended and more integrated Luas can only hope to be part of the transportation solution.

Unlike metro, however, an on-street light rail system is highly visible and its mere presence along with all the attendant high quality street furnishings and landscaping uplifts the urban and suburban environment. Its dependability and easy accessibility will make it an indispensable part of city life and providing investment is scrupulously maintained it will become an essential part of the pumping heart and very soul of the future Dublin.



When the RPA took over the former Harcourt Street to Bray line as far as Sandyford only the nine-arched viaduct at Milltown still stood; the other bridges had already been demolished soon after the line's closure on 1 January 1959. Most of the latter have since been rebuilt usually with the more modern spans resting on the existing original stone abutments. This method was not possible at Dundrum where the junction at Taney Road, Churchtown Road and Dundrum Road had been considerably broadened to cater for widened roads and a new by-pass. A different and more ambitious solution had to be found here to span the crossing. The result, now virtually a gateway landmark for the city, is a soaring 50m high inverted 'Y' pylon from which the main 108.5m concrete span and the 21.4m backspan are held by 52 elegant cable stays. The specifications of the bridge allows for the planned heavier metro of the future. A pedestrian path flanks the tram lines. The bridge, officially named the William Dargan Bridge in honour of Ireland's greatest 18th century railway builder, has since won several construction and engineering awards.

Green line extension set for launch in 2009

With the Green and Red Luas lines now open and proving a huge success with Dubliners and visitors, work is proceeding on a number of projects, the most significant of which is the extension of the Green Line from Sandyford to Cherrywood near Loughlinstown.

Cherrywood is the site of a major development scheme by Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council and private developers and, as such, will be home to thousands of new residents and workers.

It has always been an objective that Luas would be extended to Cherrywood to service this development and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council has already initiated a scheme of levies on developers in the area to fund the link.

Now that ambition is to become a reality. The man charged with overseeing the exciting project is Pat O'Donoghue, Director of Design and Construction with the RPA.

"Following the outstanding success and public acceptance of the two Luas lines we are delighted to be now talking about extending it," Pat said.

He explained that the proposed extension will have 11 stops and will, in fact, have one stop beyond Cherrywood at Bride's Glen.

"It will obviously be a continuation of the line at Sandyford beginning with a bridge over the Brewery Road roundabout and on through land behind the Central Park Development," he said.

After that the line will cross the new South Eastern Motorway and run down by the Ballyogan Road and then go back over the Motorway on to the remains of the old Harcourt Street Line.

The line will run under the Glenamuck Bridge and head down to the proposed Town Centre in Cherrywood.

The 11 stops will include: Central Park, Glencairn, The Gallops, Leopardstown Valley, Ballyogan Wood, The Racecourse (open on race days only), Carrickmines, Brennanstown Road, Laughanstown, Cherrywood and Bride's Glen.

A 350-space Park n' Ride facility will be provided at the Carrickmines stop. If the statutory process goes smoothly work could begin as early as the Spring of 2006 with the line opening in the summer of 2009.

"The estimated cost at 2004 prices is €260m", added Pat, "We expect around half of that to come from the private sector. There is already a levy in place on developers and we would hope that they will also make a further contribution to such a valuable piece of infrastructure", said Pat.

He added: "This is a unique partnership between the private sector, ourselves at the RPA and the local authority. It is also a good example of a Land Use Transport initiative where the infrastructure goes in before much of the development takes place."

Pat paid tribute, in particular, to the work of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council in driving the initiative.

"We are ready to roll on making application for a Railways Order which is the start of the process. A public inquiry will have to be held as part of that. At the same time we are finalising agreement with the developers involved," he said.

Pat added: "We are looking forward to the day when the trams are running under the Glenamuck Road and past the old Station House at Carrickmines and on to Cherrywood."

Believe it or not

The distance which all of the Luas trams together have travelled to date equals 2.24million km.

