



COMHAIRLE | CLARE  
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

## TUARASCÁIL MHÍOSÚIL ÓN PHRÍOMHFHEIDHMEANNACH

### MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Meán Fómhair / September  
2021



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT p23



FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES p2



RURAL DEVELOPMENT p5



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT p43



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT p14



# FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

## CORPORATE SERVICES



Top: Maureen O'Neill Regan, President of the County Clare Patriotic, Benevolent and Social Association of New York City, visited Áras Contae an Chláir, where she was presented with a copy of 'The Story of Clare and its People'. Above left: Five new graduates have commenced with Clare County Council as part of the LGMA Graduate Recruitment Programme (l-r): Conor McCarthy, Communications & Marketing, Corporate Services; Seán O'Farrell, Communications & Marketing, Rural Development; Johnny Fearon, Climate Action, Environment; Ndubuisi Okoroafor, Project & Programme Management, Housing; and Hanish Vasireddy, Data Analytics & Data Metrics, Planning. Above right: Meeting with Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien TD, at Áras Contae an Chláir on 27th August, 2021.

**Freedom of Information and Data Protection**

**2021 year-to-date statistics to 31/08/2021**

- 123 Freedom of Information Requests
- 6 Freedom of Information Internal Review applications
- 1 Appeals to Information Commissioner
- 2 Data Access Requests – Subject Access Request
- 19 Data Access Requests – Third Party Access Request, e.g. Gardaí.

**Procurement**

The following tender competitions were published in June 2021.

Brief Description	Response deadline
8 Social Housing Units, Tulla Road, Roslevan, Co. Clare	10/09/2021
Provision of services for the Building and Development of a brand new website for Visit Clare Tourism, Clare County Council	15/09/2021
Miltown Malbay Flood Relief Scheme	13/09/2021

**Print and Graphic Design**

The print and graphic design service continues to provide services including layout and production of posters and signage, forms, certificates and booklets.



**Irish Language**

August saw various translations including a Motor Tax flier and Covid-related safety posters, originally issued in English only under emergency conditions.

Work on the draft revised Scéim Teanga is under review and online Irish language sessions are now available on the staff Extranet.

**Social Media**

The Communications Office monitors and updates social media channels with creative content to enhance engagement with the public and maintain awareness of the work of the Council. In July/August, the Communications Office:



- Posted 154 times on Clare County Council’s Facebook page, with followers now 16,186 and 14,708 people have liked the page. Posts achieved 634,000 impressions with 20,500 engagements.
- Tweeted 98 times on Twitter, with total followers now 7,171. Tweets earned 174,000 impressions and 5,350 engagements.
- Posted 31 times on Instagram, with followers now 2,216.

**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 July/August included:

- Minister O’Brien visits Ashline social housing development in Ennis
- Official opening of Fire Service maintenance workshop in Ennis
- Ennis launched as an Age Friendly Town
- Minister Rabbitte visits Clare centres and organisations
- Temporary Covid-19 Ennis Town Centre Mobility Plan update
- Connect with Clare’s heritage during National Heritage Week 2021
- Construction of the Springfield Flood Relief Scheme at Clonlara has commenced
- Minister Humphreys visits rural development projects across Clare
- Consultants appointed for Kilrush-Kilkee section of West Clare Railway Greenway
- Minister Feighan visits Healthy Ireland-funded athletics club in Killaloe.

**FINANCE**

The interim financial report which covers the six-month period from January to June 2021 is before Council. The report outlines the financial results of Clare County Council for the first six months of the year. In summary a deficit was recorded in the Revenue Account of €3.2m. This deficit was predominantly driven by the ongoing financial challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, details of which are outlined in the report. On the capital ledger the closing balance for the six months reduced, with expenditure exceeding income by €1.9m.

Work Area	Update
<b>Recruitment</b>	<p><b>The following recruitment competitions were progressed during July/August 2021:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clerical Officer Final Interviews</li> <li>• GO Driver I</li> <li>• Executive Conservation Officer</li> <li>• Executive Quantity Surveyor</li> <li>• Burial Grounds Community Playgrounds Co-Ordinator</li> <li>• Information Systems Technical Support Officer</li> <li>• Assistant Staff Officer Final Interviews</li> <li>• Library Van Driver / Attendant</li> <li>• Executive Engineer (Active Travel) – Eligibility Exercise.</li> </ul> <p><b>The following competitions were advertised:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Enterprise Development Officer (LEO) (Open)</li> <li>• Canteen Supervisor (Open)</li> <li>• GO Driver II (Fix &amp; Find Water Services) Panel (Confined)</li> <li>• Waste Water Inspector (Fix &amp; Find) (Confined)</li> <li>• Executive Engineer (Active Travel) (Open)</li> <li>• School Warden Part-time (Ennis MD) (Open).</li> </ul>
<b>Learning and Development</b>	<p><b>Online Training programmes / Webinars / Information Sessions held in July/August include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children First Training</li> <li>• Climate Change, Championing Leadership</li> <li>• Community Engagement</li> <li>• Library Staff Training Workshop</li> <li>• Covid-19 Induction Refresher</li> <li>• Occupational First Aid/FAR Refresher</li> <li>• Online Library Promotion.</li> </ul> <p><b>With the resumption of SOLAS training, the following has been provided:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abrasive wheels • Toolbox Talks • CSCS – Signing, Lighting &amp; Guarding at Roadworks • Fire Warden Training.</li> </ul> <p><b>Essential Skillz on-line Courses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cyber Security • ErgoWize • Manual Handling • Working in a Covid-Era</li> <li>• GDPR • H&amp;S Induction.</li> </ul>
<b>CORE</b>	CORE upgrade V28 has taken place in August 2021.
<b>Employee Welfare</b>	Employee Welfare supports are provided to staff on an on-going basis.
<b>Covid-19</b>	The Human Resources Department continued to liaise as necessary regarding Covid-19 matters.
<b>Unions</b>	The Human Resources Department continued to engage and consult with Unions on various matters.



# RURAL DEVELOPMENT



## Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, visit to Clare on 29th July

Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, as part of her visit to Clare on 29th July, opened two new remote working Digital Hubs in the county.



The opening of the Cross Community/Digital Hub and Ennis Digital Hub represents a significant milestone for Clare County Council's DigiClare initiative and brings to 10 the number of hubs now operational across the county. Located in the Quin Road Business Park, the Ennis Digital Hub comprises hotdesk facilities, meeting rooms, training rooms and business incubation units. The project has been funded by Clare County Council with additional funding obtained through the government's Connected Hubs programme. With the works now fully completed it is envisaged that this facility will be fully functional from mid-September.

The Cross Community/Digital Hub has emerged from the re-purposing of the former local national school building into a remote working facility and community social space.

Facilities include remote working, hot desks, high speed broadband, and meeting, training and community rooms. The project was funded by Clare County Council, Kilballyowen Development Association and the Department of Rural and Community Development under Town & Village Renewal Accelerated Measures in 2020. This facility, which opened for business in April, has become very popular with the local community and visitors to the area, with the facilities being fully booked throughout the full summer.

Speaking at the opening, Minister Humphreys said the Government, through the 'Our Rural Future' strategy, has identified remote working as a key commitment aimed at creating vibrant rural communities. "Clare is well-placed to respond to the increased shift to remote working because of the pandemic with a comprehensive network of hubs which, complemented by numerous Broadband Connection Points, are providing families and individuals with the option to live and work in rural communities throughout the county," stated the Minister.



