



COMHAIRLE | CLARE
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

TUARASCÁIL MHÍOSÚIL ÓN PHRÍOMHFHEIDHMEANNACH

MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Márta / March
2021



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FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

CORPORATE SERVICES

Freedom of Information and Data Protection

2021 Statistics from 01/02/2021 to 25/02/2021:

- 25 Freedom of Information requests
- 0 Freedom of Information Internal Review applications
- 0 Appeals to Information Commissioner
- 1 Data Access Requests – Subject Access Request
- 8 Data Access Requests – Third Party Access Request, e.g. Gardaí
- 5 Data Breach – internal breach, not forwarded to DPC.

Procurement

The following tender competitions were published in February 2021

Brief Description	Response deadline
Provision of Services for Design and Development of cliffsofmoher.ie website and App	05/03/2021
Shannon Town & Environs Flood Relief Scheme_Storm Sewer Network Survey (CCTV, Pump Stations, Flow & Rainfall Monitoring)	08/03/2021
Grass maintenance Ennis Area	08/03/2021
Tender for Architect Led Integrated Design Team Consultancy Services For The Preparation of a Property Feasibility Study & Streetscape Enhancement Strategy for Corofin Village, Co. Clare	09/03/2021
N19 Shannon Airport Access Road Improvement Scheme - Ground Investigations	12/03/2021
Shannon Town & Environs Flood Relief Scheme_Topographical Survey	05/03/2021
Flagmount Bridges- Rehabilitation Works (Corlea Bridge,Pollaharan Bridge, Derrynacaw Bridge & Pollagoona Bridge)	16/03/2021
Shannon Town & Environs Flood Relief Scheme_Ground Investigation Works	16/03/2021

Ethics:

Part 15 of the Local Government Act 2001, which refers to the Ethical Framework for Local Government Services, came into operation on 1st January 2003. This places an obligation on relevant employees and elected members of the Council to complete and submit an Annual Declaration no later than the 28th February, 2021. In line with business process improvement an online platform for the submission of forms was implemented this year. It is an offence not to furnish an annual declaration and a report will be compiled and forwarded to the Chief Executive for non compliance with this section of the Act.

Register of Electors:

The Register of Electors for 2021/2022 was published on the 1st of February 2021 and came into effect on 15th February 2021 this register has a life of one year up to and including 14th February 2022. In the event of any elections or referenda being held this is the Register which will be used at the polling stations together with a supplement which will be compiled prior to elections or referenda. The total electorate on the 2021/2022 Register of Electors is 92,412. As a result of Britain leaving the EU British Citizens will no longer have a vote in the European Elections which are due to be held in 2024.

FINANCE

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage recently announced a commercial rates waiver for the first quarter of 2021 (25% of the annual rate bill). It will take the form of a credit in lieu of commercial rates on the rate payers accounts. This is to continue the supports available for ratepayers, and in recognition of the impact of the ongoing trajectory of COVID 19. This 3 month waiver has modified criteria and accordingly is a separate, standalone waiver scheme from last year's scheme. Any business that does not meet the eligibility criteria will be excluded. Per the terms of the waiver process Clare County Council has sent letters to all business in the excluded category informing them of the right of appeal. The strict qualifying criteria for appeal has been outlined to customers. Finance Rates team has commenced management of the appeals process.



Rare Disease Day

Pictured at Áras Contae an Chláir in Ennis, Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr. Mary Howard in support of the upcoming Rare Disease day-February 28th. On this day hundreds of rare disease patient organisations and their supporters from countries and regions all over the world will 'Light Up' their homes, businesses, buildings and monuments to raise awareness of people living with rare diseases, many of which have no treatment. Clare County Council are happy to light up Áras Contae an Chláir in Ennis to show support to the estimated 300,000 people living with rare diseases in Ireland

COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Office communicates and promotes Council activities and services and raises public awareness of issues of local and national interest.

Media releases issued during February included:

- St Patricks day Virtual event and competition- included social media promotion.
- Clare is Leading the Charge by Mapping the Skills and Talent of the Region for Increased Employment Opportunities and to Attract New Business. Which included social media promotion.
- Clare Apple Tree Project 2021 and social media promotion.
- Launch of Clare's 'Not Around Us' Campaign - Towards a Tobacco & Vape Free Clare
- New campaign to get Clare reading during Covid
- Plans submitted for Holy Island visitor centre

Irish language

Applications for the Scéim Deontais, Irish Language grants were received for adjudication this month. The applications include several exciting and innovative ideas due to come alive in the coming months. The total grant funding in this category is €5,000.

There are ongoing translations and signage issues with regard to the Irish Language Act 2003, itself currently under review. Planning is ongoing for Seachtain na Gaeilge which runs from 1st to 17th March and the Irish language officer is

seeking innovative ways to engage the public within current restrictions.

Social Media

The Communications Office continues to monitor and update social media channels with creative content to enhance engagement with the public and maintain awareness of the work of the Council.

Facebook

In February, the Communications Office:

- Posted 68 times
- Posts reached 86,925 people. Up 119%
- New Page Likes: 112
- New Followers: 128. Up 86%
- Post engagements 17,354. Up 18%

Twitter

- Posted 54 times
- Followers 6,877. up 53
- Earned 142k impressions
- 247 mentions
- 3,620 profile visits.

Design and Print Department

The procurement of a new colour digital printer is in its final stages and the new equipment should be installed during the coming weeks.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Work Area	Update
Recruitment	<p>The following recruitment competitions were progressed during February 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ganger (Confined) • Waste Enforcement Officer (Confined) • Customer Services (Security) (Confined) • Assistant Civil Defence Officer (Confined) • Canteen Supervisor (Confined) <p>The following competitions were advertised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traveller Liaison Officer Panel (Open) • Retained Station Officer (Killaloe) Panel (Confined) • Retained Firefighter Panel (Ennistymon) (Open) • Technician Grade II (Civil, Arch & Building) (Open) • Executive Technician (Open)
Learning and Development	<p>Training programmes / Webinars / Information Sessions held in February include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Junior Achievement Ireland Information Session • Universal Class with Clare Libraries (Online course - Information Session) • Microsoft Excel (online course) Basic/Intermediate • Disability Awareness Training • Climate Action Awareness Training • Children First Training • FOI for Decision Makers Training <p>Essential Skillz on-line Courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 74 participants on a variety of courses including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manual Handling - H&S Induction - Cyber Security - Ergowize <p>The remote delivery by the IPA of their programmes is continuing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate in Local Government Studies • Diploma in Local Government Studies
Employee Welfare	<p>Telephone counselling services continue to be available to staff and members. General employee welfare supports, initiatives, advice and guidance are available from the Employee Welfare Officer.</p>
Covid-19	<p>The Human Resources Department continued to liaise as necessary regarding Covid-19 matters.</p>
Unions	<p>The HR Department continued to engage and consult with Unions on various matters.</p>

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

PLANS FOR HOLY ISLAND VISITOR CENTRE



The development of a landmark tourism project in East Clare has taken a significant step forward with the announcement of plans for a proposed new Inis Cealtra (Holy Island) visitor centre in the heart of Mountshannon village.

The Inis Cealtra Visitor Experience project, which is being led by the Tourism Department of Clare County Council, will steer the tourism development and visitor management of what is locally referred to as the 'Jewel of The Lough Derg'.

Having taken 41 acres on the island into public ownership in 2015, Clare County Council has this week submitted a Part 8 Planning Application for The Old Rectory building overlooking Mountshannon Harbour and Lough Derg to progress a mainland visitor centre, which will interpret the seventh century monastic site of Inis Cealtra and its surrounds.

The Inis Cealtra Visitor Experience is a collaborative project involving Clare County Council, Ireland's Hidden Heartlands (Fáilte Ireland), Waterways Ireland, the Office of Public Works (OPW), National Monuments Service and National Parks and Wildlife Service.

At a time when the tourism sector faces unprecedented challenges, it is encouraging to see new and innovative tourism

projects being progressed. Holy Island is one of the most important historical and ecclesiastical sites in Ireland, and has important links to Brian Ború, the last High King of Ireland," added the Mayor. "The development of a visitor centre represents a significant step forward in realising the significant potential for the sustainable growth of the wider Clare tourism sector, as well as the conservation and promotion of the county's rich heritage.

The delivery of the proposed Inis Cealtra visitor centre facility on the shores of Lough Derg will introduce this iconic tourism attraction to a wider audience. It will further raise the profile of East Clare as an attractive visitor destination at a time when the domestic tourism sector is preparing for the reopening of the wider economy, and it also will complement the success of the Lough Derg Blueway which has delivered significant economic benefit for communities around the lake since its launch in 2018. The Elected members of Killaloe Municipal District are very supportive of this project.

Working with other agencies in the region Clare County Council, through the Clare Rural Development Strategy 2026 and the newly developed Clare Tourism Strategy 2030, identified Holy Island and Lough Derg as a key heritage asset with potential for sustainable tourism development.

The plans for the visitor centre represent an exciting milestone after two years of detailed preparatory work by the Council's Tourism Department. This project has been supported by Government with an RRDF (Rural Regeneration & Development Fund) Category 2 grant for the design and feasibility research stage. As we move to the next stage, I acknowledge that much time and effort has been invested into the preparation of a detailed grant application in order to secure funding for the development of the project.

This project seeks to conserve Inis Cealtra as a significant historical, ecclesiastical, archaeological and cultural site; as well as expand its attractiveness as a sustainable tourism destination and, in so doing, address population decline and rural deprivation by providing social and economic benefits derived from tourism for East Clare and the wider Mid-West region. This project is being Funded In partnership with the Department of Rural and Community Development through the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.

From an Ireland's Hidden Heartlands perspective the new visitor centre and facilities to service Inis Cealtra are a very exciting development on Lough Derg which will help further to establish the lake as a must-see visitor destination.

It will provide visitors with a significantly enhanced experience and will ensure the sustainable development of tourism in the region for the whole community.

The proposed development of visitor facilities at Inis Cealtra and Mountshannon are "a most welcome and extremely important tourism and navigational addition to the Shannon in general and Lough Derg in particular. This supports the work of Waterways Ireland.

Viewed through the lens of the recently completed Shannon Tourism Masterplan the project when completed will provide a step change in the repositioning of the Shannon as a key tourism and navigational destination helping to define the unique offering and more importantly providing a platform for the realisation of that offering.

The Inis Cealtra project has been the subject of considerable local consultation.

As part of the collaboration with other agencies, the Elected Members of Killaloe Municipal District received a briefing on the project recently. The project has also involved close engagement with Mountshannon Community Council.

The making of a planning application is the first step in preparing for the development of the visitor centre. The next step awaits an announcement of Government funding for which a grant application has been submitted for the actual development of the project.

Still used as a burial ground, the ruins and buildings still standing on Holy Island date back as far as the 7th century when the monastic site was established by St. Caimin. Buildings on the island include a 24-metre-high Round Tower, an Oratory, and several churches. The Island lies close to the village of Mountshannon and is on the UNESCO World Heritage site tentative list as an Early Medieval Monastic site along with Clonmacnoise, Durrow, Glendalough, Kells and Monasterboice.

The Part 8 application in relation to The Old Rectory, Mountshannon, is available to view on the planning section of the Clare County Council website at www.clarecoco.ie.



Healthy Clare launches ‘Not Around Us’ Campaign



On National No Smoking Day, the 17th of February 2021, the “Not Around Us” (NAU) campaign was launched in County Clare. The campaign is about promoting an environment where it is easier for those who smoke to quit and stay quit and helping to de-normalise smoking for the next generation.

The Not Around Us campaign is another step Towards a Tobacco/Vape Free Clare. The campaign is in response to the government’s national target for a less than 5% smoking prevalence in Ireland by 2025. It supports Chapter 7 of the Tobacco Free Ireland policy - denormalisation of smoking and protection of children and young people.

Healthy Clare is leading this campaign in partnership with a range of stakeholders, including the HSE’s QUIT-Mid-West team, Clare Comhairle na nÓg, Clare Children and Young People’s Services Committee, Clare Youth Services, Clare Sports Partnership, Greener Clare and Healthy Ireland.

THE AIM OF NOT AROUND US IS TO:

- Help protect children and young people from second-hand smoke exposure.
- Contribute to the denormalisation of smoking for children and young people.
- Reduce environmental nuisance, cost of cleaning and damage that discarded tobacco products create.
- Signpost the HSE Quit services.

Signage is available for different settings (e.g. at school gates, in a playground, designated areas at festivals and window stickers). Organisations interested in the signage should go to the Healthy Clare webpage <https://www.clarecoco.ie/services/community/healthy-clare>

Geopark Code of Practice training:



A very successful month with the Geopark Code of Practice training for the Burren Ecotourism Network with over 70 local business attendees in our Code of Practice Webinar series. So far, we have looked at our role within UNESCO, our local Geology and Universal Design in the Geopark and how the Leave No Trace principles can support sustainable tourism in the Geopark. We are looking forward to developing our Geopark Code of Practice training in the weeks ahead.