2.24 million km is

- ▶ 56 times round planet earth's equator (end to end, of course!)
- ▶ 10 times the distance from planet earth to its moon (almost exactly, by chance), or

▶ 5 return journeys to the moon (same statistic)

During construction of Luas the following were laid/planted

- ▶ 15 Kilometres of new watermain
- ▶ 25 kilometres of new gas main
- ▶ 189 kilometres of new ducting
- ▶ 5 kilometres of new road carriageway
- ▶ 9 New bridges plus 2 bridge refurbishments
- ▶ 63,753 Sq metres of new footpath
- ▶ 70,189 Sq metres of new trackbed
- ▶ 50,000 Sq metres of grass and landscaping
- ▶ 37,222 New trees and shrubs



The old Tallaght tram line circa 1910



Tallaght's Institute of Technology

New dawn for Tallaght

Local historian **Kieran Swords** on the impact that the return of trams has had on an area undergoing massive rejuvenation

Tallaght has been a vibrant location through the ages and the arrival of Luas is part of the ongoing new dawn in its rich history and continuing development. The origins of the name Tallaght are lost in legend. It is said that the Partholonians, the first people to invade Ireland after the Deluge who settled in the plain between the hills and the sea were later wiped out by a plague and were buried in the area, whence Taimh leach muintir Parthalon or the plague grave of Parthalon's people.

Tallaght first enters history with the foundation of a monastery here by St. Maelruain in the last quarter of the 8th century. Through the influence of St. Maelruain and his friend St Aengus, the monastery of Tallaght became the centre of a cultural renaissance, the Céilí Dé movement, that spread throughout Ireland.

An earlier monastery, founded in the 6th century was located where Kilmamanagh housing estate lies today. St. Kevin of Glendalough was educated there. In 811 the monastery of Tallaght was devastated by the Vikings but the destruction was not permanent as the annals of the monastery continued to be recorded throughout the following centuries.

After the Anglo-Norman invasion in 1179, Tallaght and its property were transferred to the See of Dublin and became the property of the Archbishop. The complete disappearance of every trace of what must have been an extensive and well organised monastic settlement can only be accounted for by the subsequent history of the place because of its location on the border of the Pale. Defensive walls and castles were erected and demolished as the incessant warfare lasted for hundreds of years.

In 1310 the bailiffs of Tallaght obtained a royal grant for enclosing their town. No trace of the defensive walls survive nor have we any evidence of their exact location except for the name Watergate Bridge which spans the stream on the Oldbawn Road. A survey of Tallaght made in 1654 shows the

castle and its offices within a rectangular enclosure.

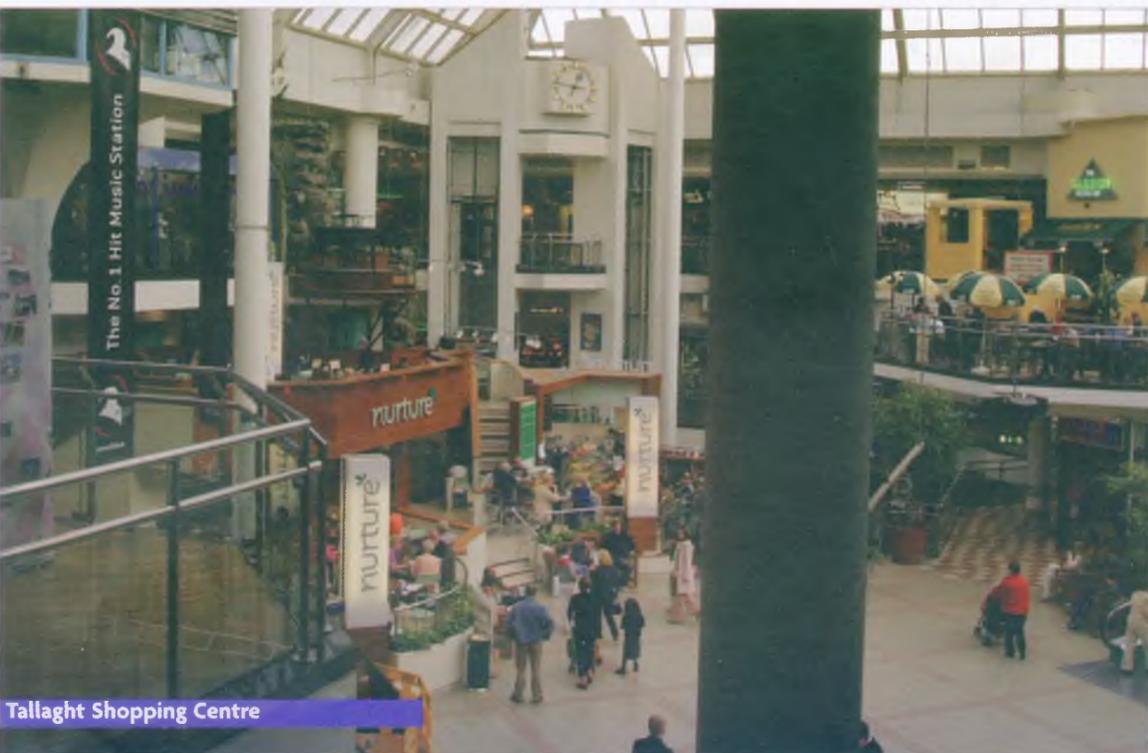
There has always been a strong tradition of learning in the area. The scholastic settlement of St Maelruain and St Aengus was superseded by the arrival of the Dominicans in 1856 and the development of St Mary's Dominican Priory. Today, IT Tallaght, a centre of excellence in education is located close to the site of the monastery of Tallaght.