### Launch of DigiClare's Remote Working Prospectus

The official opening of the Hubs coincided with the launch of DigiClare's Remote Working Prospectus which will be distributed across Clare, Ireland and abroad to showcase the county as an established remote working location in Ireland. The prospectus which is available in both hard and soft copy provides information and details on DigiClare's countywide hub network of flexible and affordable hotdesks and co-working spaces where individuals and teams can work. The network enables Clare residents and visitors to work locally in a fresh, dynamic and safe environment that's provides global connectivity through high-speed broadband.

Minister Humphreys commented: "DigiClare's network of hubs supports not only benefits those who choose to live and work in their community but also seeks to attract those commuting or living in cities to consider moving to a more rural location, which can offer them a better quality of life."

Councillor PJ Ryan, Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, said Clare's Digital Strategy, complemented by the rollout of the National Broadband Plan and the Clare Rural Development Strategy 2026, has sought to ensure that broadband is leveraged to help alleviate the root causes of rural depopulation.

"The county's network of Digital Hubs has been extremely busy over the past 18 months, and it is great to see the facilities being utilised by increasing numbers of people from all sections of the community from local residents to students, local enterprises and

entrepreneurs, visitors to the county, relocated individuals and web developers," added Councillor Ryan.

He acknowledged the work of the Digital Team and Rural Development Directorate of Clare County Council, as well as the Council's General Design office, on the delivery of these newest Hubs which will help to further bridge the digital divide as well as create smarter communities in Clare."

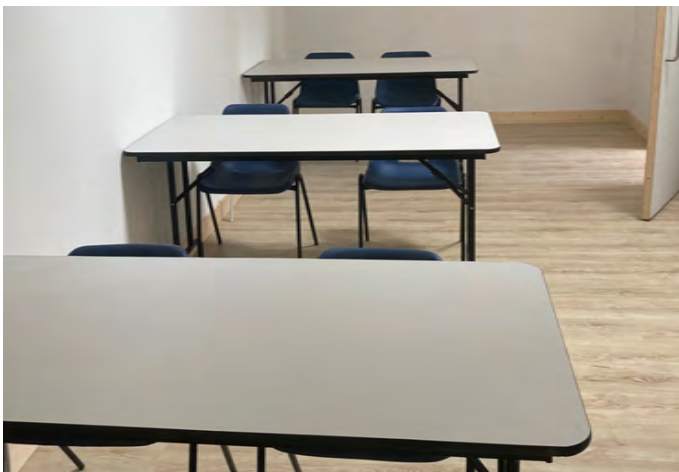


Full details on all our remote working hubs is available on [www.digiclare.ie](http://www.digiclare.ie)

For access to our remote working prospectus visit:  
<https://www.digiclare.ie/flipbook.html>

### Killaloe Family Resource Centre

Works have been completed on a project at the Killaloe Family Resource Centre which received funding under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2018. The works involved the redevelopment of a building at the rear of the existing centre for the purposes of providing a Community Hub Cafe, a fully equipped kitchen, a multi-purpose training room and garden classroom and garden. The works were delivered by the Killaloe Family Resource Centre with assistance from the Rural Development Directorate.





## INNOVATION

### Cratloe Solar Farm Project (Enhanced Environment under the Rural Development Strategy)

A community solar energy project is currently in the early stages of development in Cratloe. Renewable electricity is a central element of government action on climate disruption as set out in the Programme for Government, the Climate Action Plan 2019, and the National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030. Community led energy schemes embrace this vision and are led by dedicated volunteers on the ground, who want to create change in their own community. The primary purpose of Community Renewable Energy Schemes is community benefit (environmental, economic or social) rather than financial profit.

A group of experienced volunteers are bringing their energy to bear on a site outside Cratloe and plan to deliver 5MW per annum from solar power. This will lead to a benefit for the community through investment back into the area over the life span of the solar farm. This a long-term project, with potential to create income for the community. A number of new policies relating to Community Benefit and Community Renewable Energy Schemes have recently been developed and launched. Cratloe is also exploring becoming a Sustainable Energy Community with the Clare SEAI Energy Mentor Gloria Callinan.



Tom Golden, Cratloe Solar Project, and Jennifer O'Brien, Rural and Community Development Officer for Shannon MD, at the entrance to the proposed solar farm site.

RCDO support has highlighted how this role operates across directorates and brings community innovation into the heart of the organisation, linking the group with appropriate departments in the local authority and offered advice and engagement on governance, project pathways and community benefit. Support for innovative environmental projects that are community led fits with the Clare Climate Change Adaptation Policy.

### Minister visits Healthy Ireland-funded athletics club in Killaloe



Minister of State with responsibility for Public Health, Well Being and National Drugs Strategy, Frank Feighan TD (centre), visited Clarisford Park, Killaloe, County Clare, Friday, 16th July, 2021, where he was hosted by Derg Athletics Club and greeted by the Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr PJ Ryan (right). Minister Feighan saw at first hand the benefits of Healthy Ireland funding for local and voluntary groups in Clare.

Photo: Eamon Ward.

Minister of State with responsibility for Public Health, Well Being and National Drugs Strategy, Frank Feighan TD, visited Killaloe in County Clare (Friday, 16th July, 2021) to see at first hand the benefits of Healthy Ireland funding for local and voluntary groups in Clare. The Minister was greeted by the Cathaoirleach and Elected Members of Clare County Council, Clare Oireachtas Members, and local representatives and stakeholders, together with staff from Clare County Council and representatives of the wider community in Killaloe.

Derg Athletics Club, which received €22,000 of the total €374,100 allocated to County Clare under Healthy Ireland funding, hosted

the Minister's visit. Established in 2013, Derg Athletics Club offers physical activity programmes for all in a fun environment in Clarisford Park, Killaloe. Healthy Ireland funding is helping to sustain the club's inclusive athletics programmes and is essential to enabling participation in athletics activities for children with a physical disability or those on the autism spectrum. It is available to all children living in Clare, Limerick and north Tipperary.

The funding has supported Derg Athletics Club in promoting its inclusive athletics programmes, resulting in increased participation across the various programmes. Some of the programmes offered by Derg Athletics Club with thanks to Healthy Ireland funding

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## RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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include Juvenile and Little Athletics, Fit4Teens, Fitness for Team Sports, Couch to 5K, Fit4Life, Five Miler Run/Walk & 1km Kids Run, and the Development Squad.

The importance of physical activity for all is a key priority in the Healthy Clare Strategic Plan 2019-2021 and Derg Athletics Club is just one example of how physical activity is being supported by Healthy Ireland in Clare.

Speaking during today's visit, Minister Feighan said: "We want to promote and raise awareness of the importance of physical activity at all stages of life and for all abilities. It is vital that we remove barriers and reduce inequalities that exist around accessing sports. This is one of the core aims of Healthy Ireland – to ensure that no one gets left behind, and I am delighted that Healthy Ireland funding has been involved in helping to sustain these programmes."

Cllr PJ Ryan, Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, highlighted the benefits of Healthy Ireland funding in County Clare, saying: "Derg Athletics Club, like other community organisations all around County Clare, is empowered by Healthy Ireland funding. This enables the club to deliver tangible supports to meet the health and wellbeing needs of its communities. This funding is very much welcomed in Clare."