Elected Members fund response to Food and Fuel Poverty – Covid 19

At the Clare Covid-19 Community Response Forum in January, the very real issue of food and fuel poverty was raised. This issue is not unique to Clare and is a long-term socio-economic challenge and is reflective of the issues coming into particular focus during Covid-19. An immediate Covid-19 response was needed. This wider issue requires a long-term solution across agencies with this remit. This has been noted by participants on the Forum.

Interim funding mechanisms were explored locally. The Elected Members provided an immediate response of €10,000 from their GMA to establish a central fund in response to this emergency need.



In April 2020, Clare experienced a food/fuel poverty emergency which was largely addressed through the COVID-19 Emergency Fund (Round 1) under the remit of the LCDC, with 8 organisations in Clare receiving total funding for food & fuel provision of circa €45k. This seems to have sustained the required emergency response to this issue throughout 2020.

Following January’s meeting of the Forum a Food/Fuel sub-committee was formed which comprised of the four Family Resource Centres, Clarecare, St. Vincent de Paul, Mid-West Simon Community, CLDC and Obair (supported by Rural & Community Staff).

Through the sub group we were able to establish the reasons behind the emergency need some of which included:

- heat and light costs increasing as more people are required to spend time at home under the level 5 restrictions,
- school/childcare closures resulting in families having to meet additional food needs for children, where these facilities would have provided breakfast/lunch,
- older people struggling to meet fuel costs challenged by the lack of alternative heated spaces to use i.e. libraries, shopping centres,
- missed fuel payments creating additional medium term pressure, where a family are cut off and require more funds for reconnection/deposit which further impacts on their ability to provide other necessities.

It was agreed that a collaborative funding application would be advanced under the current round of Covid-19 Funding. This funding application was submitted and will be included in those recommended to the LCDC for approval on February 24th. The funding application is for €10,300 and if approved by the LCDC, will ensure food and fuel supports to the most disadvantaged individuals and families in the county. It is estimated that the fund will support 375 families/individuals in need of emergency food and fuel as a direct result of Covid-19 across the County for a period of 8 – 10 weeks.



The Food/Fuel Sub-Committee of the Forum will meet to review these socio economic issues as appropriate throughout the year in conjunction with the Country’s response to the challenges of Covid-19.

Framework for Local Authority
Community Support Response



Coronavirus
COVID-19
Public Health
Advice

Smartphone Project for Older People

The Age Friendly and Development Officer is working with the Clare Older People’s Council (OPC) on ways to help older people in Clare “stay connected” at this time. Since the majority of activities during level 5 restrictions take place online, it was agreed during a recent Community Response Forum meeting that digital support for older people is of the utmost importance to improve social connection and combat isolation.

The OPC have managed to secure a small amount of grant funding through the Community Support Scheme (CSS) which they have used to purchase approx. 40 smartphones from Vodafone. They wrote to the 4 Family Resource Centres & Clarecare who are delivering befriending services, to identify seniors most in need of these devices i.e. have no means to purchase a smartphone, may be suffering from feelings of isolation and loneliness.

Each device will be accompanied by a “Staying Digitally Connected” booklet developed by the Clare Age Friendly Programme which incorporates Age Action’s “Getting Started Kit” as well as other useful information to support older people.



Twining gift reciprocated to mark the occasion of the 5th anniversary

Gift reciprocated to mark the occasion of the 5th anniversary of the establishment of friendship between Yunnan Province of the People’s Republic China and Clare County Council and the people of the Burren & Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark, County Clare.

Pictured with the painting, titled “Burren Summer Coast” are Mayor of Clare, Cllr Mary Howard along with Pat Dowling, CE, Clare County Council.

The medium used for this painting is acrylic on canvas, and the artist Manus Walsh describes it as “The Burren, (Gaelic for “Rocky Place”). This unique landscape, with its terraced hills, sloping down to the Atlantic Ocean, its ancient prehistoric monuments, and it’s constantly changing light and shade, has long been and will continue to be, inspiration in my work.”



WEST CLARE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Smart Solar Big Belly Bins

Kyron Limited recently supplied us with 10 solar powered compacting bins. We have placed these in 3 pods of 2 bins (1 waste & 1 recycling) in Henry Street & Market Square, Kilrush & Cappagh (near the beach & playground) & on the promenade in Lahinch.

Big belly bins use solar power to compact the deposited waste. This means the bins can hold significantly more waste than standard street bins. In addition, each bin uses smart technology to alert us when it is full.

These two measures mean these Bins –

- Reduce unnecessary collection runs;
- Reduce collection frequency.

This is a Pilot project in WCMD where we hope to reduce the overall number of Municipal Waste (standard street litter) bins on the streets of Kilrush & Lahinch.

We would like to thank all our elected members – who have contributed some of their GMA towards the provision of these Big Belly Bins.



Big Belly Bins
Pod of 2 bins (1 waste & 1 recycling) recently installed at Cappagh, Kilrush.



Integrated solar panels in top of bins.

Road Resurfacing

Dún na Mara in Doonbeg is a housing development that has been taken-in-charge by Clare County Council. Unfortunately, the public road (L-2028) outside some of the houses had deteriorated. This led to passing traffic splashing water from the resultant puddles onto adjacent houses & into gardens.

Lagan Construction, on behalf of Clare County Council, recently planed & resurfaced approximately 40 metres of the roadway in front of the affected houses. The splashing problem has stopped and residents have expressed their thanks to Clare County Council.



Localised Planing & Resurfacing Works
Recently completed at Dún na Mara, Doonbeg.



Localised Planing & Resurfacing Works
Recently completed at Dún na Mara, Doonbeg.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

HOUSING

Level 5 COVID restrictions continue and in that sustained high demand for housing services, most staff are now remote working and remain fully committed to the provision of services albeit that the manner of service delivery has changed.

Housing

The housing public interface is available by appointment only in line with Level 5 restrictions. Appointments are facilitated only where the business of the appointment is deemed necessary by the appropriate line manager for the responsible service area.

The majority of our construction projects are suspended again for compliance with Level 5 COVID restrictions and in the interest of public health. Only projects that can now be delivered before the 30th April are authorised to continue at this time. In addition the return of vacant stock and necessary maintenance works are proceeding.

Housing in numbers

Breakdown of tenancies by Municipal District (including RAS and leasing):		
	Social housing*	HAP
Ennis	1150	646
Shannon	604	153
West Clare	925	394
Killaloe	379	163
Inter Authority HAP		57
TOTAL	3058	1413

2,647 LA tenancies	1,413 HAP tenancies	215 RAS tenancies
284 leased properties	2,664 LA properties	3,123 Rent accounts

Summary of activity

COVID 19 restrictions continue to impact on service areas with essential services as determined continuing. The impact of these challenges is reflected in the numbers hereunder.

Housing allocations	
Offers issued from(23.01.2021 to 22.02.2021)	47
Offers refused	5

AHB nominations	14
Tenancies signed up	22
Tenancies terminated	10

Voids work programme	
Voids/casual vacancies	44
Acquired properties (works on-going)	2
Average vacancy period	150 days
Number voids returned to stock	5
Average spend	€8,491

Position at the end of February 2021.

Housing maintenance calls	
February	363

Private rented inspections

*Inspections suspended for January under Level 5 Covid-19 restrictions.

Private rented inspections	
February	0

Housing grants

Grants approved for January 2021		
Grant type	Number of approvals	Value of works (€)
Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability	9	73,150
Housing Aid for Older People	15	83,475
Mobility Aids Grant	10	47,585
Total	34	204,210

Rebuilding Ireland home loan Homeless

Homeless services are an essential service and remain available to anyone who is homeless or at risk of

4 Applications	0 Approvals	2021 To 23/02/2021
85 Loans approved	63 Loans drawn down	Cumulative to date: 23/02/2021

HOMELESS

Homeless services are an essential service and remain available to anyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness. The Clare Homeless Action Team (HAT) office is open by appointment during office hours and can be contacted on 065 684 6291. Please be advised that due to the demand for the service all calls cannot be immediately answered, please leave a detailed message which will be responded to.

The interagency Homeless Action Team continues to support clients in the transition from homeless services to accommodation while also endeavouring to prevent clients from becoming homeless. Consequently, the team with the assistance of CCC HAP place finder prevented 2 households from entering homeless services by supporting them to source alternative accommodation. In addition, we continue our focus on exits from homeless services and during the period 22nd January 2021 to 21st February, 2021 7 households exited from homeless services; of these 7 households; 2 housed in own door properties through HAP, leasing, AHB and local authority allocations, 5 discharged/self-discharged and left homeless services.

Homeless presentations to 21st February, 2021	
New presentations	12
Repeat presentations	59

Status as of 21st February, 2021:				
	Families	Adults	Dependents	Providers
Laurel Lodge	0	12	0	1
Cusack Lodge	5	7	9	1
Westbrook	0	14	0	1
Ashford Court	5	11	5	1
Winter Initiative	0	10	0	1
EA Families	4	5	6	2
EA Individuals	0	11	0	9
TOTAL	14	70	20	16

KILLALOE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Schedule of Municipal District Works

Allocations have been received from the Department in relation to the Non-National roads grants. Grant categories include Restoration Maintenance, Restoration Improvement, Drainage & Discretionary Improvement. Technical Staff in the area are compiling the Works lists and will engage with the members in relation to same.

Active Travel 2021.

Killaloe MD have submitted numerous beneficial projects in relation to Active Travel. This fund, led by the NTA have sought initial expressions of interest in works which meet the Active Travel criteria.

Low Cost Safety :

A further allocation was received in relation to upgrade works at Henchys Cross on the R352. Killaloe MD will work with the Road Design Section throughout 2021 to bring these works forward.

Killaloe Ballina Mobility Plan:

The Killaloe Ballina Mobility Plan is currently at pre-draft stage. Clare County Council is working with Tipperary County Council and consultants currently. It is hoped to bring the plan to draft stage in the near future.

Level 5 Restrictions

The outdoor staff team continue to provide essential repair and maintenance to the Areas roads during Level 5 restrictions. Works are concentrated on drainage to the sides of Regional Roads at this time.

Update on capital programme

SHIP capital	No. approved	Current stage	Start date	Completion date
Shannon PPP	51	Under Construction - Ess. Designation 23 Units – Pro. Complete Q2 2021 28 Units – Pro. Complete Q3 2021	Q4 2019	Q3 2021
Ashline, Ennis	40	Under Construction. Delays owing to Covid-19. Forecast completion Q1 2022	Q3 2020	Q1 2022
Milltown Malbay	27	Under Construction. Delays owing to Covid-19. Forecast completion Q1 2022	Q4 2020	Q1 2022
Tulla	25	Under Construction. Delays owing to Covid-19. Forecast completion Q1 2022	Q4 2020	Q1 2022
Newmarket on Fergus	18	Under Construction. Delays owing to Covid-19	Q3 2020	Q4 2021
Doonbeg Sites	2	Under Construction - Ess. Designation	Q4 2020	Q2 2021
Scarriff	18	Stage 2 app. refused by DHPLG. Rev. stage 2 app. being prepared.	Q3 2021	Q3 2022
Roslevan, Tulla Rd.	8	Stage 3 app. with DHPLG.	Q2 2021	Q2 2022
Doonbeg Lands	8	Stage 1 approved by DHPLG. Stage 2 app. being prepared.	Q3 2021	Q3 2022
Clarecastle	2	Single Stage approved by DHPLG. Contract ready to be awarded.	Q1 2021	Q4 2021
Drumcliff Rd. Ennis	26	Stage 1 approved by DHPLG. Procuring Design Team	Q4 2021	Q4 2022
Sixmilebridge	16	Stage 1 approved by DHPLG. Design Team Appointed.	Q4 2021	Q4 2022
Ennistymon	30	Stage 1 approved by DHPLG. Procuring Design Team	Q4 2021	Q4 2022
Ballaghboy, Quin Road, Ennis (TA)	5	Stage 1 approved by DHPLG. Procuring Design Team	Q3 2021	Q3 2022
Subtotal	276			
Bruachlan, Westbury (CoOperative Housing Ireland)	22	CALF – Property transfer complete, reapply for planning permission	Q4 2021	Q4 2022
Gleann Cora, Newmarket on Fergus (CoOperative Housing Ireland)	2	CALF Acquisition approved. Under construction – to close in 2021.	Q1 2020	Q2 2021
Edenvale (Newgrove Housing Association)	4	CAS – Stage 2 with Dept. for approval	Q3 2020	Q4 2021
Ballymacaula, Ennis (Cluid)	2	Part V	Q3 2020	Q4 2021
Subtotal	30			
Total	306			

CULTURAL SERVICES – LIBRARY, ARTS, MUSEUM, ARCHIVES

Clare County Library

Library Programming



Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Mary Howard and Pat Dowling, Chief Executive of Clare County Council being presented with copies of This is Happiness by Clare County Librarian Helen Walsh as part of Clare Reads, Ireland Reads and Keep Well Campaign.