Between 1888 and 1932 Tallaght was served by a tram, the Dublin to Blessington steam tram. More than 70 years after the tramline bridging Blessington and the City Centre was closed, its contemporary manifestation, Luas, will provide a new connection between the county and the city centre.

The old trams were a critical infrastructure lifeline for business for the rural economy of the time. As well as passengers, agricultural produce and other commodities were ferried to the city and provisions ferried out.

Around Tallaght, manufacturing and service industries have replaced traditional farming and the need to bring livestock to the market. Today, broadband networks and the high-speed cables serve as vital pieces of infrastructure, ferrying information on which businesses are based. The new trams have helped to transport the county's most valuable resource, the people who live and work in the area to and from their homes and places of business. Tallaght has grown from a village on the outskirts of Dublin 50 years ago into a thriving and maturing centre for commercial, political and social life. It has become the county town of South Dublin County and the base for South Dublin County Council which this year proudly celebrates the 10th anniversary of its existence.

The importance of Tallaght today can be gauged from proposals to have Tallaght made a city as the third largest conurbation in Ireland after Dublin City and Cork and ahead of Limerick City. Coincidentally, the Luas terminus in Tallaght is located in the Developing Tallaght Town Centre on the line of the Old Blessington Road, which route was taken by its predecessor, the Dublin to Blessington Steam Tram.



Tallaght Shopping Centre

Park and Ride offers a real alternative

With over 1600 car parking spaces along the Red and Green lines, Luas now offers more options than ever for people who want to travel in to Dublin from surrounding areas

Luas Park and Ride is managed on behalf of the Railway Procurement Agency (RPA) by QPark Ltd, an international parking organisation that prides itself on being a customer-orientated, innovative organisation. In Q-Park's view, parking is not an end in itself but part of the total mobility chain.

A total of 1600 car parking spaces have been made available for all Luas customers at Balally, Stillorgan and Sandyford on the Green Line and at the Red Cow stop on the Red Line.

The RPA believe that customers can benefit from the convenience and the time saved, by using these parking facilities and then using Luas to get in and out of the city. They also have the option of leaving the car overnight, should they wish as the car parks are open 24 hours a day. These benefits have become widely known through word of mouth, especially for major sports events, such as in Croke Park or Lansdowne Road, or for major civic events, such as the St Patrick's Day festival. During the Christmas period many shoppers also found the Park and Ride facilities to be very convenient.