Paul Patton, Chair of the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), said: "I wish to acknowledge the Minister's continued support for the Healthy Ireland programme and the role of the Healthy Ireland Co-ordinators. Health and wellbeing has never been so important and we expect the upcoming Round 4 of Healthy Ireland funding to be that lifeline that many community and voluntary groups need, particularly in a post-Covid environment."

Deirdre Coleman, Chairperson of Derg Athletics Club, said: "Derg Athletics Club would like to acknowledge the importance of the Healthy Ireland funding for the club. It has been a lifeline for us and has enabled us to run various events, including a virtual marathon during Covid-19 restrictions last year. The funding has allowed us to develop a training app, implement a parent and coach education programme and purchase much-needed equipment for our newly renovated track and field at Clarisford Park.

"We are the first inclusive athletics club in Clare and the Healthy Ireland community engagement funding has been invaluable in helping us promote the various activities and events we host, allowing our Derg Athletics Club community to grow.

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### Minister Heather Humphreys visit to Cnoc na Gaoithe, Tulla



Minister Humphreys, Minister for Rural and Community Development, paid a visit to the Cnoc na Gaoithe Cultural Centre in Tulla which has previously been funded under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2017 and 2018. Projects funded under this scheme facilitated the expansion of the Cultural Centre to provide on-site accommodation and tea room facilities. A total of €300k was provided by the Minister's Department for these projects which have enabled the centre to offer visitors week-long workshops which combine with afternoon tours to the attractions of County Clare. In addition, the tea room facility functions as

a valuable community space for social and cultural events at the centre. The Minister also had the opportunity to view the current works on site which comprise the redevelopment of the adjacent school building into a state of the art multi-functional performance space which will be used to preserve, showcase and promote the cultural heritage of East Clare. These works are being funded by the Ministers Department under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund 2019 (€900k). The completion of this project will consolidate the cultural offering on site.



## RURAL DEVELOPMENT

During her visit to Clare, the Minister officially opened the Lissycasey Community Amenity Area project, which received funding under the Department's CLÁR programme to develop the community carpark and public areas around the local crèche, primary school, GAA grounds and playground. The area serves as a hub for community activity and provides a safe space away from the main road for people to safely attend.

The Minister also met with community representatives and Clare Local Development Company (CLDC) at Kilmihil People's Park. The Leader-funded project comprises an integrated sports, leisure and community complex comprising of an open plan park area, recreational equipment and facilities available to all age groups from the village, the neighbouring communities and beyond. The project was also the beneficiary of CLÁR funding in 2020 from the DRCD of €50k towards the development of outdoor amenity area, public lighting, footpath and crossing.



Pictured at Minister Heather Humphreys' visit to Vandeleur Walled Garden Stables restoration project (RRDF).





## TOURISM DEPARTMENT CAPITAL PROJECT UPDATE



Photocall at Loop Head Lighthouse – 9th July, 2021.

Back (l-r): Noel Kilkenny, Chair of Kilrush Amenity Trust; John O’Malley, A/SEO, West Clare Municipal District; Leonard Cleary, Director of Rural Development, Clare County Council; Kieran Clohessy, Quantity Surveyor; Pat Dowling, Chief Executive, Clare County Council; Ruth Hurley, Clare County Council; Kevin Bartley, Kerin Contract Management; Deirdre O’Shea, A/ Head of Tourism, Clare County Council; Martin Gleeson, Caretaker; Cllr Cillian Murphy, Cathaoirleach, West Clare MD.

Front (l-r): Cllr Gabriel Keating, Elected Member, Clare County Council; Cllr PJ Ryan, Cathaoirleach, Clare County Council; Conor Hourigan, Drake Hourigan Lead Architect; Dermot Custy, Contractor. Photo: Eamon Ward.

### Renovation Project To Light Up Loop Head Visitor Attraction

The historic lighthouse keeper's cottages at Loop Head are undergoing renovation works as part of an overall project plan for the sustainable development of the popular West Clare visitor attraction.

The renovation works to the cottages, which are in existence since circa 1850, involve the conservation works to the semi-detached building at Loop Head to include the repair of the existing roof and sash windows and making safe the electrical works internally. Custy Contraction has been contracted by Clare County Council to carry out the works.

The visitor attraction at Loop Head has been closed to the public since 2020 to facilitate a large-scale renovation project, since complemented by the successful installation of a 1.7km water main pipe to the lighthouse, which up to now had no mains water connection in its history. This project is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development’s Rural Regeneration Development Funding (RRDF) first call, as part of Project Ireland 2040.



Progress on site – 10th August, 2021.

Simultaneously, plans are underway to submit to An Bord Pleanála the design of the Loop Head Lighthouse Project Enhancement and Environmental Sustainability Plan. A holistic approach to development at Loop Head Lighthouse is being taken to ensure the full effects of visitor management within this the Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Loop Head Special Protected Area (SPA) are correctly monitored and mitigated.



## Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience



According to Tripadvisor the Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience has moved into the top 10% of rated Visitor Attractions in the world and has received a Travellers' Choice Award. The Travellers' Choice Award celebrates attractions that consistently deliver fantastic experiences to travellers around the globe. Winners like the Cliffs of Moher earned positive reviews and ratings over the past year that contribute to the Trip Advisor Awards. The Cliffs of Moher profile on Trip Advisor is managed the Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience with tickets available to purchase, visitors have contributed 14,400 photos and has over 14,000 reviews with 92% 4 star or 5 Star rating.

## 50 Shades Greener Certificate for the Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience



The Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience was recently presented with a certificate of completion of the Fifty Shades Greener, Green

Business programme. The programme is currently available for free to Irish hospitality businesses through collaboration with Kildare & Wicklow Education & Training Board, with funding from SOLAS. The Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience has excelled in their commitment to reducing waste production through provision of waste segregation training for team members with a commitment to reducing plastic waste across the site with the introduction of a visitor water fountain through Refill Ireland. The Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience found immediate benefits for example finding out that water usage fell from 6.1 litres to 4.1 litres per visitor in one month. Goals for the coming 12 months include a reduction by 15% of CO2 per customer and installing a rainwater harvesting tank to further reduce water consumption. Over 200 businesses from the hospitality and travel sector have participated over the last six months in Ireland's first ever state-subsidised green training programme, Fifty Shades Greener. The Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience is the second business in Co. Clare to finish the programme since joining earlier this Summer, after the Stonecutter's Kitchen Restaurant in Doolin.

## Cliffs View Café Upgrade and Local Menu



Indoor dining recommenced at the Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience in County Clare for the first time since the start of the pandemic with the reopening of the newly refurbished Cliffs View Café. Operated by Brambles, one of Ireland's leading catering providers, the 120-seat facility is located on the first floor of the Visitor Centre. Current Covid restrictions mean that indoor dining is currently restricted to 52. Visitors to Ireland's most popular natural attraction are also now able to enjoy a menu filled with locally sourced produce from wild Irish salmon to farm cheese. Among the Clare food producers supplying the reopened café are The Burren Smokehouse, The Burren Butcher (Lisdoonvarna), Hazel Mountain Chocolate, Celtic Salads (Bellharbour), St Tolas Cheese (Inagh), Gluten Free Treats, Haugh's Butchers (Ennistymon), Garrihy Seafoods (Doolin), Hugh Galloway Sourdough Bread (Lahinch), Burren Gold Cheese (Ballyvaughan) and Salann Foods Salt (Miltown Malbay).

## WEST CLARE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

### Kilrush LEA

#### Footpaths

In recent times, Clare County Council has completed the repair and restoration of existing footpaths and the provision of new footpaths at:

- Doonbeg
- Cooraclare
- Killadysert.