Clare libraries are participating in the Ireland Reads promotion. 500 copies of Niall William's "This is happiness" has been purchased and delivered to nursing homes, direct provision centres and other community groups this month.

Two Parent and Baby sign language workshops were successfully delivered by Claire Glynn. There is great demand for these workshops, which teach parents how to communicate with their babies and young children by signing, but it also enables parents of young children to connect and share their experiences.

Right to Read programme

The children's librarian is currently planning programmes for Seachtain na Gaeilge, Teen Week and World Book Day events. Staff in branches have uploaded four story readings online for young children, and staff in Miltown Malbay library have created a Chinese New Year craft session video for children.

Creative Ireland

The Creative Ireland Project Award grant schemes was advertised on 28th January with a closing date of 12th February. The theme is 'Creativity in the Community' and CI Clare invited applications for any form of creative work with a public interface/engagement. Twenty-two applications were received for the grant scheme and successful applicants will be informed by the end of February.

Decade of Centenaries

The closing date for the Decade of Centenaries Project Award grant scheme was 5th February. Applications were encouraged from community groups and historical and commemorative

groups who wish to commemorate events which happened in Clare during 1921. Successful applicants included the West Clare War of Independence Commemoration Committee, Glenwood Ambush Memorial Committee, Mid Clare Brigade Commemoration Committee, Clare Roots Society, Inis Cathaigh Kilrush Comhaltas, Lissycasey Historical Committee, Joe Ó Muircheartaigh, Oidhreacht an Chláir, Lough Graney Community Development Association, Brian Spring, Christy McNamara and the East Clare Memorial Committee. All commemorative events and projects will be completed by November 2021.

Healthy Ireland

Gillian McConnell, consultant dietitian, delivered an online Nutrition workshop and it was attended by both Council Staff and members of the Community. A follow-up workshop on 'Food to boost your mood' is planned for March.

Work Matters

Jayarel Consulting delivered an interview preparation workshop online as part of the Work Matters programme.

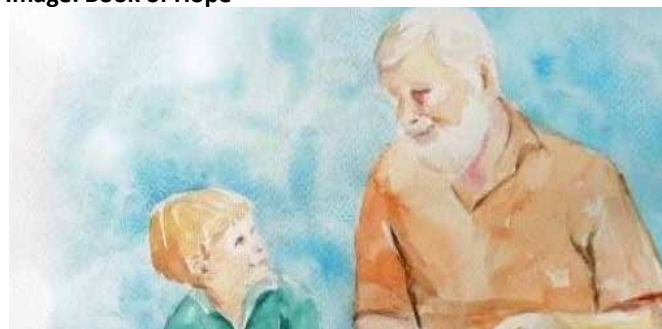
Clare Arts Office

An audit of the needs of the Festivals and Events sector in the County was completed and work began on the development of a training programme as part of a Capacity Building initiative with Festivals

First round adjudication of 130 applications for Engine Shorts took place - a scheme to support and develop emerging film makers in Clare, run in conjunction with Film in Limerick and Limerick and Tipperary Arts Offices, and supported by the LCETB. Adjudication of 26 Duala "Creator in Residence" Scheme proposals took place of which 11 were international applicants. Under the Community Supports Scheme, 84 applications were adjudicated upon as part of the Arts Grants

In addition, 4 arts proposals were adjudicated upon to commemorate the "Decade of Centenaries".

Image: Book of Hope



Clare Museum

The photographing of the collection is ongoing and another batch of images and their captions are awaiting to be uploaded to the museum website. These are items from 2014. A video on St Bridget's Crosses was made for the "Keep Well" campaign and was posted online, a second video on Butter Making will be uploaded shortly. Also, 35 items were catalogued during the month.

The curator is currently working on the Museum's strategic plan and on a new draft Education Policy for submission to the SPC shortly. Clare Museum's Community Access Project (whereby the Museum received funding for camera equipment and a showcase) is featured on the Heritage Council's website. <https://www.heritagecouncil.ie/news/news-features/clare-museum-community-access-project>

Clare Archives

Local Studies added a small archive relating to one of Clare's principal families of Corcomroe, the O'Loughlens of the Burren, https://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/library/local-studies/o%27loghlen_family.htm

Clare Archives

Work continues on digitising the Electoral Registers.

CULTURAL SERVICES

stock deliveries to homes around the county continued:

1836 DELIVERIES

Online Resources – newspaper access and e-audio books lead the field in the e-resource usage

1698 EBOOKS

1998 AUDIO BOOKS

1214 E-MANGAZINES

1109 ONLINE COURSES

6258 PRESS READER

104
Transparent
Languages

18 Council staff attended an information session held by library staff on access to online courses available from library resources in February. The rollout of TTRs educational licences continued.

Staff are currently piloting one to one digital literacy support over the phone for specific groups. This service will be expanded after the pilot.

Marketing continues with Facebook, Instagram and Twitter being the principle platforms in use



- 145 posts
- 1,460 likeS
- 535 shares
- 182 comments



- 111 posts
- 398 likes
- 165 retweets
- 15 comments



- 92 posts,
- 1,320 likes
- 39 comments

SPORTS & RECREATION



CLARE SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

Since the beginning of this challenging year, the staff of the LSP have been involved in a number of high level and important projects that have been feeding into the strategic program areas (Target Groups).



Fig 1: Clare LSP Program Strategic Areas

These areas play an important role in how we continue to support and sustain participation in sport and physical activity in the county. As a partnership, we roll out our projects through strategic partnerships.

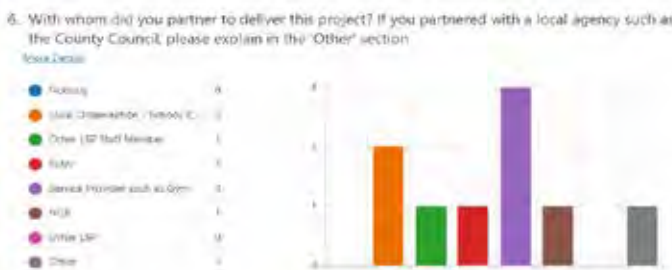


Fig 2: Clare LSP Partnerships Jan / Feb 2021

These partnerships are important as they allow us to be efficient in all of our resources thus maximizing our outputs and outcomes. Finally, we target our projects into categories such as: - Participation, Education and Training, Capacity Building, Support and Information Sharing.

Level 5 restrictions are such that there are limited facilities open, that said, Active Ennis/ Kilrush are engaged in a number of ancillary projects.

ACTIVE ENNIS LEISURE COMPLEX remains closed. The site is open to accommodate access to the Bring Banks between 9am-5pm Monday to Friday.

ACTIVE ENNIS JOHN O’SULLIVAN PARK, LEES ROAD The Park is open to the public for individual exercise only. No bookings or organised training/matches/gatherings or events permitted. All users are advised to observe the Government/HSE guidelines.

ACTIVE ENNIS TIM SMYTHE PARK This Park is also open to the public for individual exercise only. No bookings or organised training/matches/gatherings or events are permitted. Playgrounds are accessible with appropriate parental supervision.

It must be noted just how vital and important our Parks are in the current climate. We are experiencing a significant increase in users, and we must acknowledge how everybody demonstrates an impressive regard for social distancing and the safety of others.



BANNER BUDDIES

Our 8 week virtual physical activity program was run over the two months. It proved to be a great success. To engage the participants, we used a blended mix of podcasts, work programs, videos and a closed social media group. Over 300 people signed up to it and all evidence suggests that most continued and still continue to engage. One participant noted the power of the program:-



COVID 19 GRANT SCHEME

Covid 19, like all other areas of society, has had a major negative impact on sporting organisations throughout the county. We were in the fortunate position to be able to administer a Grant Scheme to support these clubs.



Fig 3: Clare LSP Return to Sport Grant Scheme

75 clubs in Clare were approved for funding through this grant to assist them with the costs of returning to sport during Covid-19. The total amount allocated was €70,276.38. To drawdown their funding each club had to supply us with the following:

- Covid-19 related receipts dated May 2020 – December 2020
- Proof of insurance
- Bank details
- To be signed up to our club directory/facilities audit

There has been €67,189.38 paid out to date to 72 clubs, with the remaining to be paid out to the remaining 3 clubs in the coming weeks.

DIRECT PROVISION / ASYLUM SEEKER SUPPORT #KEEPWELL

The design of the of two brochures about physical activity and healthy eating for those in direct provision, one for adults and the other for children, has been finalized. Main languages from the three direct provision centres in Clare have been confirmed, fig 4.



Fig 4: #keepwell brochures for asylum seeker and direct provision centres. Brochures are being translated into relevant languages such as Arabic, Somali, Georgia etc.

ACTIVE HOMEWORK

A total of 7201 children took part in our Active Homework Challenge that was completed in January. This was a virtual challenge where our development officers linked with primary schools to demonstrate activities that enhance Physical Literacy. Videos and worksheets were provided to the schools and we linked with local gyms and individuals to host activities for us.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

TRANSPORTATION

Roadworks Programme and Operations

Clare County Council has received its road grant allocations for 2021. The grant allocation from the Department of Transport (DoT) for regional and local road maintenance and improvement is €25.267m, which represents a 3.2% increase on the allocation received for 2020. The initial grant allocation from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) for national road maintenance and improvement is €5.312m, which results in total grant funding of €30.579m being available for the delivery of the Roadworks Programme.

The Roadworks Programme for 2021 has been prepared as part of the SMDW for 2021 and input was sought from the elected members as part of the preparation of same. The 2021 SMDW will be presented at the four Municipal District meetings in March for consideration by the elected members.

Strategic Transportation

Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy

The Draft Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS) document was approved by the National Transport Authority (NTA) Board during the summer and the draft Report and the Executive Summary have been published. The supporting documents have been developed. The LSMATS public consultation, to which all Members were invited, was launched by the NTA on 2nd September and was on public display for an 8 week period up to 30th October. There were over 112 submissions during the process which the NTA are now considering. A second round of consultation will commence in Spring 2021 with a view to finalising the strategy by September/October 2021.

Connecting Ireland

This project commenced in 2021 and is being led by the National Transport Authority. The aim of the project is to improve the public transport service provision in Clare by improving scheduling, dealing with gaps in the service and by introducing new public transport routes. Liaison and information sharing has commenced between the NTA and Clare County Council Municipal Districts and Road Design Section to support the NTA in a comprehensive rollout of the project.

Active Travel Programme 2021

Further to the announcement of the Active Travel Programme 2021, Clare County Council has engaged with the NTA, the funding Authority for this programme, in formulating a portfolio of projects across all MD's in Clare. The Active Travel Fund is part of the overall Sustainable Transport Measures Grant (STMG) Programme and is Multi-Annual, and predominately urban-focused.

The STMG Active Travel Programme supports:

- Development of active travel network strategies
- Provision of new / widened footpaths or segregated cycle tracks
- Reconstruction / renewal of defective footpaths or cycle tracks
- Improved crossing facilities for pedestrians/cyclists including raised surfaces, zebra crossings
- Provision of lighting and signalised crossings including the provision of cycle parking
- Dishing of footpaths at junctions, raised pedestrian crossings, and reducing road width at crossing points
- Permeability measures to support improved access within and between local communities
- Setting appropriate speed limits in accordance with the Guidelines for setting and managing speed limits in Ireland and/or introducing a "Slow Zone"
- Pedestrian / cycle bridge rehabilitation works
- Design work in respect of the provision of a future pedestrian / cycle bridge

Public lighting

Cork County Council published the tender for the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project in County Clare and four other counties on 1st October, 2020. The tenders for the contract and the consultants are currently in review stage.

For the benefit of Councillors, the following are the options available to facilitate reporting of public lighting faults:

- Internet: Direct reporting on our website – www.airtricitysolutions.com;
- Phone: Airtricity Utility Solutions dedicated call centre – 1850 372 772;
- Local Authority Identification – via Local Authority's website or contact number.

Road Design Office

Current projects – monthly update

It should be noted that this monthly project update is relevant only to the current period and the milestone progressions during that period.