The cost for one day's parking is €4 or €2 for up to four hours, but only if you have a valid Luas ticket for that day. Failure to produce a Luas ticket upon request would result in the customer having to pay the standard fare of €45. Parking for disabled drivers is, of course, free of charge. All payments are made using the new Pay by Bay machines where the customer simply keys in the bay number and pays the charge (using coins or credit card). There is no need to return to the car to display a sticker.

The RPA is also actively looking at ways to reward the long-term customer, such as the regular commuter, by offering more convenient ticketing options. For example, customers can now purchase a Monthly Plus ticket, which combines a monthly Luas ticket (with tax saver benefits) with a monthly parking permit. In the pipeline will be a new SmartPark chip card where a customer can bulk purchase parking credits at a discounted rate.

It is RPA's belief that these parking facilities will eventually become an integral part of the customer's mobility chain and will continue to work hard to deliver effective facilities that the customer wants.

Red Cow Park & Ride

Naas Road, Dublin 22
Max Capacity: 750
Surface parking

Balally Park & Ride

Rockfield, Dundrum, Dublin 16
Max Capacity: 426

Underground parking

Stillorgan Park & Ride
Blackthorne Road, Sandyford, Dublin 18
Max Capacity: 310

Surface parking

Sandyford Park & Ride
Blackthorne Road, Sandyford, Dublin 18
Max Capacity: 110
Surface parking



Green for Red

Anthony Cronin discovers all human life on the Red line

For most of its length the Green Line Luas runs through sylvan suburbs, old and new, Stillorgan, Kilmacud, Ranelagh. The view from the moving tram is of back and front gardens. The suggestion is one of rest and recreation, home and refreshment. True, there is the Sandyford Industrial Estate at one end; and Harcourt Street and St Stephen's Green at the other; but the Sandyford Estate is modern, ungrimed, belonging to the technological age; and Harcourt Street and Stephen's Green are reminders of a gracious and leisurely past. Travelling on the Red Line however, you encounter human life in all of its busyness, its complexity, its energy and its variety. You could get born in the Coombe Hospital, a stone's throw from the Rialto stop, and married at any one of a number of Churches. If you fell ill you could be cared for in St James's or Tallaght Hospital. If your marriage did not work out, you could be divorced in the Family Courts; engage in law suits in the Four Courts; find refreshment for the weary spirit in the National Theatre in Abbey Street or the Irish Museum of Modern Art which is visible from Heuston and some alleviation of your lot in the products of the vast brewery you pass after the climb up from Heuston to James's. There are reminders of our history, glorious and ignoble by turns, at several places along the route, including the General Post Office; and if these did not console you, you could get off at the stop called Museum after Smithfield Market and wonder about the peaceful lives that people once lived.



There is a famous psychiatric hospital, St Patrick's, founded by Dean Swift along the route for those who find the journey through life sometimes too difficult. There is the busiest shopping street in Ireland for retail therapy; cafes, restaurants, recreational centers, gymnasias and numerous schools for your children. And when all was over, when the fullness of life with all its rewards and satisfactions as well as its sorrows had satiated you, you could rest from the struggle in the city morgue, for which the stop is Busaras.

It can easily be seen that the Red Line will be at least as busy and popular as its Green counterpart. It begins at Connolly Station where it connects

with the Dart and also with the trains from the north-east. A barrister living in Howth – or for that matter, in Drogheda or Dundalk if any barristers do live in those towns – could travel to work at the Four Courts by rail all the way. And so could a consultant attached to any one of three major hospitals, St James's which it runs right through or Tallaght which is the second last stop – that is if consultants, demi-gods in their own sphere, ever mix with ordinary mortals and travel on trams, however comfortable and up to date. There is another connection with the rest of our far flung transport system at Busaras; and then, after Abbey Street, comes the negotiation of the capital's busiest and widest thoroughfare, a crossing which keeps the bell clanging and the klaxon blaring. It is of course quite safe for Luas passengers, but having it crossed in the Luas, I am more than ever amazed at the casualness with which the pedestrians of Dublin seem to regard their own lives and safety. Many of them

seem to me to be in imminent danger of needing some of the facilities along the line.