Clare County Council has commenced the repair and restoration of existing footpaths in Kilrush Town. Funding is via a mixture of Clare County Council own resources and National Transport Authority Active Travel grant funding.



Above left: Active Travel footpath on Ennis Road, Killadysert, on approach to school and town. Above right: Active Travel footpaths in Killadysert Village R473.

#### 2021 Roadworks Programme

Our Surface Dressing programme is complete.

Our Restoration Improvement programme is approximately 75% complete.

Pavement overlays have been completed on the N67 between Doonbeg and Kilkee, another near Quilty and one is currently underway at Caherea on the N68 near Lissycasey.

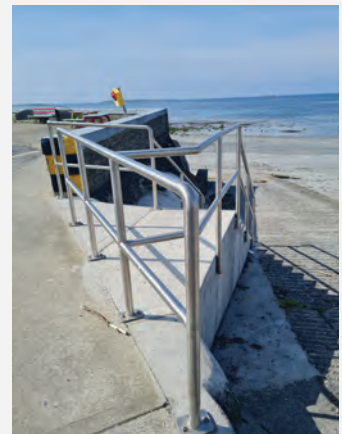
In addition, approx. 1.6km of the R-487 to Loop Head lighthouse was resurfaced this year. The road was widened as part of works proving an upgraded watermain to the lighthouse and the resurfaced road is now better able to cater for all road users, including cyclists and pedestrians. The resurfacing works is part the overall Tourism Strategy for the area. We are working closely with our colleagues in Tourism and Rural Development Sections to improve the overall tourism offering for the area (including RRDF funded projects at the lighthouse).



Above left: N68 Caherea to Lissycasey resurfacing currently underway. Above right: R472 Tiermaclane Surface Dressing.

#### Town & Village Renewal Scheme

A handrail and protective guardrail (at the N67 level) have been fitted to the steps providing safe access to Quilty Beach. Funding for these works was provided by the Department of Rural and Community Development's Town & Village Renewal Scheme.



#### Climate Adaptation and Resilience Works 2021

Clare County Council recently raised the road levels of the L-20423-0 @ Shragh. Ongoing flooding of the road by the nearby Doonbeg River left two houses stranded (no road access) for long periods (often in excess of a week) during the winter. Grant funding from the Climate Adaptation and Resilience Works 2021 allowed us to purchase land from a nearby landowner, and alter the line and level of the road to ensure that both houses will have road access in all but the most extreme flood events.

Clare County Council and Michael Boland (Contractor) have carried out coastal protection works to the L-2002 (Grave of the Yellow men to Kilbaha). Funding for this work was received from the Department of Transport's Climate Adaptation and Resilience Works 2021 grant.



**Department of Agriculture,  
Food and the Marine  
Piers & Harbours grant  
(grant funded Local  
Authority works) 2021**

At Doonmore Pier, Doonbeg  
Clare County Council –  
in partnership with the  
Doonbeg Boatmen’s Group  
– received grant funding to  
provide a floating ramped  
access platform, to provide  
easy access between the  
pier and the floating pon-  
toon platform.



Doonmore Pier. Ramped access platform now in place.

**Beaches**

There are a number of Blue Flag (Kilkee, Cappagh) & Green Coast (Seafield, Quilty) and other popular beaches in the West Clare MD – Kilrush LEA.

The summer season is winding down and officially ends in mid-September. Clare County Council allocated substantial resources to ensuring that facilities at our beaches were up to a high standard, and to facilitating an outdoor summer for “staycationers” during the pandemic. A large volume of visitors were catered for, and the West Clare MD team kept the beaches and villages clean – working weekends (including bank holidays) as necessary.

**Ennistymon LEA**



Bike Rack recently installed by North Clare Crew in collaboration with Local Community Group.



Contactless Bottle Refill Station recently installed by West Clare MD. This was delivered in partnership with Senator Róisín Garvey and Irish Water and Clare County Council.

# SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

## HOUSING



### Housing

The summer season ended with the visit of Minister Darragh O’Brien to the Ashline site. The Minister welcomed the development and the Housing team’s commitment to the delivery of housing in the County. This Council with the support of the DHLGH is on track to deliver an additional 322 homes by direct build across the county by 2023 with two-thirds of these already complete or under construction. In anticipation of the new housing programme ‘Housing for All’ the team continue to develop a strong pipeline for delivery of local authority own build as well as supporting approved housing bodies in their efforts to maximise outputs to meet the significant demand for social housing.

While we continue to respond to minimise the impact of Covid-19 on public health the business of Housing continues. Presently the housing public counter is open by **appointment only**, appointments are facilitated only where the business of the appointment is deemed necessary by the appropriate line manager for the responsible service. This service is working well and is generating efficiencies for staff and customers alike.

### Housing in numbers

Breakdown of tenancies by municipal district, (including RAS; long- and short-term leasing; Traveller accommodation & Mortgage to Rent):		
	Social housing*	HAP
Ennis	1166	645
Shannon	619	160
West Clare	935	386
Killaloe	377	163
Inter Authority HAP		59
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3097</b>	<b>1413</b>

2889 LA tenancies	1413 HAP tenancies	203 RAS tenancies
306 leased properties	2,686 LA properties	3,246 Rent accounts



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Housing need by area of choice

AREA OF CHOICE	Transfer NO	Transfer YES	Grand Total
<b>ENNIS MD</b>			
CLARECASTLE	131	59	190
ENNIS	556	749	1305
Subtotal	687	808	1495
<b>SHANNON MD</b>			
CLONLARA	19	8	27
MEELICK/PARTEEN/WESTBURY	81	72	153
NEWMARKET-ON-FERGUS	60	35	95
SHANNON	137	120	257
SIXMILEBRIDGE	32	29	61
Subtotal	329	264	593
<b>WEST CLARE MD</b>			
COORACLARE/DOONBEG	21	30	51
COROFIN/RUAN	34	44	78
ENNISTYMON/LAHINCH	90	91	181
KILDYSART/BALLYNACALLY	19	15	34
KILFENORA	7	2	9
KILKEE/CROSS/CARRIGAHOLT	46	48	94
KILMALEY	4	9	13
KILMIHIL	12	13	25
KILRUSH	68	70	138
LISDOONVARNA/BALLYVAUGHAN	24	33	57
MILTOWN MALBAY/MULLAGH/QUILTY	45	51	96
Subtotal	370	406	776
<b>KILLALOE MD</b>			
FEAKLE/SCARIFF/WHITEGATE	71	95	166
KILLALOE	38	34	72
QUIN	17	13	30
TULLA/KILKISHEN/BROADFORD	32	24	56
Subtotal	158	166	324
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1544</b>	<b>1644</b>	<b>3188</b>

\* First area of preference only counted.

Please note these figures are correct as of 31/08/2021.

## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### Summary of activity

Activity remains to be impacted by Covid-19 restrictions in some service areas with other services returned to 'normal' operating conditions. The detail hereunder provides a summary of activities during the months of July and August:

Housing allocations	
Offers issued (from 23.06.2021 to 20.08.2021)	27
Offers refused	2
Tenancies signed up	23
Tenancies terminated	12

Voids work programme (end of August)	
Voids/casual vacancies	39
Acquired properties (works on-going)	15
Average vacancy period	160 days
Number voids returned to stock	16
Average spend	€30,972

Housing maintenance calls	
July	336
August	350

### Estate Management

Following additional funding being approved by the Elected Members for the 2021 Budget, Clare County Council enhanced the Housing Estate Management unit by appointing three temporary Tenancy Enforcement Officers (TEOs) in January 2021 to support existing staff, to help address and enforce instances of anti-social behaviour in Local Authority tenancies in a more proactive manner.