TII road safety projects – monthly progress

Project	Update – February 2021
HD15 and HD 17 sites site inspections, with TII Regional Road Safety Officers, were conducted on 29th September. A progress meeting with the TII was held on 27th January, 2021.	
TII HD15 sites	<p>For the N85:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The TII are reviewing additional design proposals for the Lahinch Rd/Shanaway Rd. An additional revised design for Clareabbey roundabout has been submitted to the TII for consideration, focusing on reducing speed and pedestrian crossing points. <p>For the N68:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Derrycrossaun junction design and feasibility report is completed and has been submitted to the TII for approval. Principal project approval received from the TII in January 2021.
TII HD17 sites	<p>For the N68:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further to onsite inspections at Cranny, Crag and Parknamoney junctions the TII have requested the RDO to progress detailed site surveys, conceptual designs and an option feasibility report all to be progressed in 2021. <p>For the N67:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topographical surveys of the identified junctions for phase 1 is now complete i.e. Galway Border to Ballyvaughan. Design and Feasibility Report for phase 1 is progressing, with land acquisition required at 2 junctions. A revised design for Minster Place, Kilkee has been approved by the TII. A detailed design, Feasibility Report and Preliminary Design Report are being prepared for submission to the TII in early 2021

Low Cost Safety Schemes 2021: Monthly Progress February 2021:

Road Number	Location of LCS	Description of Proposed LCS	Progress Update
R352	R352/ Corrovorrin junction, Tulla Road, Ennis	LCS to improve the traffic movements of the junction from Kevin Barry Ave onto the R352.	Survey substantially completed
Junction of R462 & R471	Pedestrian crossing in the Square, Sixmilebridge	Provide a controlled pedestrian crossing point across on the R462 in Sixmilebridge.	Survey Completed
R478 / L10381	Doonagore	Improve sightlines approaching R478 from southern side L10381.	Survey Completed
L4190-7/L8272-0	Lismulbreeda	Warning signs and to slow down traffic on the approaches to the bend.	Survey Completed
R463/R466	O'Briens Bridge / Bridgetown Junction	LCS with new signage and lining. Improve sightlines by removing existing vegetation.	Survey substantially completed

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Road Number	Location of LCS	Description of Proposed LCS	Progress Update
R352	R352 Spancill Hill to Tooreen	Renew existing road lining, cut back vegetation, SLOW markings on road, 80kph repeater signs, centre and edge lining.	Survey to be Completed
L-3050-0	Clonlara primary school on the L3050-0	Provide a controlled pedestrian crossing point at the primary school in Clonlara.	Survey to be Completed
R476/L5260	Kilnaboy	Improve sightline exiting the L5260 on to the R476. Improving signage and lining at the junction, removing vegetation.	Survey Completed
R465-82	Broadford National School on the R465	Provide a controlled pedestrian crossing point serving the National School the GAA sports grounds and a housing estate	Survey Completed
L2050	Cahill's Hill on Local road from Killmer Ferry to Cooraclare	Improved signage and a pull in area for motorists.	Survey Completed
L4058-2 & L4062	L4058/L4062 Junction in Feakle	Provide a controlled pedestrian crossing point serving the National School and two housing estates	Survey Completed
R460/L1010	Lough Bunny	Improve sightlines onto the L1010 from both sides of junction. Improving signage and lining at the junction, removing vegetation.	Survey to be Completed
L4611-0	L4611-0 Newpark Ennis	Provide a controlled crossing point. Where footpaths are discontinuous.	Survey to be Completed

Other Projects: Monthly Update February 2021:

Project	Location of LCS
EuroVelo 1	Funding of €182,000 was secured from the Department of Transport (DoT) for the implementation of the EuroVelo route signage in County Clare. Procurement is completed and the signage installation is near completion. Consultation with community groups has commenced to identify optimal locations for map boards and cycle stands. Marketing and promotion of the route is being progressed.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Project	Location of LCS
Liaison with NTA regarding bus stops	<p>Wheelchair accessible bus stop on Bothar Linne, Shannon Town:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The design is completed and issued to the Shannon MD. The project received €30,733 in NTA funding. A Preliminary Safety and Health Plan have been issued to the Shannon MD. Works commenced in late November. Works well underway with the remainder to be completed in 2021. Works will recommence once Covid 19 restrictions permit.
Liaison with NTA regarding bus shelters	NTA have assessed proposed locations. 6 new bus shelters (Kilkee, Lisdoonvarna, Crusheen, Newmarket, Limerick Rd, Ennis and Westbury) and upgrading 5 existing bus shelters in Shannon. Prior to a formal application the NTA have requested costs relating to the civil works. Contract documents have been completed and uploaded on E-tenders. Tenders have been received are currently being assessed.
Road Schedule & Queries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Search requests from the public and Municipal Districts regarding the road schedule are being carried out on an ongoing basis. Updates to the roads schedule is carried out as updates are being received.
Circular RW 10/2020 - Active Travel Measures Allocations 2020	2020 element completed. Active Travel Carry Over List – Surveying and designs have initiated in conjunction with MD's
Circular RW 09/2020 - Climate Change Adaptation Allocations 2020	2020 element completed. The 2021 remaining element is near completion.
Circular RST 04/2019 Safe Overtaking Width for Cyclists Signs	Clare County Council received an allocation of €29,350 from the Department of Transport for the provision of safe overtaking width signs for cyclists. Installation process is ongoing
Cycle counts	Ongoing monitoring of cycle counts at four locations in Ennis and one in Lahinch.
Planning Reports	Planning reports are being provided for the Planning Department on a continuous basis
Cycle Infrastructure County Clare	Surveying and mapping of the existing cycle infrastructure for the entire county has commenced and will continue as an ongoing project for 2021. Collaboration with IT & GIS has also commenced to find an optimal solution to develop an information map available for public view/download as an app.
NTA Active Travel Circular (2021)	An active travel Projects Proposition List was submitted to the NTA for a wide range of active travel projects across all MD's on the 1st February 2021.
R352 Henchy's Cross Junction	A Specific Improvement Grant Application for R352 (Henchy's Cross) upgrade was submitted to the Department of Transport on the 18th November 2020 in order to progress the project to the next phase. The Department of Transport has allocated €100,000 in February 2021 for specific improvement works.

Bridge Rehabilitation – Monthly Update February 2021:

2021 Bridge Rehabilitation grant is €687,000 for 30no. Bridges

- AA Screening: Assessing tender returns prior to appointing Consultant;
- Bunratty Bridge: Meeting on site to be arranged with Waiting National Monuments when Covid restrictions are lifted.
- Stonepark Bridge: Fisheries Derogation applied for, road closure will be required.
- Smithstown Bridge: Delayed with water levels and Covid restrictions.
- Ballyalla Bridge: Delayed with water levels and Covid restrictions.
- Sragh Bridge: Structural investigations to be complete when Covid restrictions are lifted.
- Corlea Bridge: Tender for repair works issued
- Pollagoona Bridge: Tender issued
- Derrynacaw Bridge: Tender issued
- Latoon Masonry Bridge: Design ongoing- tender drawings issued for review

Other Bridge Works

- Moanagh Bridge: Emergency repair works completed, other work to be completed when water levels reduce
- Killestry Bridge: Malachy Walsh & Partners appointed as designers, design commenced
- Wooden Bridge Springfield: Survey to be carried out, meeting to be arranged with Waterways Ireland when Covid restrictions are lifted

Health and Safety

During the past month the Health and Safety Team continued to provide support and guidance in the format of Covid-19 risk assessments to the Crisis Management Team and all Departments of Clare County Council in the delivery of essential services and in accordance with the Governments National Framework for Living with Covid 19. In addition, the Health and Safety Team continued to review and assess National, Sectoral and Operational Covid-19 Guidance Documents in order to revise and update the Councils Covid-19 Response Plan. A Schedule of Covid 19 Inspections were completed to check compliance with the Covid 19 Response Plan. The Health and Safety Team continued to progress their Schedule of Workplace Risk Assessment reviews and programme of Health & Safety Inspections.

General Design

The General Design Office are delivering the following projects across the organisation;

DigiClare Hubs – site selection, design, tender, contract management

- Carron at Michael Cusack Centre (completed and open for business), Corofin, Cross (90% complete) , Flagmount, Kilkee (completed and open for business), Kilmihil, Kilrush, Sixmilebridge and Ennis (80% complete)

It should be noted that due to current Covid restrictions construction sites are currently closed.

Economic Development & Property

- County Museum Refurbishment – Contractor appointed and ready to start
- Quin Road Campus Development – Phase 4 commenced
- HQ & Libraries (Space Remodelling)
- Council Property Management - Claureen Property Clean up; Masterplans input; Property Assessments
- Feasibility Study for Enterprise Centre
- Tullyvarraga Hall – Access and Building Repairs; Designed and Tendered
- Canteen Modifications at HQ
- Bunratty Village Perimeter Walkway Proposal

Rural Development & Tourism

- Ennistymon Hub Basement unit
- Cliffs of Moher Walking Paths – 90% Complete
- Burren Discovery Trail & Burren Signage Plan
- George's Head Kilkee
- Lough Derg Amenity Trail
- Loophead Lighthouse Visitor Centre
- Burial Grounds: Countywide - Parking, access & maintenance works
- Works completed at Drumcliff Burial Ground
- Site Investigations and site surveys for lands at Ballaghafadda
- Lemenagh Burial Ground; Newmarket on Fergus: Stonework entrance– specifications sent to contractor, awaiting quotation.
- Ballycannon – tree surgery and improvement of pathway works in hand. Site visit carried out with Contractor– awaiting quotation for clearance of spoil under trees in main burial ground.
- Loophead Looped Trail

Project Management Office, Municipal Districts, Planning - Mapping Services

- Capital Projects – Ennis Flood Relief, Killaloe Bypass
- Taking in Charge – Mapping
- Ennis Leisure Centre - New Entrance Porch
- Sixmilebridge Town and Village Renewal

Roads & Transportation

- Traffic Management Plans
- Funding applications for Footpath works
- Recreational Trails in Ennis and Environs

Despite the enduring restrictions relating to the Covid 19 pandemic, the PMO Team made good progress on the varied list of projects being managed and delivered across the County. Some of the main developments during February are as outlined below.

Cloughaninchy Coastal Protection Works – Part VIII permission has been obtained for the project. Negotiation with landowners is ongoing and subject to their agreement, the project can proceed to construction.

Doolin Pier Visitors Services Building – Negotiations are at an advanced stage regarding the acquisition of third party lands that would be of benefit to the project. This will allow the Design Team to develop the building design based on optimised footprint. Following the conclusion of same, we expect to advance the project at pace. To this end, the Project Team met in late February to identify the critical path items and associated timelines. All going well, it is expected that we will be in a position to submit an application to An Bord Pleanála by the end of September.

Ennis Lower Flood Relief Scheme - Work on the two tie in sections of the flood wall was completed recently. This completes the sheet pile flood protection wall from the Club Bridge to Bank Place and is the final section of the Town Flood Defences along the River Fergus. The limestone wall is now 80% complete along the riverside face of the flood defence wall. The installation of the new outfall headwall and flap valve is also complete but the removal of the old headwall will have to wait until April due to environmental considerations. The railings have been fabricated off site and will be erected on completion of the wall. Work on the landscaping has commenced. The scheme is programmed to be completed in April 2021 and is currently on course to meet this date.

Ennis South Flood Relief Scheme – Work is continuing on the installation of pile caps and the testing of the associated welds. The contractor has also begun to remove sections of the piling platform that is no longer required. A small embankment is being constructed along the piled wall to reduce visual impact. This area will be planted with native species of hedgerows to encourage bio diversity. Work is continuing on the drainage channels and landscaping. The overall project is on programme to be completed in August 2021. Related to same, we await the outcome (expected in the next few weeks) from our recent Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) application for funding to develop a riverside walk along the bank from the Quin Road to Clare Abbey.

Ennistymon Inner Relief Road and Bridge Crossing (Blake's Corner) – We are awaiting further details from An Bord Pleanála regarding their determination of our CPO application submitted by the Council last Summer

Killaloe Bridge and By-Pass – The Project Team continue to progress the delivery of this important piece of infrastructure and are due to meet again virtually in early March. The independent checking and technical compliance of the final detailed design of the project Works Requirements / Scope of Works is nearing completion. Observations from these third party disciplines are now being incorporated in the final suite of tender documents ahead of going to Tender in Spring 2021.

The advance works contract is progressing well on site and remains on programme with a completion date of mid-May. Site clearance works are nearing completion with the current road closure on the R494 scheduled to re-open on the 1st of March. Works are currently progressing simultaneously on accommodation works, boundary treatments and access road construction. Utility diversions and sewer installations will be progressed over the coming weeks and further updates will be provided in due course.

The Archaeological Works are also nearing completion with the remaining works now being confined to one specific area. Archaeology investigations are also scheduled to be completed on the canal island in the coming weeks following the site clearance. Completion of these works is expected in April 2021. Land Acquisition continues to be progressed with a significant number of cases completed while others are nearing finalisation.

Kilkee Flood Relief Scheme – The Project Steering Group led by Clare County Council and including the OPW continues to meet with our Consultants Jeremy Benn Associates (JBA) and JB Barry (JBB) online each month. Unsuitable weather conditions continue to prevent the specialist survey contractor from completing the bathymetric survey of Moore's Bay which is required as part of the wave overtopping analysis. The final report from the Topographical Surveyor has been received and is under review by the consultant. The CCTV Survey contractor has also attended site to capture the outstanding data.