The Red Line, like the Green, is high tech. The driver has closed circuit screens instead of mirrors and a switch that he presses at regular intervals to show headquarters that he is still in control: otherwise the train will stop of its own accord. But much of what it passes is still old Dublin.

For a section of the route after Rialto, it avails of the basin of the disused part of the Grand Canal and then runs alongside the water, where the numerous swans who have nested there for forty years or more float undisturbed. Gloomy forecasts about the disappearance of the swans have proved inaccurate and

the numbers have, if anything, seemed to increase. They apparently like the company of trams.

After Kylemore and again after the Red Cow roundabout – where even gloomier forecasts about interference with the traffic have proved unfounded – you are among fields and meadows, hedgerows and trees. In the distance a man walks his dog, horses crop the grass and the blue Dublin mountains loom all around. There is a wonderful sense of release about this part of the journey, reminding you of how near the fields and the mountains were once to us all.



Maiden voyage

Deborah Sweeney talks to regular and first time users of Luas and gets their views on the service

Emblematic of the financially robust times which our dynamic capital has experienced in recent years, I watch as the silvery Luas tram snakes its way along St. Stephen's Green and deposits itself at the terminus while its mirror image languorously departs, gaining speed and momentum as it goes. St. Stephen's Green is awash with people on this uncharacteristically balmy day in early June. In the background I notice a lady who sits quietly alone at a shelter, amid the countless commuters that career past. I approach Madeline Matthews and soon learn that she is, in fact, waiting for someone with whom she will take her maiden voyage aboard Dublin's Light Rail Network. "I'm ashamed to say it," she confides "but this is my first excursion on the Luas and it's quite an adventure I have to say. I'm waiting for somebody now otherwise I'd be on it already because it looks so fascinating," she says.

Madeline who is from Harold's Cross, (not currently on a Luas line), tells me that she usually takes the car into town but admits that the headache of circling the city looking for a car parking space has lead her to abandon such practices in recent times. "I would normally use the buses," she says, "but they are highly unpredictable because of the traffic problems. I am amazed sitting here looking at this. All the trams just keep coming in and out. I'm delighted. I can't wait to get on."

Undoubtedly excited about her trip, Madeline says that the design from the outside appears to be "streamlined and sleek" and that she anticipates a comfortable interior to boot. "I don't know what it's going to be like inside but it looks comfortable and it runs on time so I mean before anything else that's



a bonus isn't it?" Another pair who share Madeline's enthusiasm for the Luas are Emma Barrett and Danielle Gould from Sandyford. Currently working as supervisors in a cleaning company the girls work both in and out of town. In conjunction with their city centre socialising habits, the two, by their own admission, spend "a lot of time" in town and consequently on the Luas. "I think it's brilliant," says Danielle, "and it's so much handier".

Emma agrees saying that she hasn't been on a bus since the Luas went into operation. "You're guaranteed to be in town within a certain amount of time," says Danielle. "You can leave the house at quarter past eight and definitely be in town for nine. It's great." "With buses I used to wait for hours on end," adds Emma, "with no guarantee whatsoever".

The duo concur that the Luas' strong points are that there are plenty of

them running, they are never too packed and they are always on time. From an aesthetic point of view, however, the pair differ somewhat. "I don't like the purple colour," confesses Danielle who scrunches up her nose in distaste. "I'm not mad on it but I guess it's ok". Emma on the other hand Emma thinks that the tram looks "pretty cool" from the inside.

City centre resident and suburban employee, Allan Howes, also uses the Luas on a regular basis, thanks mainly to the fact that he works in The Card Company, which is situated in the Dundrum Shopping Centre. "The Luas dead handy," he says, "way better than the bus. It's so regular and there is no traffic or anything". When asked if he thought the service offered value for money, Allan is quick to respond. "It's great value for money. I get the monthly pass and it's dead handy. I can't think of anyway they could improve the service. It's great just the way it is," he says.