The primary role of the TEO team is to:

- Receive and investigate fully in a proactive manner, as part of the Estate Management team, any complaints relating to alleged failure of tenants to abide by the conditions of their letting agreements.
- Work closely and collaboratively with the Traveller community and respond to complaints of anti-social behaviour, serve notices on illegally parked caravans as required and to liaise with Local Authority Services and other statutory agencies i.e., Gardai to address unauthorised encampments within the County in accordance with the relevant legislation.
- Provide support to communities in relation to anti-social behaviour of Council tenants.

The Tenancy Enforcement Team has been very successful and effective in proactively dealing with anti-social behaviour complaints. The following is a summary of the call outs carried out by the team:

	July	Aug	Total year to date
Call Outs	322	295	1,663

Any matters that need to be brought to the attention of the Estate Management unit can be done so by emailing [asb@clarecoco.ie](mailto:asb@clarecoco.ie).

The working hours of the TEO team are flexible to meet required need, involving working after hours and weekends as the need dictates. The TEO team can be contacted out of office hours, should the need arise, by contacting the Council Emergency Phone no. (087) 4169496.

### Traveller Liaison Officer

To support the accommodation needs and increase interaction with the Traveller community this Council sought and was approved funding for the post of Traveller Liaison Officer. Gerry Murphy commenced this role early in the summer and has since been visiting sites and building relationships with the Traveller community. The Traveller Liaison officer is available to support and assist the Traveller community in their interactions with the Council.

### Private Rented inspections

Private rented inspections were stalled for a substantial period due to COVID restrictions they recommenced in July with a combination of physical and virtual inspections. The number of physical inspections remain low as tenants are nervous to allow persons into their homes. In recognition of this the Department introduced virtual inspections to equip the Council to inspect properties without having to physically enter same. The virtual inspections comprise of an invitation to landlords to carry out a provisional inspection of their property by completing a checklist of requirements supported by photographic evidence and relevant certification, they can also choose to nominate their tenant to carry out this inspection. We are working with landlord and tenants to support the virtual inspections and we will continue to ramp up the physical inspections as Covid-19 restrictions are relaxed.

Physical Inspections July & August:	2
Virtual Inspection Invitations July & August:	120

### Housing Grants

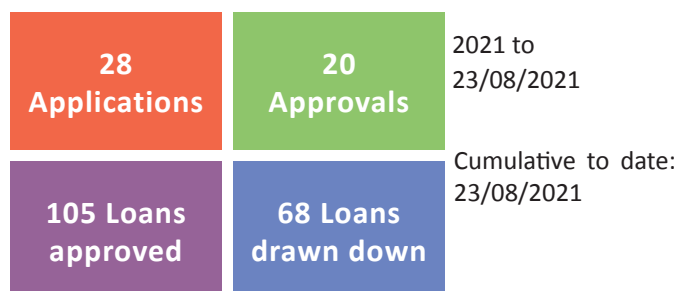
Grants Approved for July and August 2021:

Grant type	Number of approvals	Value of works €
Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability	21	383,615
Housing Aid for Older People	28	136,905
Mobility Aids Grant	9	51,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>572,020</b>



## Rebuilding Ireland home loan

Demand for the Rebuilding Ireland Homeloan remains steady with full details on eligibility criteria and loan calculator to be found on [www.rebuildingirelandhomeloan.ie](http://www.rebuildingirelandhomeloan.ie)



## 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.

Clare HAT continue our focus on exits from homeless services and during the period 25th June to 23rd July 2021: 2 households exited from homeless services; of these 2 households; 1 housed in own door properties through HAP, Leasing, AHB and Local Authority Allocations, 1 discharged/self-discharged and left homeless services.

During the period 24th July to 20th August 2021: 4 households exited from homeless services; of these 4 households; 2 housed in own door properties through HAP, Leasing, AHB and Local Authority Allocations, 2 discharged/self-discharged and left homeless services.

Clare HAT commenced Housing First in August 2021 and 1 household has successfully transitioned from private emergency accommodation to this new supported model. This project is the primary policy response of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to address street homelessness and those with complex needs that inhibit their ability to live independently. Consequently, over the coming months, an innovative implementation group led out by Clare HAT in partnership with our colleagues in HSE Social Inclusion will be looking to better meet the needs of this cohort going forward through this project.

Following notification from St Vincent de Paul of a change in their business/operational model the Council tendered for a new service provider for the operation and management of Laurel Lodge. The tender process is on-going, and we are hopeful of the appointment of a new service provider in the coming weeks

Homeless presentations to 23rd July, 2021:	
New presentations	20
Repeat presentations	141
Total Presentations	161

Homeless presentations to 20th August, 2021:	
New presentations	26
Repeat presentations	113
Total Presentations	139

Status as of 20th August, 2021:				
	Families	Adults	Dependents	Providers
Laurel Lodge	0	11	0	1
Cusack Lodge	5	8	7	1
Westbrook	0	12	0	1
Ashford Court	7	14	13	1
Clann Nua	0	11	0	1
EA Families	1	1	1	1
EA Individuals	0	9	0	7
TOTAL	13	66	21	13

## Irish Refugee Resettlement Programme

Seven families have been resettled in Clare in late August just in time for the children to commence in their new schools. All agencies worked tirelessly ensure a smooth transition for the families and to ensure all new Clare residents were accommodated with relevant school/creche/adult education places. The families are hugely appreciative of the help and support from the Irish people which has enabled them to restart their lives following traumatic experiences in their home countries.

The seven properties in this phase of the roll out accommodates half of our target for 2021 under the resettlement programme. This Council wishes to acknowledge the work and cooperation of all agencies, voluntary and statutory, who gave so generously of their time and resources in the delivery of this programme. We continue to work with all the agencies to support phase one and plan for the second phase of this project.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Update on capital programme

SHIP capital	No. approved	Current stage	Start date	Completion date
Shannon PPP	51	Complete	Q4 2019	Q2 2021 & Q3 2021
Ashline, Ennis	40	Under Construction.	Q3 2020	Q1 2022
Milltown Malbay	27	Under Construction.	Q4 2020	Q2 2022
Tulla	25	Under Construction.	Q4 2020	Q2 2022
Newmarket on Fergus	18	Under Construction. 6 Units – Due to complete Q4 2021 12 Units – Due to complete Q1 2022	Q3 2020	Q4 2021 & Q1 2022
Doonbeg Sites	2	Complete	Q4 2020	Q2 2021
Scarriff	18	Rev. stage 2 app. submitted to DHLGH.	Q4 2021	Q1 2023
Roslevan, Tulla Rd.	8	Project out to Tender	Q3 2021	Q3 2022
Doonbeg Lands	8	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH. Part VIII approved.	Q1 2022	Q1 2023
Clarecastle	2	Single Stage approved by DHLGH. Contract ready to be awarded.	Q2 2021	Q1 2022
Drumcliff Rd. Ennis	26	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH.	Q1 2022	Q2 2023
Sixmilebridge	15	Stage 1 approved by DHLGH.	Q2 2022	Q3 2023
Ennistymon	30	Stage 1 approved by DHLGH. Design Team appointed.	Q1 2022	Q3 2023
Ballaghboy, Quin Road, Ennis (TA)	5	Stage 1 approved by DHPLG. Procuring Design Team	Q3 2021	Q3 2022
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>275</b>			
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	Completed on 29/7/2021	Q1 2020	Q3 2021
Edenvale (Newgrove Housing Association)	4	CAS – Project completed	Q3 2020	Q2 2021
Ballymacaula, Ennis (Cluid)	2	Part V	Q3 2020	Q4 2021
Limerick Road, Ennis (Cluid Housing Assoc)	24	CALF Acquisition – Construction to commence 9 to be delivered Q4 2022 15 to be delivered Q3 2023	Q4 2021 Q3 2022	Q4 2022 Q3 2023
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>54</b>			
<b>Total</b>	<b>329</b>			