Rainwater gauges and water level gauges have been installed and the data is being logged and will inform the design of a scheme. A site visit of the Kilkee pumping station was carried out during the period, attended by the consultant, CCC and the OPW. The consultant is nearing completion of draft Ground Investigation tender documents for the Steering Group's review. Information on the project can be accessed through our online information video and associated information literature available on the scheme website www.kilkeefrs.ie

Limerick Northern Distributor Road (LNDR) – Following the submission of the Project Appraisal Suite of documents to the Dept of Transport in early November, we await their consideration and response to same, which if favourable, will allow us to progress to the next stage of development. To this end, we have a meeting scheduled with the DoT for late February to discuss and

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Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF) – Following a third party application to seek a Judicial review of the Part VIII permission approved by the Members at the September meeting, we await the outcome of same. It is again scheduled for mention in early March, following which, if favourable, we will be in a position to carry out the necessary Geotechnical Investigations to inform the detailed design and engage further with the relevant Landown-

ers regarding acquisition of the necessary lands.

Miltown Malbay Flood Relief Scheme – Work is ongoing on the detailed design of the project and meetings are continuing between the Scheme Consultants, JBA and the PMO. Clare County Council will engage with local property owners and stakeholders affected by the proposed works when a more detailed design is available. Once the design is finalised, tender documents will be prepared to procure a contractor for the project at the earliest juncture.

N19 Shannon Airport Access Road – Phase Two (Options Selection) is currently ongoing and following the recent public consultation phase, observations received are now being assessed by the project team and will feed into the final option selection. The non-intrusive utility survey works have been completed on site by Apex Surveys. The results of the survey will provide background utility mapping of the study area necessary to identify any constraints associated with the various options being considered. The ground investigation tender documents were uploaded to eTenders on Friday the 12th of February with a tender return date of the 12th of March 2021. The results of these investigatory works will help inform the emerging route selection process currently ongoing.

N85 Upgrade at Kilnamona – Approval from the TII is imminent in regard to the appointment of Consultants to commence the design of this proposed project. To this end, funding of €100k has been provided by TII in their 2021 allocations.

Remediation of sites containing ACM (Asbestos Containing Material) – Clare County Council has received a proposal from our expert Technical advisors in respect of detailed designed and tendering phase of works which will involve managed removal and processing of waste deposits from the various sites. It is envisaged that Tenders to carry out the works will be issued in the coming months followed by the appointment of the successful Contractor and completion by Q3 2022 subject to the availability of the necessary funding required. In the interim the sites are rendered safe following the carrying out of temporary works. They are being routinely monitored and we will continue to liaise with the EPA and take direction in this regard.

Shannon Town & Environs Flood Relief Scheme – The Project Steering Group led by Clare County Council and including the Office of Public Works and Shannon Airport Authority continues to meet with our Consultants RPS Consulting Engineers, online each month. Tendering for third-party surveys for the scheme is nearing completion with the current status as follows. Subsequent to the open competition for the Geophysical Survey, three tender submissions were received through Etenders. The consultant has assessed the submissions and issued the Tender Report for CCC review. A letter of Intent will be issued before the end of February. The CCTV Survey & Flow Monitoring tender competition was advertised on Etenders and published on the Official Journal of the European

Union (OJEU) on February 5th. The return date for submissions is March 8th. The Topographical Survey was tendered as a mini-competition from the OPW Framework for Lot 1 Survey Services on February 12th and has a return date of March 5th. The finalised Ground Investigation tender documents have now been agreed and will be advertised on Etenders by w/e 26.02.21. An application for permission to carry out Ground Investigation works was submitted by Shannon Airport Authority and advertised in The Clare Champion on February 4th 2021. The submission includes a Natura Impact Statement.

Spanish Point Coastal Protection Scheme – Environmental Screening is being carried out currently and a report is due which will inform planning and design requirements. All going well, it is expected to complete the works before the summer season of 2021.

Springfield, Clonlara FRS - The Springfield area experienced another flood event in the last month. Clare County Council staff were on site to help locals prepare for the event. However, the incident did not reach the critical levels of the past and the operation was stood down. Unfortunately, the ground investigation contractor was on site and their work was delayed by two weeks as a result of the flooding. That work is now completed and the samples gone to the laboratory for analysis. The results of the ground investigations are being collated and will be submitted to the consultants shortly. It will inform the detailed design of the embankments. The test trenching has also been completed and inspected by a qualified archaeologist. The topographical survey was also completed in recent weeks. A project specific website has been completed and will be going live shortly. This will give the most up to date information with regard to the project to the public and stakeholders. The PMO continue to liaise with Local Residents on progress and negotiations with landowners to acquire the lands necessary to construct the embankments are ongoing. All going well, construction work on site is expected to commence in late April/early May of 2021 and work is expected to take 6 months to complete.

West Clare Railway Greenway – Following the tender for Technical Advisors for Phases 2 -4 of the West Clare Railway Greenway (Kilrush to Kilkee), Clare County Council are currently reviewing the tender submissions. Assessment is ongoing and we would expect to be in a position to make the appointment in the coming weeks subject to the availability of the necessary funding required.

White Strand Miltown Malbay, Coastal Protection Minor Works - Byrne Looby Consultants have been appointed to prepare the Part VIII application for this project. Preliminary Design has commenced. All stakeholders and landowners will be consulted throughout the process and it is expected to be in a position to submit a Planning Application in the middle of 2021.

FIRE & BUILDING CONTROL SECTION

Ennis Fire Station Redevelopment Works

Works are progressing on the Fire Service Maintenance Building and nearing completion. The final fit out is taking place at the moment along with commissioning of specialist garage equipment.

Approved Capital Grant Aid Funding for 4 x New Equipment Transfer Vehicles

The National Directorate for Fire & Emergency Management has approved Capital Grant Aid Funding for the purchase of 4 new equipment carrying vans. It is intended that the vans will be based in Shannon, Ennistymon, Scarriff and Kilkee Fire Stations and will replace older 4 wheel drive vehicles at these stations. The vans are on a special order so it is expected that it will be a number of months before they will be delivered.



Fire and Building Control Section Main Activities	January 2021	February 2021 (Up to 22.02.21)	Year to Date
Number of Emergency Calls Attended	71	55	126
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Received	3	2	5
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Granted	2	3	5
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Invalidated	0	0	0
Number of Disability Access Certificates Received	4	0	4
Number of Disability Access Certificates Granted	3	7	10
Number of Commencement Notices Received	21	15	36

Clare Civil Defence

Operational Duties

- Civil Defence provided the following operational duties:
- Members provided transport for patients to hospital appointments in Ennis & Limerick.
- Members provided transport for patients from their homes to a vaccination centre in Ennis.
- Members provided assistance to Galway Civil Defence by participating in a search of the North Clare coast for 3 missing persons.
- Members responded to a request from An Garda Síochána to assist in the search for a missing person in the Kilmaley area. The search concluded with the successful recovery and treatment of the missing person by Clare Civil Defence members.
- Members provided assistance to a local animal charity with the urgent transport of essential equipment from Broadford to Navan.

ENVIRONMENT

Covid-19

The "COVID-19" pandemic continues to affect operations in the Environment section but the effects are mitigated by our adaptable business continuity planning. To date all services in the environment section have continued uninterrupted. The current Level 5 restrictions will affect our output in terms of inspections, interaction with the public, businesses, contractors and other agencies. As previously seen in earlier restriction periods, the level of activity tends to increase in the Civic Amenity sites.

Environmental Awareness

Cigarette Littering Awareness Campaign

During February, we collaborated with the Healthy Clare team in promoting Not Around Us' Campaign - Towards a Tobacco & Vape Free Clare. An infographic was developed highlighting the environmental impacts of cigarette butt littering and was promoted on social media and advertised on The Clare Echo Green Page. Karen Foley, EAO also participated in a Clare FM Morning Focus interview highlighting this issue.

Other awareness raising campaigns

During February using Clare County Council and Greener Clare social media channels as well as the Clare Echo Green Page the Environment Section promoted the following campaigns:

- Low Smoke Coal
- Love this Place Leave No Trace
- Covid 19 related littering

Water and Scientific Services

Water Pollution Complaints

A total of 20 complaints (Section 4 licenced sites, wastewater and agriculture) have been received and investigated to date in February 2021. Enforcement notices/letters were issued where required under the Water Pollution Acts and the Good Agriculture Practice Regulations 2017 as amended.

National Inspection Programme of Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems (DWWTS-Septic Tanks)

No inspections have been carried out to date due to Level 5 Covid-19 restrictions. The EPA have confirmed that they will be consulting with Local Authorities regarding the National Inspection Plan process for the coming year.

Planning referrals from Planning Department

To date this year 73 reports including 7 forestry reports have been prepared and submitted by environmental staff to the planning section. Assessment and recommendations were made in order to minimise potential water pollution and protect public health.

Lake Sampling Programme 2020

TMS Environmental have carried out monitoring at 10 lakes to date in 2021. All samples are transported to the EPA laboratory in Castlebar for analysis.

Water Framework Directive and River Basin Management Plan (RBMP)

There were no LAWPRO referrals or meetings in February 2021. There is a public consultation process in place until June 2021 for the third cycle of the River Basin Management Plan.

Ballyduff Beg Waste Landfill Licence Monitoring Requirements

Our Environmental Contractor continues to carry out monitoring on site to comply with EPA licence conditions. Clare County Council staff carry out weekly sampling of surface water ponds. No issues have been reported to date.

Laboratory and Technical Support

Rural Water

Drinking water data and statistics from Group Water Schemes and private commercial supplies was compiled, approved and uploaded to the EPA data portal by the 28th of February deadline. The data includes all the monitoring, which Clare County Council Environmental Laboratory undertakes that is not covered by the Irish Water SLA.

River Monitoring Programme 2021

Clare County Council is required to collect 295 river water samples in 2021. The calendar for sampling was agreed with the EPA in December last with the sampling spread evenly over the 12 months. The second round of sampling was completed in the third week of February.

Drinking Water Monitoring

Clare County Council is required to sample and analyse all public water supplies including public supplied Group water schemes as part of the Service Level Agreement. The level of monitoring required is agreed with Irish Water and is based on the population served. The monitoring is spread evenly throughout the year with all analysis results forwarded to IW in the agreed format.

Wastewater Treatment Plants

Laboratory Staff in conjunction with Area based Technicians monitor all Licensed and Certified discharges for compliance with their discharge limits. In Clare, monitoring varies from monthly to twice yearly, based on population served. Monitoring is spread throughout the year with the second round completed in February.

Historic Landfills

A further information request has been received from the EPA in relation to the Certificate of Authorisation for Kilrush Landfill. This is being addressed by the Environment Section Scientific staff with on-going correspondence with the EPA inspector. Furthermore, the EPA has requested that the site be subjected to an Appropriate Assessment and this will be completed over the coming months.

The process of applying for a Certificate of Authorisation for Whitegate Historic Landfill has commenced and approval of funding has issued from the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications to complete the necessary risk assessments and application.

Gardening

On foot of clarification received regarding Covid-19 restrictions and gardening works, the Gardening Team commenced many routine and planned activities in public areas during February. Planting of spring bedding plants has started at certain locations, with these works due for completion in advance of the St. Patrick's Day weekend. The council aims to increase the focus on the planting of perennial and pollinator friendly species, in line with the Council's Pollinator Action Plan throughout 2021. During February, the Environment Section advertised National Tree Week, which will see the Council distribute hundreds of young trees/saplings to community groups for planting in March.

Waste Management

Ballyduffbeg Closed Landfill Site (Closure Restoration Aftercare Management Plan)

Clare County Council have awarded the contract for the CRAMP to RPS Consultant Engineers. Detailed design work will now begin enabling the works contract to issue when complete.

Bring Banks

Glass collection for the county is up 20% in comparison to the same period last year. Bottle bank sites continue to be well used with additional collections being made when required.

Forestry

Tree felling in compliance with our tree felling licence at Ballyduffbeg in Inagh is due to commence in late February. A number of plots will be felled and replanted with a mix of additional broadleaf type trees.

Waste Enforcement

Solid Fuel Inspections

In February, 256 Households in the Drumbiggle area were written to and notified of the requirement to burn Low Smoke Fuel as they are covered by the Specified Area of Ennis under the Air Pollution Act (Marketing, Sale, Distribution and Burning of Specified Fuels) Regulations. It is prohibited to market, sell, distribute or burn smoky (bituminous) coal within this Specified Area. Information on the prohibition on burning waste was also issued in this mail shot.

A "mystery shopping" exercise was carried out in six fuel merchants in Ennis to assess compliance with the Air Pollution Act (Marketing, Sale, Distribution and Burning of Specified Fuels) Regulations 2012 (S.I. No. 326 of 2012). One €1,000 fine was issued as a result of these inspections.