Emer Porter and young son Oisín are also self-professed Luas supporters. "I think the service is really good," says Emer. "You know I'm travelling with the child and I think it's really buggy friendly, which is great." Emer and Oisín use the network "just to pop in and out of town" from Dundrum. "It's absolutely a time saver, I mean I can get here in what, 10 minutes? It's fabulous," enthuses Emer who hurries off to board her tram.

I ponder the popularity of the Luas and the begrudgers who dealt it so much slack in its infancy and as I contemplate the fact that the Green line, which connects Sandyford to St. Stephen's Green, hurtles towards its first birthday (30th June 2004) an older lady who sat alone at a shelter catches my eye as she greets her friends, hops on a silvery tram and speeds off on the adventure she had earnestly awaited.

Thousands of customers are getting Smart

Thousands of Luas customers are now using the Luas Smart Card to pay for their travel on Luas. The Luas Smart Card is the quick, pay-as-you-go way to travel on Luas which was launched by the Minister for Transport Martin Cullen T.D. on March 21st this year.

To use the Smart Card, customers simply present their card to a blue platform validator before boarding and after exiting the tram. The validator emits an audible confirmation and the exact fare is



deducted from the card. For customers this means no queuing for tickets, and using the Smart Card is also cheaper than purchasing a single ticket from the ticket machine.

Cards can be topped up to a maximum value of €100 at

any Luas ticket machine and can be used to travel to all stops on both Luas lines. The Luas Smart Card is the second phase of the development of an integrated ticketing system for public transport in Dublin. The plan is to have an integrated Smart Card scheme in operation similar to those in Northern Ireland, London and Hong Kong. Dublin Bus, some private operators and the DART (Irish Rail) will have Smart Cards on their services during 2006. There will be an integrated Dublin Bus and Luas Smart Card in 2006.

Smart Cards cost €10 which includes €3 pre-loaded value and can be purchased online at www.luas.ie, over the phone by calling Freephone 1800 300 604, by postal application or at any existing Luas sales agent. Further information on the integrated ticketing system is available on www.rpa.ie

Customers' response to this new innovative way of paying has been extremely positive. Here's what some Smart Card users have to say about using the card:

"I use the Luas often but not often enough to purchase a weekly or monthly ticket. Using the smart card means I do not have to purchase single and return tickets all the time. Using the card is also cheaper than purchasing a single ticket from the ticket machine."

Elis Mannion, Killmainham

"I bought a Luas Smart Card because I use Luas to travel to several different destinations. Using the Smart Card means I do not have to purchase a different ticket for every journey so I save time queuing."

Noel Conroy, Blanchardstown

"I bought the Luas Smart Card because I can top it up with up to €100 so I can make a lot of Luas journeys without having to top up at a ticket machine. I purchased my card online so if it is lost or stolen I cancel it and get a replacement card free of charge."

Sharon Coetzee, Ballsbridge



Emma Barrett and Danielle Gould

Win one of 20 Luas Smart Cards with €50 preloaded value

To celebrate the success of the Luas Smart Card we're giving away 20 Luas Smart Cards with €50 preloaded travel value. To be in with a chance of winning simply complete the details below and post them to us at: Luas Smart Card competition, Railway Procurement Agency, Parkgate Business Centre, Parkgate Street, FREEPOST, Dublin 8. No stamp is necessary. Closing date for receipt of entries is the 14th of August 2005.

What is the maximum amount a Luas Smart Card can be topped up with?

Answer

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE NUMBER:

Tallaght
Hospital
Cookstown
Belgard
Kingswood
Red Cow
Kylemore
Bluebell
Blackhorse
Drimnagh
Goldenbridge
Suir Road
Rialto
Fatima
James's
Heuston
Museum
Smithfield
Four Courts
Jervis
Abbey Street
Busáras
Connolly

St Stephen's Green
Harcourt
Charlemont
Ranelagh
Beechwood
Cowper
Milltown
Windy Arbour
Dundrum
Balally
Kilmacud
Stillorgan
Sandyford