## SPORTS & RECREATION

### Active Ennis Leisure Complex



Active Ennis Leisure Complex reopened in June as permitted following the easing of Covid-19 restrictions. Staff and customers are delighted to be back for individual swimming and training sessions. Hereunder are the usage statistics for June and July:

Month	Total usage for the month	Pool usage for the month	Gym usage for the month
June 2021 (started 7/6/21)	3,837	2,965	872
July 2021	6,196	4,725	1,471

All sessions still need to be pre-booked by calling the leisure complex on 065 6821604. Numbers remain limited at this time however capacity is regularly reviewed in line with the recommendations. Full details on the activities at the centre are available on [www.activeennis.ie](http://www.activeennis.ie)

Active Ennis John O’Sullivan Park, Lees Road, Active Ennis Tim Smythe Park, Active Kilrush & Active Cloughleigh

Demand for the pitches in all facilities during the summer was and remains high with limited capacity available. Booking detail and availability can be viewed on [www.activeennis.ie](http://www.activeennis.ie)



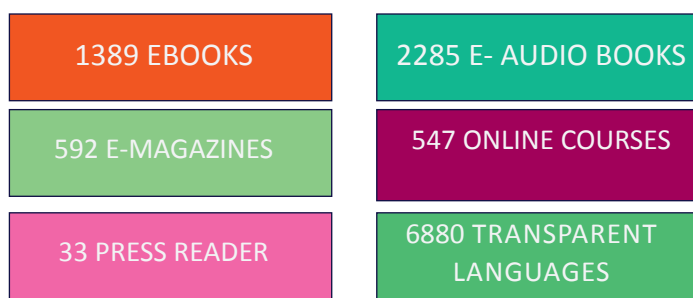
Clare Sports Partnership continue to work with clubs and the community in the active participation in sport in the County. For further details on activities please check out [www.claresports.ie](http://www.claresports.ie)

## CULTURAL SERVICES – LIBRARY, ARTS, MUSEUM, ARCHIVES

### Clare County Library

Kildysart library resumed part time opening in July. All Clare libraries are now reopened and providing lending services to the public.

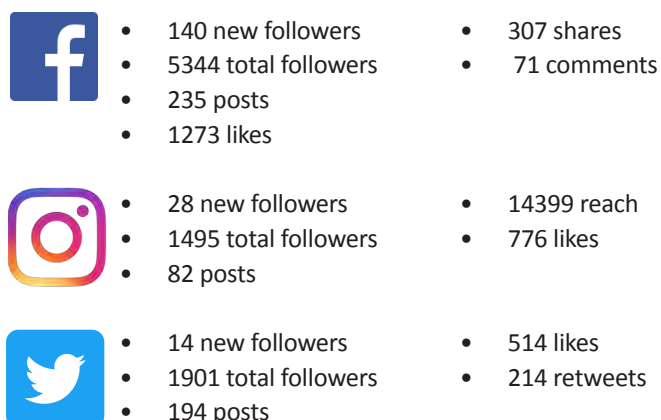
Online Resources – e-audiobooks lead the way in digital services with a large uptake also in language learning



### DAF funding

Clare Library received Dormant Accounts funding for a number of programmes and equipment including signage and hearing loops. Programming will begin in September.

### Marketing





Kilrush Book club members

## Library Programming

A number of Clare libraries – Kilkee, Kilrush, Newmarket on Fergus, Scariff & Shannon - hosted outdoor events in July & August. Events included story time sessions, arts & crafts, literacy workshops and book clubs.

Library Programming	
Total number of live events	15
Total number of online events	22
Total number attendances at live events	149
Total number attendances at online events	171
Total number of videos posted online (across all platforms, including Facebook/YouTube/Vimeo, etc.)	73
Total number of video views (across all platforms)	2643



The Summer Stars Reading Adventure, a national summer reading programme for children took place in Clare Libraries in July & August. Children throughout the county were invited to join the adventure and to enjoy the fun and pleasure of reading and writing over the summer. Summer Stars is non-competitive and every child who reads even one book/ eBook is regarded as having completed the programme. Figures at the halfway point in the programme indicated a marked increase in participation this year, with over 800 children having registered.

Libraries in County Clare hosted a variety of programmes for children during July and August, with an increase in attendance figures for 2021, as families embraced the reopening of libraries for the summer. Programmes were hosted online or outdoors where possible. Highlights included:

- The MAD Atlas Creative Writing Workshops with Maeve Devoy with Ennistymon and Kilrush Libraries
- Teddy Bear Sleepover in Scariff Library
- Outdoor Craft Workshops and story times in Shannon and Kilrush Libraries
- Art Therapy Workshops with Kate O’Sullivan - De Valera Library Ennis
- Storytime with Mr. Read, countywide
- Dogs Trust online dog safety workshop and quiz with Scariff Library.

## Creative Ireland

Creative Ireland funding was provided through Project Awards to Féile Brian Ború which took place in July, the Killaloe Music Festival and photographer/musician Christy McNamara for his video on the Spancilhill Fair entitled ‘A Fair in the Air’. Funding was also given to the Heritage ‘Daoine agus Áit’ postcard project and to the Arts project ‘Visual Voices’.



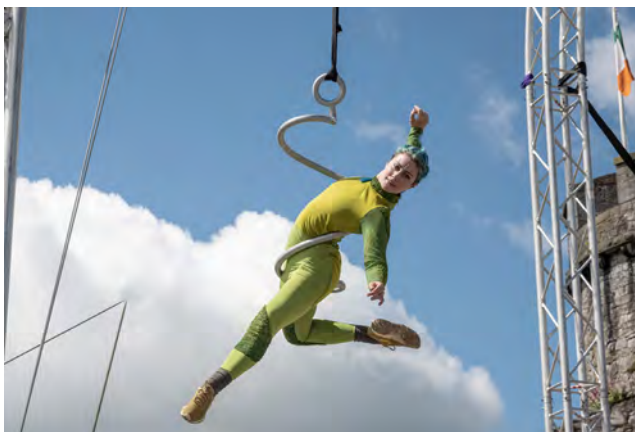
## Healthy Ireland

One Healthy Ireland event – an awareness talk on Diabetes - took place on Thursday, 29th July. The talk was delivered by Nurse Clair Naughton, from Diabetes Ireland. Participants gained an awareness of the different types of diabetes, together with the signs, symptoms and risk factors.

Two Healthy Ireland events were delivered online in August. Dr Mary O’Kane, lecturer in Psychology, Early Childhood Studies and Education, delivered a very informative webinar for parents on how to best support children on their move from primary to secondary school. On Thursday, 26th August, Dr O’Kane delivered a second workshop on the subject of ‘Raising resilient children’. This workshop focussed on practical ways of supporting children so that they can cope with the ups and downs in life and work towards developing solutions when faced with challenges.