The Environment section also sent two solid fuel (coal) samples to the laboratory at Arigna Fuels for sulphur content analysis. This is a requirement of the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications.

Dog Fouling

Following on from last month's noted increase in dog walking activity, leading to an increase in Dog Fouling complaints, Dog Warden, Frankie Coote has now been authorised under the Litter Pollution Act, 1997 to issue fines for Dog Fouling. One Dog Fouling fine was issued in February and has been paid. The Environment staff and Dog Warden carried out a joint awareness patrol in Clarecastle and Clonroad to address the dog fouling issue. We also engaged with dog owners to raise awareness. Further Awareness Patrols are planned for other Municipal Districts throughout the county in the coming weeks. The Environment Section wardens continue to respond to Dog Fouling complaints by erecting signage, creating ground stencil artwork and increasing patrols in the affected areas. Frankie Coote has addressed responsible dog ownership on his Clare FM slot.

Environmental Monitoring (Illegal Dumping/Litter)

The Waste Enforcement Team continued to respond to increasing waste and litter related complaints in February. A total of 226 complaints relating to litter and waste have been received in February and are currently being investigated. A total of 8 litter fines were issued in February, as a result of evidence found by the Environment section in illegally dumped waste. Payment of one litter fine was made in February. One Section 9 Notice (Notice requiring the removal of litter) has issued to date in February.

Beaches

Beach Bye laws 2021

The Public consultation period expired in Mid-February and a report on submissions received will issue to the council shortly.

WATER SERVICES

Annual Service Plan

The Covid-19 pandemic continues to be a challenging time for the delivery of essential front-line water services across the county especially with the current level 5 restrictions.

The Water Services Department of Clare County Council continues to deliver the water services function as per the Service Level Agreement and the 2021 Annual Service Plan with Irish Water.

Water and waste water operations

The following statistics provide an indication of the level of activity / work being carried out by the water and waste water teams throughout the county from 22nd January 2021 up to and including 18th February 2021. The figures do not however reflect the time invested by the teams which is required to resolve each complaint /issue.

- 11 Customer Complaints were dealt with and closed out
- 1 Emergency Work Orders were received during the timeframe
- 355 Reactive Maintenance Work Orders were dealt with and closed out
- 0 Customer Asset Flooding Work Orders were received
- 128 Service Requests (SR's) were raised for Field Requests and Follow On Work Orders for Reactive Maintenance work
- 37 Outage Notices were placed on the IW portal during the period. 26 accounted for unplanned works for water outages and burst water mains. 4 were for planned works while the remainder 7 notices were for step testing and watermains flushing.

Water Operations

A number of outages occurred in Clarecastle as a result of bursts and also connection of the new main on Main St. in the Mid Clare Area

There were a number of outages in Doonbeg, Cooraclare, Killadysert, Doolin and Lickreen in the West/North Clare Area
In the Shannon area a number of outages occurred in Shannon, Bunratty, Parteen and Meelick.

RAL Upgrades

Ward and Burke Construction Ltd have been appointed by Irish Water to undertake the Clare Remedial Action List (RAL) Upgrade contract. As required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), milestones for the completion of the projects at the individual sites have been set as follows;

- Corrofin WTP – 30th November 2021
- New Doolough WTP - 30th February 2022
- Ballymacravan WTP – 30th January 2023

Designs for New Doolough and Corrofin plants are currently being progressed with Ballymacravan to follow. The Contractor is expected to start on site with Corrofin and site investigation are scheduled to take place in April.

Water Conservation

The 2021 leakage reduction target for Clare County is to achieve a 1.2MLD average leakage saving. This 1.2 MLD reduction is the equivalent demand of supplying circa 3,200 housing units.

In February, the Leakage Find Crews continued water conservation activity throughout the county reacting to various increases in demand primarily in Ennis (Ballybeg DMA) and Shannon (Aidan Park & Shannon Town) and Newmarket District Metering Area (DMA).

The Find & Fix Crews concentrated activities in East-Clare and West-Clare with leaks repaired in Ardnacrusha and Kilmihil DMA. Leak detection find works are currently taking place in Crusheen and Kilmurry McMahon DMA's.

Waste Water Operations

The Shannon Operations team carried out a repair to a burst on the Bunratty rising main. This cast iron main serves the entire village of Bunratty. The repairs were carried out in a very safe and efficient manner in poor weather conditions on Wednesday evening 17th February. The environmental impact was minimised by this timely repair. The rising mains in the Shannon/Bunratty area of the subject of an Irish Water Design Report which will identify strategies for the rehabilitation of these mains.

Irish Water Fleet

Funding has been approved for provision of 3 No. new pick up trucks by Irish Water. It is expected that these will be delivered by Irish Water Fleet Management to Clare County Council in Q3.

Irish Water Capital programme

Shannon Waste Water Treatment Plant interim upgrade

Ward and Burke commenced work on site on the 1st January 2020. Construction work is continuing on the WWTP with the dewatering building fit out being finished at present. Upgrade works at the four pumping stations is due for completion at the end of February. Both the industrial and the domestic treatment streams are in operation now. All Emission Limit Values (ELV's) in the final effluent have been compliant based on the latest data available. As-built surveys are complete and draft as-built drawings have been prepared.

The full project including testing and commissioning is scheduled for completion in late March 2021/early April. Sludge is being conveyed to skips for removal off site.

Kilrush Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrade

A new waste water treatment plant, rising main and upgrade of the existing Frances St pumping station are proposed in Kilrush. EPS were awarded the contract under the IW Early Contractor Involvement framework to design and build the works. A Site Investigation Contract (to determine ground conditions and locate utilities) is substantially complete. Detailed design is ongoing. A new planning application is to be lodged by IW to deal with necessary alterations to the design of the WWTP. Ecology surveys have to be undertaken again and a new NIS prepared. The Planning application is anticipated to be lodged in February 2021. Renewable energy sources to provide electricity for the operation of the plant will be investigated by Irish Water. Planting to increase biodiversity will also be included in landscaping plans. Construction is expected to commence late 2021 with completion early 2023.

Clarecastle Agglomeration Upgrade

Under Irish Water's UTAS the waste water collected at Quay Rd pumping station will be diverted via a new waste water pipeline to Clareabbey WWTP.

The detailed design is being finalised and it is anticipated that the main contract will go to tender by Q2 of 2021. The advance contract for the construction of 311m of rising main from Quay Road to a point just north of the Church was awarded to Ward & Burke

Construction Ltd. Works commenced on site on 11th January 2021 and are now complete. This is the first step in a project, which will ultimately lead to the cessation of the discharge of raw sewage to the River Fergus at the Quay in Clarecastle. The 311m of rising main will be capped off until the remainder of the rising main to Clareabbey is completed. The contract for the remainder of the rising main and the Quay Road works is programmed to start late 2021 with completion during 2022. It is anticipated that the upgrade works at Clareabbey WWTP will run concurrently with the rising main works such that flows can be pumped from Clarecastle to Clareabbey for treatment.

A section of old cast iron watermain was also replaced as part of these works.

Liscannor Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrade

A new waste water treatment plant, pumping station, rising main and gravity sewer are proposed for Liscannor. The design/build contract was awarded to EPS in January 2020 under the IW Early Contractor Involvement framework.

Detailed design is on going. Irish Water has been notified that An Bord Pleanála will determine the Compulsory Purchase Order without holding an Oral Hearing. The An Bord Pleanála decision on the CPO has not been made available as yet. The project is expected to go to construction in mid 2021 with completion late 2022.

Ballyvaughan Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrade

A new waste water treatment plant, pumping station including pipework extensions are proposed in Ballyvaughan. Site Investigation, on site surveys at the WWTP site, pump station site, and rising main route have been completed. Irish Water notified An Bord Pleanála that it has withdrawn the Compulsory Purchase Order for lands for a proposed waste water treatment plant, pumping station and rising main. Irish Water and its Consultants are now undertaking further assessment of the proposed scheme to determine the next steps in the project.

Kilkee Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrade

A new waste water treatment plant, pumping station and rising main is planned for Kilkee. A Design Summary Report was prepared by the IW Consultants in June 2020 in relation to construction of a WWTP. The Project Brief has been issued by IW to EPS, the Design/Build Contractor. The Site Selection process has to be finalised by IW, EPS and their Consultants before the project can progress, taking into account the work completed by the previous Consultants. The project delivery plan, cost estimates and programme are being prepared at present. A Planning application for the scheme is anticipated to be lodged in late 2021. IW/CCC have agreed that pumping of flow will continue from the Victoria Stream to the existing outfall at Intrinsic Bay thus protecting the Blue Flag beach during the bathing season. The project is

expected to go to construction in late 2022 with completion in late 2024.

Ennistymon and Lahinch Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrade

Upgrades of waste water treatment facilities for Ennistymon and Lahinch are required as the existing plants do not meet the Emission Limit Values required by their wastewater discharge Licences. This project is in the current IW Capital Investment Programme. Mott McDonald Consulting Engineers produced a draft Feasibility Study Report for various options including combining Ennistymon and Lahinch treatment at one new plant. Constraints mapping has been produced including a 50m buffer zone around buildings. Potential sites were evaluated and a draft of the Site Selection Report is being finalised. A number of options will go forward from the Site Selection Report to the Feasibility Study Report, which will then be finalised, and a recommendation made to Irish Water.

Newmarket on Fergus Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrade

It is proposed to construct a new pumped rising main which would outfall to the Rine River thereby ceasing discharge of primary effluent from the existing WWTP to Lough Gash. A Design Inception Report and outfall route selection have been prepared.

In the next phase of the project site investigation, ecological studies, licences, wayleaves and Planning application documents will have to be undertaken/ prepared. A Foreshore licence and Discharge Licence review will be required. The contract for the site investigation along the road from the Plant through Kilnasoolagh Park and on the R458 towards Latoon will be awarded before the end of February. It will commence in March 2021 and temporary traffic management will be required. Ecology surveys and river flow surveys have commenced. The survey of the existing network in the town commenced on the 15th of February 2021. Flow meters have been installed which transmit data to the Installer and this data is forwarded to the IW Consultants on a weekly basis. Clare Co Co requested that IW review power supply to the existing plant and possibilities for use of renewable energy eg ground mounted solar panels. A draft report has been prepared. It is anticipated that the Planning application for the upgrade scheme will be lodged mid 2021. Construction is anticipated to commence in early 2023 and be completed by early 2024.

Kilfenora WWTP Upgrade

It is proposed to upgrade the existing Kilfenora WWTP, reuse the existing treated effluent rising main to the current discharge point and construct a new percolation area at this site. Planning Permission has been granted. Land owner negotiations are ongoing. The CPO was published in the Clare Champion dated

14th August 2020 and the Oral Hearing is to be held on-line by An Bord Pleanála on the 23rd of February 2021. The timeframe for a decision is not known. Site investigation is complete and detailed design is ongoing. Construction is planned to commence in September 2021.

Quin Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

The project aims to provide additional capacity and treatment capability by constructing a new waste water treatment plant on the existing site whilst maintaining the operation of the existing plant during the construction period.

The main phase of civil works at the plant have been substantially completed on site. Mechanical and electrical testing and proving of the new plant equipment is now complete with the commissioning phase of the project currently underway. The new plant is expected to be fully operational at the start of May.

Mullagh / Milltown Malbay Pipeline

These works involve the replacement of 4.7 kilometres of existing sub standard water supply pipework which was identified to Irish Water as requiring replacement.

The contractor is continuing works onsite with 1.7 km of the total 4.7km left to construct. This work will be carried out under road closures starting at the end of February with the approval of the West Clare Municipal District technical staff. Works are expected to be fully complete by June 2021.

Asset Transfer

375 water and wastewater assets, in county Clare, have been identified for potential transfer to IW to date. Of these 51 are non operational assets (prior to January 2014) and as such will not be transferring to Irish Water leaving 324 for transfer. Of these 324 assets 190 have now been transferred to IW.

The remaining 134 assets are broken down as follows:

- **Pending** - 17 assets are being prepared for transfer to Irish Water in the coming months. Some of these assets will have to be subdivided by map/plan. Once a consensus has been reached on the remaining assets with both IW and Clare County Council, a CE order will issue thereafter.
- **National Special Projects Office (NSPO)** – This is a department within Irish Water dealing with special projects which includes facilitating the Asset Transfers from Local Authorities - 5 assets are with the NSPO for investigation to ascertain if they are to be considered as underground assets. Underground assets are transferred by S.I. 13 of 2015. When they are approved IW will issue a letter to Clare County Council confirming their approval. Note

that Underground assets i.e. all water mains and sewers (other than storm water sewers) and any related accessories, and all pipes, waterworks and waste water works that are located under land, along with any related accessories, were vested in IW by S.I. No. 13 of 2015.