## Clare Arts Office

- 2 Arts and Disability Programmes commenced at the Dulick Centre and the National Learning Network and mentoring commenced with one individual from the Dulick Centre, employing 3 artists.
- Clare Arts office posted 76 times on social media last month with a post reach of 18,552.
- Clare Arts Office advertised and managed submissions for the Live Outdoor Local Performance Scheme, Drama League of Ireland Bursary and Studio Spaces at the Tulla Stables.
- Clare Arts office completed Phase 1 of the “Festivals Training” initiative and launched a new website [www.clarearts.ie](http://www.clarearts.ie)
- Funding for Fidget Feet was received under the Arts Council’s “In the Air Scheme” for a series of outdoor performances in Ennis.



- The arts office also supported Coisceim Dance Company’s outdoor performance in Querrin Pier and Light Ballet’s Light Installation on the River Shannon.

- The Visual Voices programme in day care centres county-wide was launched.
- Ennistymon was selected as Clare Poetry Town in conjunction with Poetry Ireland.
- Shannon was successful for a “Creative Space” award from the Arts Council.
- Filming requests for Getty Images/Traveller Magazine were received, and in collaboration with Fáilte Ireland successfully attracted a Hallmark Production ‘Christmas at the Castle’ to shoot in Ennis and Bunratty.

## Clare Museum

Refurbishment works continued in the Museum for July & August. Clare Museum aims to re-open to the public as soon as is permissible.

The museum’s application for maintenance of accreditation was submitted to the Heritage Council and the curator has been informed that the assessment will take place online on 16th September.

About a dozen items in the collection have been identified as requiring conservation and these will be included in the museum’s new Care of Collections strategy.

The Accession Registers for the period 2017-2020 has been proof-read, printed from the Adlib database onto archival quality paper and is currently awaiting binding. This is a requirement for accreditation.

The museum has continued to feature items from the museum collection on social media during this time.

## Clare Local Studies & Archives



The Local Studies Centre received a donation of European Postcards from the family of Murrough and Suzanne O’Brien. These were sent by Aubrey O’Brien (1885-1925) to his family

in Ballyalla and Foynes Island between 1922 and 1925. The Postcards have been added to the Photographic Archive on the Clare Library website and the collection can be accessed at the Local Studies Centre.

Eight Valuation Town Plans signed by Richard Griffith (of Griffith’s Valuation) from 1847-48 have also been digitised – the plans of Corofin, Newmarket on Fergus, Clarecastle, Carrigaholt,

Cooraclare, Killaloe, Kilkishen, Broadford, Labasheeda and Tulla were donated to Clare Library by the late historian Seán Ó Murchadha (1923 – 1995).

The Archives digitization project is continuing and the Board of Health collections are currently being scanned.

## KILLALOE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

The Municipal District team were engaged in submitting applications under available funding programmes to secure funding for enhancement works at various locations.

**RRDF Application:** In collaboration with the Digital section of the Rural Development Directorate, an application in respect of proposed upgrades for Scarriff Town was submitted to the Department of Community and Rural Affairs by the deadline of July 31st. The Department will adjudicate on all submissions from across the country over the next 3 months with announcements to be made towards the year end.

**ORIS Application:** Killaloe MD has submitted a revised application to the Department in relation to Tubbermurra and Banes field in Killaloe. Adjudication on these submissions will be towards the year end.

Work commenced on the Clooney TVR Project in late August. The works involve the provision of new public footpaths, pedestrian crossing, public lighting, line marking, signage, drainage works and other associated works. Killaloe MDs technical team will be overseeing the delivery of the project on the ground.

### Active Travel 2021: Killaloe MD Programme

Project	Status
Tulla footpath remediation	Design complete, tender preparation
Tulla connection to athletics grounds	Design complete, tender preparation
Droomindoora	Design complete, tender preparation
Quin	Design complete, tender preparation
Clarisford Park Connection	Design complete, tender preparation

### Amenities

Ballycuggeran Lakeside Park experienced high numbers of visitors during the summer months. The Council provided resources to ensure the facility was maintained at a high standard. The new water-sport facility at the Lake added to the attraction and enjoyment for users of the amenity and is a welcome boost in tourist attractions to the East Clare region.

### Schedule of Municipal District Works

Footpath Upgrades – the procurement is completed on three footpath upgrade projects. These are located in Beechwood Lawns, Bodyke; Hillcrest Grove, Kilkishen & Clonmoney Grove, Crusheen. Contracts will be signed in the coming weeks and works will commence in September 2021 with completion on all project before the end of the year.

**Local Improvement Scheme and Community Involvement Scheme** - works on these schemes will commence in September.

**Surface Dressing:** All Surface Dressing roads are complete in the MD for 2021.

**Restoration Improvement:** The ‘Regional Blacktop’ contract commenced in July with Lagan Asphalt Ltd undertaking the works on behalf of the Council. Overlays are completed on the R352 Fortane, Ballinahinch Cross and R365 at Broadford.



Killaloe MD crew restoring roads in July.



# PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

## TRANSPORTATION



### Strategic Transportation

Clare County Council's overall allocation for Roads in the 2021 Roadworks Programme is €34.5m which comprises Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and Department of Transport grant allocations along with IPBMI and own resource allocations.

The Roadworks Programme for 2021 has been prepared as part of the Schedule of Municipal District Work for 2021 and was adopted by all four Municipal District meetings in March. Rollout of the 2021 programme of work is well underway in all of the Municipal Districts.

### 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 of 2020. The LSMATS public consultation, to which all Members were invited, was launched by the NTA on 2nd September, 2020, and was on public display for an eight-week period up to 30th October. There were over 112 submissions during the process which the NTA have considered. A presentation was made by the NTA to the Physical Development Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) in February 2021. The NTA are currently reviewing the draft LSMATS document.

### 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.

### Winter Maintenance Review

A Winter Maintenance Review was carried out during July

and August 2021. Submissions were requested from Elected Members on 22nd July, 2021. A comprehensive reconfiguration of salting routes was carried out at the last review in 2018 and route length increased from 12% to 14% of the road network. Some minor adjustments were made to this over the past year.

Feedback and Notice of Motions in relation to winter maintenance were considered as part of this review process. On balance the routes and winter maintenance arrangements have worked well. Where possible over the winter months some routes have been extended to cover problem areas.

The outcome of this 2021 review is that the current winter arrangements will remain as they are with two minor amendments which will increase the length of road treatment by a further 12km. It is intended also, at budget time later this year, to seek to increase the capacity to the Municipal Districts/ Area Offices to respond locally by providing additional support during a long cold snap. Last year was a busy winter with an increased number of salting nights. There were 52 treatments carried out last winter, an increase of four treatments on the previous winter.

### Active Travel Programme 2021

Funding for the Active Travel 2021 programme was announced by the NTA for County Clare on 29th March, 2021. The total allocation for projects across all MDs in the county is €5,986,000 and this allocation has been broken down into 28 projects which was progressed through a Grant Applications submission. Each project also requires NTA approval at the various developmental stages of the projects. To date 22 of the 28 projects have received project approval. The design, statutory processes and construction stages for the projects is at various stages of progression.

The Active Travel Programme supports:

- Development of active travel network strategies.

### 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 procurement process is at an advanced stage. At present 41% of public lights in Clare have been changed to LED through the current maintenance contract.