- **Property Registration Authority Ireland** – 0 assets have gone to the PRAI to be subdivided
- **3rd Party/Unregistered assets** – Of the 134 assets 114 have been identified as 3rd Party Registered lands (97) and Unregistered Lands (17).

Rural Water Programme

Under the 2019-2021 Multi Annual Rural Water Programme (MARWP), works on the replacement of 4.6km of watermains continues on the Feenagh GWS after a short suspension due to COVID 19. Works have also commenced on the Tullaher GWS with the replacement in full of 4.6km of existing mains and it is hoped to complete works in mid April. The Ballinruane GWS, Mountshannon are currently in the process of preparing tender documents for mains replacement with a view to publishing on E-Tenders in early March. All of the above works are being carried out under Measure 5 of the Programme which is the Transfer of Existing Schemes into the public Network and funding under this measure is granted at 100% of the value of the works.

The Lemenagh GWS was submitted for Taking in Charge in February and this now brings the number of GWS's submitted by the Clare Rural Water Programme awaiting Taking in Charge to 8. Due to the temporary suspension of the taking in charge of group water schemes imposed by Irish Water, these schemes will not transfer at this time. A number of further schemes shall be submitted for taking in charge in 2021.

The assessment and processing of grants under the 'Grant for Improvement Works to a Private Water Supply' is continuing under the Rural Water Programme. A total no. of 9 applications have been received to date in 2021.

The Rural Water Team continues to work with group water schemes to ensure their members have a robust and sustainable quality and quantity supply of water available to them.

ENNIS MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



St. Patrick's Day celebration 2021

Plans are underway to host a virtual event to celebrate St. Patrick's Day this year. An invite has issued through various media platforms, inviting Clare people at home and abroad to participate or join as a member of a global audience.

Participants can send in a video of an artistic performance which may be selected for inclusion on our virtual event. A number of short videos will be released on Clare County Council's youtube channel and facebook page over the course of the day, with competition winners being announced at 5pm. An online consultation platform was customised to receive video entries. In addition a body of work was carried out to ensure this activity is GDPR compliant. Ennis buildings will be lit up in green from March 8th.

ENNIS MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Ennis Public Realm – Parnell St. project

Following the redesignation of the Parnell St. project as ‘essential works’ by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage Darragh O’Brien, works resumed on February 21st. Civil works crews have started working from Wood Quay junction to Cabey’s lane, while paving crews are working on Parnell St. and Curtin’s lane. Crews are being ramped up from Feb 28th with a third civils crew and a second paving crew springing into action.



Clean up of Illegal Dumping:

Ennis Municipal District staff continue to respond to several incidents of illegal dumping at various sites in Ennis. Images reflect bags dumped at Woodquay car park (**Fig. 1.0**) and the loose litter strewn in hedges and behind fencing at Cloughleigh (**Fig. 2.0**)



Fig. 1.0



Fig. 2.0

Roadworks programme – progress update

TMD crews repaired or replaced several poles struck by vehicles, including those pictured at Abbey Street (**Fig. 3.0**) and at a pedestrian crossing along Bothar na Trocaire (**Fig. 4.0**).

Other activities included regular drainage maintenance works at Edenvale/Kilmorane/Francis Street and Patrick Street, Clarecastle (**Fig. 6.0**)

Crews continue to carry out footpath remediation works which are deemed ‘essential work’ including entrance to Aldi (**Fig. 5.0**)



Fig. 3.0



Fig. 4.0



Fig. 5.0

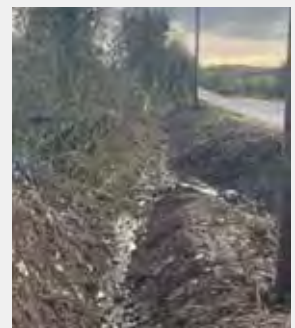


Fig. 6.0

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Clare Economic Task Force

The Council has employed the services of Abodoo Consultants to assist us to capture relevant live data on qualifications, data intelligence and technology that provides mapping and matching technology of the skills of people inside and outside of the County. Such data provides insights into the workforce skills which in turn will facilitate inward investment, reversing migration, creating employment and underpinning our investment in co-working spaces.

Ennis 2040 DAC

The DAC has started working on the project plan analysis for the delivery of potential priority sites in the town. Recruitment of the DAC executive is under way.

STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PROJECTS

Spatial and Economic Masterplan for Shannon Town Centre

This Masterplan, which is funded under the Urban Regeneration Development Fund (URDF) and Clare County Council will drive the economic future and spatial pattern for the centre of Shannon Town, and is now three quarters through the master planning exercise.

The team are currently preparing the draft Masterplan and environmental appraisals. Subject to the positive outcomes of future URDF funding applications, the Council will assist in pump priming the regeneration of Shannon Town and the Town Centre Masterplan will be used by the Council to bid for future EU, National and regional funding opportunities for Shannon.

Following the meeting of the Chief Executive, Director of Economic Development and Law Agent with the UL Interim President and her team, work has continued by the both teams on the SDZ Designated Activity Company (DAC) legal arrangements. In the coming months, further engagement between the partnership will take place to prepare for the making of an application to Government to seek the designation of the UL South Clare SDZ.

University of Limerick (UL)/ South Clare–Strategic Development Zone:

Following the meeting of the Chief Executive, Director of Economic Development and Law Agent with the UL Interim President and her team, work has continued by the both teams on the SDZ DAC legal arrangements. In the coming months, further engagement between the partnership will take place to

prepare for the making of an application to Government to seek the designation of the UL South Clare SDZ.

Killaloe-Ballina Town Enhancement and Tourism and Mobility Plan

Clare County Council, in conjunction with Tipperary County Council, has commenced the preparation of a Town Enhancement, Tourism and Mobility Plan for Killaloe-Ballina. The Plan will facilitate a coordinated approach to public realm enhancements within Killaloe and Ballina, providing a clear vision for Killaloe and Ballina as linked settlements.

Ongoing work has continued in conjunction with colleagues in Tipperary County Council on the finalisation of an emerging draft document. It is anticipated that a dDraft Plan will be available in early April for discussion and consideration with the Elected Members of the Killaloe Municipal District and the wider Council.

Roche Masterplan

Following the grant in early February of a 10 -year planning permission for the phased demolition and remediation of the Roche Facility, work has now commenced on the preparation of background studies and the consideration of the scope of a future Roche Masterplan. The preparation of the Masterplan is a medium term objective which will be informed significantly by the preparation and outcome of the Draft Clare County Development Plan and the commencement of the development and remediation on site.

FORWARD PLANNING

Clare County Development Plan 2022-2028

To facilitate the Elected Members in their consideration of the Chief Executive's Report on the written submissions received during the pre-draft public consultation period for the County Development Plan, a workshop was held with the full Council on 18th February 2021 which concluded a series of separate workshops held with each of the Municipal Districts between the 10th to the 17th February 2021. The Elected Members must give their directions to the Chief Executive in relation to the preparation of the draft Clare County Development Plan 2022-2028 by the 25th March 2021, following which the drafting of the new Development Plan will commence.

Housing Strategy and Housing Needs Demand Assessment (HNDR)

A Housing Strategy and Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDR) must also be prepared for County Clare as part of the preparation of the Clare County Development Plan 2022-2028. The Housing Needs Demand Assessment (HNDA) is a new requirement of the National Planning Framework whereby as part of the County Development Plan process this work must be undertaken as part of the preparation of a new Housing Strategy for the County. KPMG Future Analytics have been appointed to undertake the HNDA modelling, assessment and preparation of the Housing Strategy which will inform both the core strategy and the housing policy for the plan period 2022-2028.

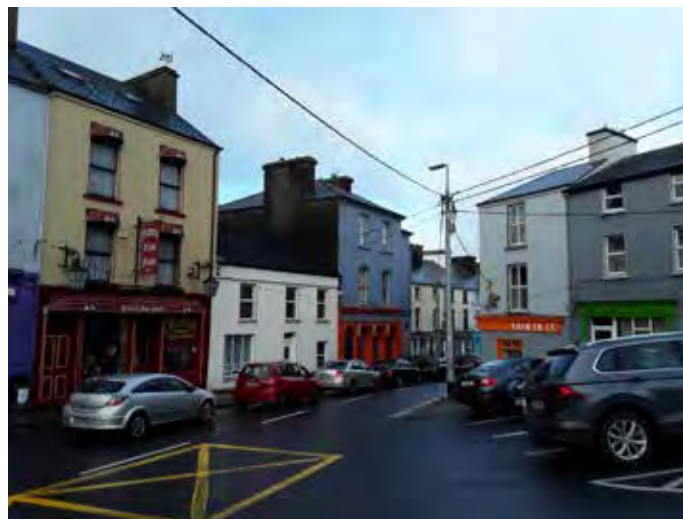
Renewable Energy Strategy

Work has commenced on the preparation of a new Renewable Energy Strategy for the County as part of the Clare County Development Plan 2022-2028. RPS Consulting have been appointed to undertake an Energy Emissions Balance for the County which will inform the targets and policies of the Renewable Energy Strategy which they have also been commissioned to prepare. The Renewable Energy Strategy will inform the renewable energy policies in the new Development Plan for 2022-2028.

Ennistymon Masterplan

Clare County Council, together with its partners Clare Local Development Company and Ennistymon Town Team, has appointed a multi-disciplinary team led by Helena McElmeel Architects to complete a masterplan for the town of Ennistymon. The masterplan seeks to build upon existing Clare County Council proposals in place associated with the planned new bridge crossing and the upgrading works to take place along the Main Street. The study will explore the potential of the existing townscape and its built environment in order to guide its development in a positive way. It will also comprise of a new signage strategy and streetscape enhancement plan, which seeks to improve both the visitor and residents experience. The

gathering of baseline information continued through February, and it is proposed to meet again in March where CLDC and West Clare Municipal representatives will participate in a review of the work undertaken to date.



Ennistymon

Corofin Enhancement Strategy

Clare County Council and National Parks & Wildlife Services have worked together to develop a brief for the preparation of an Enhancement strategy for the village of Corofin. The Corofin Enhancement Strategy seeks to maximise the potential of the village and its proximity to the Burren through thoughtful and sensitive interventions. The strategy will look to identify a suitable location and develop a design for a Burren National Park Visitor's Centre and Administration Facility for NPWS, provide public realm improvements through a streetscape enhancement plan and improve the tourist experience through the development of a new signage strategy. Tenders for an architect/urban designer lead Design Team were sought in February, and it is envisaged that the Design Team will be appointed at the end of March 2021, with a view to completing the strategy before the end of the year.



Corofin

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Development management	February 2021	Year to date 2021
Planning applications		
No. of planning applications received	127	179
No. of planning decisions made	68	143
No. of decisions notified by An Bord Pleanála	0	1
No. of pre-planning enquiries received	24	40
No. of Section 5 applications	5	9
No. of Section 97 Exemption Cert applications	2	4
Submissions received regarding Compliance	23	48
Planning enforcement		
No. of new complaints received	59	82
No of files opened	5	19
No. of Warning Letters issued	12	14
No. of Enforcement Notices served	0	0
No. of Legal Cases initiated	0	0
No. of files closed	7	16

The table summarises the activity in relation to planning applications and planning enforcement during the month of January and also gives the year to date totals.

HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY

Phase 2 of the Biodiversity Demonstration Sites:

The final reports including species records and recommendations on the 10 biodiversity demonstration sites (public amenity areas) have been distributed to the relevant stakeholders, including Clare County Council staff and community groups.

Biodiversity Webinars

Online biodiversity webinars have been facilitated to Tidy Town groups in association with the Rural Directorate. A series of three biodiversity webinars have been delivered to the community groups in Shannon Town as part of a cross department collaboration between Shannon MD, the Heritage Officer and Rural and Community Development Officer. Additional work as part of this project will involve further biodiversity awareness raising and training with communities and additional site surveys in Ennis and Shannon.

The County Clare Swift Survey 2020:

The final results of the Clare Swift Survey 2020 shows that there is a very small population of Swift remaining, with only 56 Swift nests having been located. A small number of swift nest bricks and nest boxes have been purchased and will be made available to encourage owners of suitable buildings to retain and supplement opportunities for Swifts to breed. For more information

please visit: [www.clarecoco.ie/your-council/\[news\]/clare-swift-survey-2020-to-take-place-this-summer.html](http://www.clarecoco.ie/your-council/[news]/clare-swift-survey-2020-to-take-place-this-summer.html).

Clare Keep Well campaign:

A Spring into Heritage poster has been published on the Clare Keep Well website on 10 ways to experience Clare Heritage this Spring. Biodiversity publications form part of the Clare Keep Well campaign with the Gardening for Biodiversity publication distributed as part of the Library book delivery. Two hundred Apple Trees have been delivered to individual house holders to grow in their own back gardens. Requests for trees vastly exceeded our ability to supply, which is a great reflection of the enthusiasm for this project, but disappointing for those who could not avail of the offer. Clare Keep Well website has links on gardening see <https://www.clarecoco.ie/.../clare-apple-tree-project> In addition the Clare Keep Well campaign ran a series of infomercials on Nature is good for you – general tips to make your garden wildlife-friendly on Clare FM over February.

Heritage in Schools Scheme:

Clare Education Centre in association with the Heritage Council are running a pilot on heritage online courses for primary schools children, which has been showcased to school teachers by the many heritage in schools experts in Clare.

HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY

- Three Section 57 declarations were issued during the month of February to permit works to protected structures
- Built Heritage Investment Scheme 2021 (BHIS) and the Historic Structures Fund (HSF) 2021: The 2021 Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) and the Historic Structures Fund (HSF) conservation grant schemes were announced by the Department of

Housing, Local Government and Heritage in November 2020. The closing date for applications to Clare County Council was 22nd February. A large number of applications were received. These are currently being assessed and a recommendation will be made to the Department on projects to be funded by 12th March.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

Covid-19 Supports

LEO Clare continue to support our local businesses through the month of February. A very high uptake of these supports is in evidence:

- The Enhanced Trading Online Voucher Scheme, which provides grant support to small businesses to develop an ecommerce website, has seen strong interest. In the month of February a further 9 vouchers were approved bringing the number already approved in 2021 to 47. The focus is ensuring the funding approved in 2020 is released to successful applicants and a further 27 vouchers (€67,500) were paid out during the month.”
- Online Webinars and Training: 147 clients registered in the month of February to partake in our range of online webinars and training courses. All of these webinars were provided free of charge to applicants. Events included Managing Your Online Business and a Design Strategy Master class.
- Mentoring: There were 30 applicants in February for a free 3 hour mentoring session, where a member of the LEO Clare mentoring panel is assigned to an applicant to mentor them in areas ranging from financial review

to starting a food business to digital marketing, among others.

Local Enterprise Week 2021: LEO Clare is delighted to officially launch Local Enterprise Week 2021. Due to Covid19 all events this year will take place through an online platform. More than 200 virtual events are planned by the Local Enterprise Offices around the country, including Local Enterprise Office Clare and these include training workshops, information webinars and master classes with entrepreneurs and experts, designed to help Ireland’s small businesses and those looking to start a new business in 2021. Topics across the week include starting a new business, resilience and recovery, the green economy, becoming ‘leaner’, exploring new markets, doing business online and the new trading relationship with the UK. For the first time, Local Enterprise Week also includes ten ‘Spotlight’ events and these are open to every business across the country. Highlights from Local Enterprise Week are expected to include: Marketing & Sales Essentials, S.M.A.R Tech Spotlight Event, The SME & Multinational Company Procurement Process with Shannon Chamber and Information Supports evening with CLDC & Intreo.



Padraic McElwee and Cllr. Mary Howard

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

February Evaluation Committee Meeting:

Our Evaluation Committee (EVAC) met on Tuesday the 16th of February. The committee continued the process of meeting remotely, aided by the new Submit.com grant processing system. The February EVAC approved over €290,805 in funding for six projects. All six projects were for Business Expansion Grant applications.

National Enterprise Awards 2021:

WowWee.ie, who are supported by Local Enterprise Office Clare, were winners at this year's National Enterprise Awards. The awards, which took place virtually were broadcast online from the Mansion House in Dublin, are in their 22nd year and run annually by the Local Enterprise Offices. WowWee.ie were awarded the Pivot Award. WowWee.ie owned by Áine Gleeson, are a personalised gifting company who relied heavily on corporate gifting saw their business disappear once the pandemic hit but pivoted to sell direct to consumers. The response has seen them excel in an extremely competitive market. The awards were watched online by over 3,600 viewers.

LEO Clare Podcasts:

The #MakingItHappen podcast series was launched in early September 2020. Eight clients of the Local Enterprise Office Clare took part. Each participating business was visited by Ger Sweeney who produced and presented the podcast series. The participants were recorded and these recordings were later edited and published on seven podcast platforms. After great feedback from the clients analysis has shown that the podcasts have currently been listened to by 367 people.

LEO Clare Click for Clare: Local Enterprise Office Clare in conjunction with The Clare Echo has run an extremely successful online campaign to help businesses. An online directory of businesses Website addresses was created and advertised via the Clare Echo. Recent analytics from the Clare Echo has shown that:

- Overall visits Click For Clare related articles: 62,000+
- Total online views on Daily Click articles: 20,000+
- Views on business spotlight articles: 22,000+
- Click for Clare directory visits: 12,000+ (analytics shows 4,483 visitors exited onto other WebPages indicating a large number of visits to businesses listed on the directory)



Clr. Mary Howard, Pat Dowling, Liam Conneally, Padraic McElwee and Áine Gleeson of WowWee.ie

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Facilities management

Work was completed on the reflective garden at the rear of the Council Chamber, with seating installed in mid February. This was an initiative of the Chief Executive and is now a beautiful place of peace and calm, delivered under the stewardship of Cyril Feeney, with a project group made up of staff from Human Resources, Environment and crews from various Departments. It is well worth a visit to take time out to reflect and remember former staff and Councillors who have gone to their eternal reward.

It is intended to further improve this area and provide some parking spaces and a design for same is awaited.

One lighting up event is taking place in February:

Rare Disease Day 2021 – LIGHT UP campaign. Rare Disease Day is held on the last day of February every year to raise awareness of rare diseases. Áras Contae an Chláir will be lit up in the last week of February to support this event.



Property transactions

The Table below shows the number of property transactions completed by Property Management Unit in February, together with the totals for 2021 to date.

Transaction	February 2021	Year to date 2021
Lease of Property / Building	0	1
Licence to use property / building	3	3
Grazing Agreement for Lands	15	15
Deed of Transfer signed	2	1
Contract for Sale signed	3	3
Deed of Right of Way signed	1	1
Deed of Rectification signed	0	0
Allotment Agreements signed	39	39

Casual Trading

Due to the Level 5 Government restrictions in relation to Covid 19, only those licensees who trade in food are currently trading. A briefing was held with the elected members of the Ennis Municipal District on the potential to improve the layout of trading bays in the Ennis Market and following good engagement, a workshop will be arranged. Engagement will also be commenced in the other Municipal Districts to consider the needs for changes to casual trading areas in existing locations or the designation of casual trading bays in new locations.

Derelict Sites

While non-essential site inspections are postponed for the duration of the Level 5 restrictions, work has continued on review of files on the Derelict Sites Register. In general, there has been a positive response to engagement with owners of derelict sites and a number of files have been closed. The table below provides a snapshot of the activity in February 2021.

Derelict Sites	February 2021	Year to date 2021
No. of new Complaints	3	7
No. of Section 8(2) Notices issued – Intention to enter site on Derelict Sites Register	0	0
No. of Section 8(7) Notices issued – Entry onto Derelict Sites Register	0	0
No. of Section 11 Notices issued – Measures required to render the site non-derelict	0	0
No. of files closed/property removed from Register	4	9
No. of Compulsory Purchase Orders	0	0

An example of progress in the last two months on derelict sites, following direct engagement with owners, is shown on the photos below.



BEFORE- Property in West Clare AFTER-property in West Clare



BEFORE- Property in North Clare AFTER-property in North Clare

County Museum Upgrade

A successful Tenderer has been determined for the upgrade works to the County Museum. The project involves investment in the museum offering by increasing the Museum space to incorporate the DeValera 1949 Dodge car, improving the space for the tourist office to make it more inviting and improvements to the upstairs areas with an upgrade to the meeting room, office space and canteen / break-out space. It is intended that works will start when Level 5 restrictions are lifted by Government.

SHANNON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

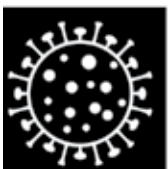
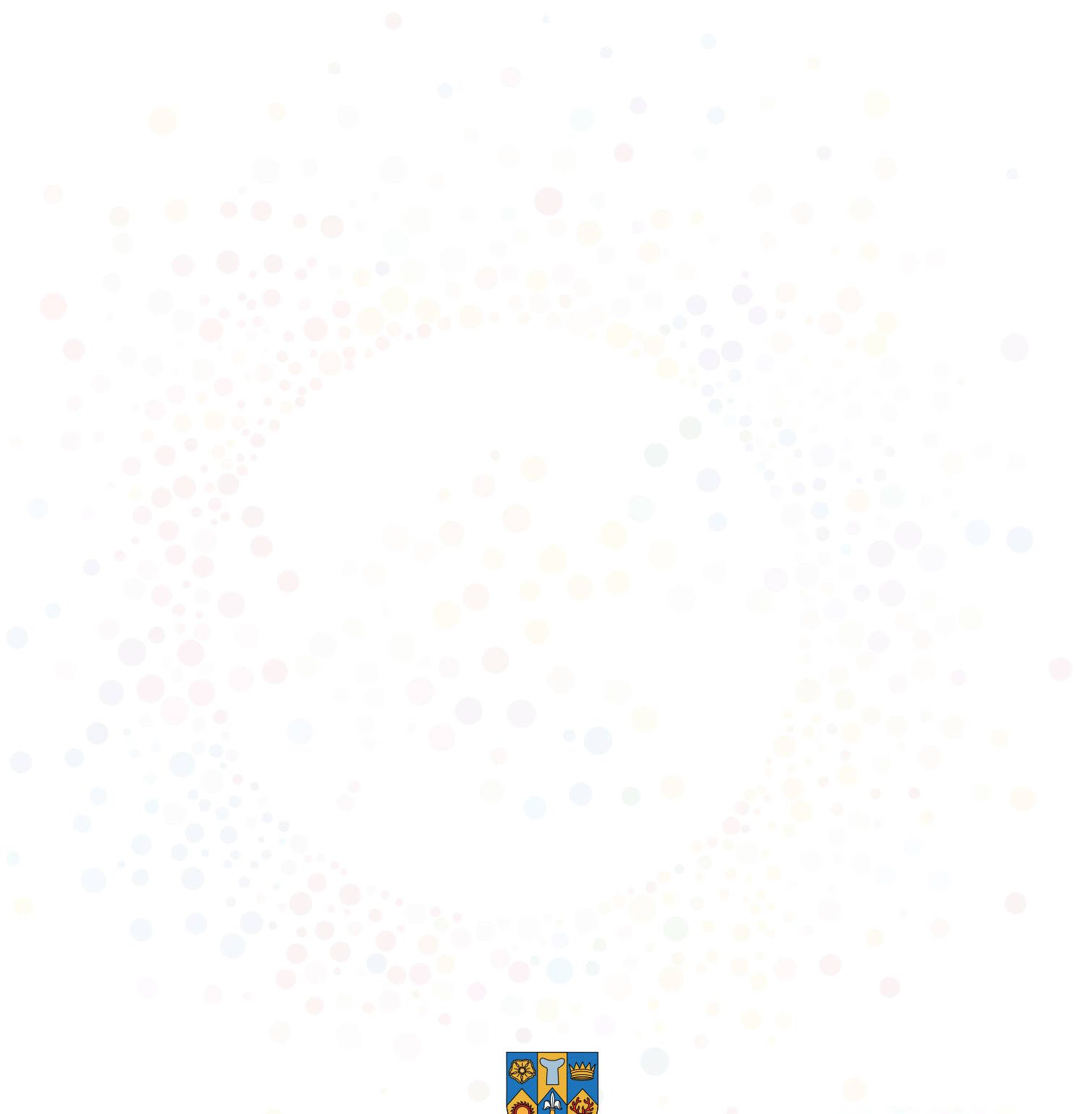
During the month of February the crews in Shannon Municipal District continued to deal with critical maintenance and emergency works as the level 5 COVID restrictions prevailed. During the month the 2021 Grass Cutting tender covering the 130 hectares of open space across the MD was run and these are being assessed at this stage.

The Municipal District monitors the ESB discharge rates at Parteen weir and during the month put certain measures in place in Springfield, Clonlara so as to ensure a state of readiness in the event of flooding. The community was communicated with and key equipment was retained for use if required. On the ground in Springfield our teams marked the key routes for safe navigation in the event of flooding and sandbags were prepared both our depot and on-site. Discharge levels have since reduced and the team in the MD continue to monitor the levels.

A number of webinars were held during the month to promote and increase awareness of biodiversity in Shannon. Caitriona Gallagher (Executive Technician), Congella McGuire (Heritage Officer) and Jennifer O'Brien (Rural Development Officer) developed a series of evening talks with ecologist Dr. Frances Giaquinto entitled "Biodiversity in Shannon: a knowledge sharing space for a special place".

Works were also carried out at Illuanmanagh, Shannon Town to secure public lands following the establishment of an illegal encampment. The Shannon MD Office has made an application for funding under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme for works at the site while detailed design works have commenced for footpath upgrades at Sixmilebridge under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme.





Coronavirus
COVID-19
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