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](http://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 Works Programme and Operations

### Road Design Office

#### Current Projects: September 2021

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

A progress meeting with the TII was held on 27th August, 2021.

Project	Progress update
TII HD15 sites	<p>For the N85:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The revised concept design for Clareabbey roundabout has been approved by the TII. Modelling of the proposed changes and their effects on the traffic flow is necessary and this is being progressed by the TII through their consultant.</li> <li>The TII are of the view that any proposed design for the Lahinch Rd/Shanaway Rd junction should incorporate Active Travel Strategy and plan for the wider area. The RDO are reviewing the current designs to incorporate these elements.</li> </ul> <p>For the N68:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Derrycrossaun junction design and funding has been approved by the TII. A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit is required prior to construction. The detailed design and safety folder has been issued to the West Clare MD for construction.</li> </ul>
TII HD17 sites	<p>For the N68:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further to on-site inspections at Cranny, Crag and Parknamoney junctions, the TII have requested the RDO to progress with detailed site surveys, conceptual designs and Feasibility &amp; Option Reports.</li> </ul> <p>For the N67:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Topographical surveys of the identified junctions for phase 1 is now complete, ie. Galway border to Ballyvaughan. Revised design required for a number of these junctions, ie. New Church and N67/L50221.</li> <li>Gateway 1 approval has been received from the TII for the proposed safety scheme at Minister Place, Kilkee. A comprehensive traffic and pedestrian survey was undertaken in early August, a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit to take place in early September and a preliminary design report is being prepared for submission to TII.</li> </ul>

#### Low-cost safety schemes 2021

Road number	Location of LCS	Description of proposed LCS	Progress update
R352	R352/ Corrovor-rin junction, Tulla Road, Ennis	LCS to improve the traffic movements of the junction from Kevin Barry Ave onto the R352.	The design is completed. Section 38 notice advertised. The RDO in conjunction with Elected Members held several public consultation meetings with resident and community groups.
Junction of R462 & R471	Pedestrian crossing in the Square, Sixmi-lebridge	Provide a controlled pedestrian crossing point across on the R462 in Sixmi-lebridge.	Design is completed. Section 38 resolution adopted at Shannon MD meeting on the 29 July 2021. Tender stage completed and progressing to construction stage.
R478 / L10381	Doon-agore	Improve sightlines approaching R478 from southern side L10381.	Design is completed. Landowner agreed required to set back an entrance pier and fence. Detailed design & safety folder issued to MD for construction.
L4190-7/ L8272-0	Lismul-breeda	Warning signs and to slow down traffic on the approaches to the bend.	Design is completed. Detailed design & safety folder issued to MD for construction.
R463/ R466	O'Briens Bridge/ Bridge-town Junction	LCS with new signage and lining. Improve sightlines by removing existing vegetation.	Design is completed. Detailed design & safety folder issued to MD for construction.
R352	R352 Spancill Hill to Tooreen	Renew existing road lining, cut back vegetation, SLOW markings on road, 80kph repeater signs, centre and edge lining.	The design is completed. The RDO in conjunction with Elected Members held a public consultation meeting with residents and community groups.



## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

L-3050-0	Clonlara primary school on the L3050-0	Provide a controlled pedestrian crossing point at the primary school in Clonlara.	Design is completed. Section 38 resolution adopted at Shannon MD meeting on 29th July, 2021. Detailed design & safety folder issued to MD for construction.
R476/L5260	Kilnaboy	Improve sightline exiting the L5260 on to the R476. Improving signage and lining at the junction, removing vegetation.	Design is completed. Safety review completed. Landowner dedication substantially agreed. Progressing to Section 38 for resolution.
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.	Completed.
L2050	Cahill's Hill on Local road from Killmer Ferry to Cooraclare	Improved signage and a pull in area for motorists.	Design is completed. Detailed design & safety folder issued to MD for construction.
L4058-2 & L4062	L4058/L4062 Junction in Feakle	Provide a controlled pedestrian crossing point serving the National School and two housing estates	Design is completed. Safety review completed. Progressing to Section 38 for resolution.
R460/L1010	Lough Bunny	Improve sightlines onto the L1010 from both sides of junction. Improving signage and lining at the junction, removing vegetation.	Design is completed. Detailed design & safety folder issued to MD for construction.

L4611-0	L4611-0 Newpark Ennis	Provide a controlled crossing point. Where footpaths are discontinuous.	To be incorporated as part of an NTA active travel project. Likely to be continued into 2022.
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### Other projects 2021

Project	Progress update
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.
Liaison with NTA regarding bus stops	Construction works are completed.
Liaison with NTA regarding bus shelters	The NTA have approved funding for six new bus shelters (Kilkee, Lisdoonvarna, Crusheen, Newmarket on Fergus, Limerick Rd Ennis and Westbury) and upgrade works for five existing bus shelters in Shannon. The contractor has been appointed and construction works commenced in early June. Bus shelter civils works are complete in Kilkee, Lisdoonvarna and Crusheen with the ESB connections remaining to be completed. Bus shelter civils works are ongoing in Ballycasey, at the Oakwood.
Road Schedule & Queries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Search requests from the public and Municipal Districts regarding the road schedule are being carried out on an ongoing basis.</li> <li>Updates to the roads schedule is carried out as updates are being received.</li> </ul>

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 the MD’s. Cycle lane and road Line marking form the Clare Inn Roundabout to Clonmoney is completed, additional cycle signs have yet to be installed by the contractor.
Circular RW 09/2020 – Climate Change Adaptation Allocations 2020	2020 element completed. The remaining elements carried over into 2021 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 is being progressed through the MD’s and this process is ongoing.
Cycle and traffic counts	Ongoing monitoring at various locations.
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)	Funding for the Active Travel 2021 programme was announced by the NTA for County Clare on 29th March, 2021 and the total allocation for projects across all MDs in the county is €5,986,000. 22 detailed project applications have been approved by the NTA the NTA. The design, statutory processes and construction stages of these projects are at various stages of progression.

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. A revised design has been sent to the regional roads safety engineer and the MD for comment.
Circular RW 06/2021 Climate Adaptation and Resilience Works 2021	A funding application was submitted to the Department of Transport (DoT) on 26th March, 2021. Funding of €699,350 has been approved.

## Bridge Rehabilitation

### 2021 Bridge Rehabilitation grant is €687,000 for 30 bridges.

- AA Screening: Consultant appointed, Screening report to be issued by 30th April, 2021. Report issued 2 bridges to proceed to NIS stage
- Bunratty Bridge: Meeting National Monuments 14th June to discuss possible repair works. Meeting held National Monuments not in favour of repair solution. Repair options been explored
- Stonepark Bridge: Works to commence early July, road closure required for five-week duration, works 90% complete
- Smithstown Bridge: Complete bar snagging. Due for completion by mid-June. Works complete
- Ballyalla Bridge: Delayed with water levels and Covid restrictions. Works recommenced 15th March. Complete bar snagging. Due for completion by mid-June. Works complete
- Sragh Bridge: Initial investigation carried out 16th March. Structural investigation completed. Atkins Consulting currently carrying out assessment of bridge. Topographical survey completed
- Corlea Bridge: Contractor on site due for completion in two weeks. Works complete bar snagging
- Pollagoona Bridge: Works 90% complete
- Derrynacaw Bridge: Works 90% complete
- Latoon Masonry Bridge: Design ongoing- tender drawings issued for review. Screening complete, progressing to tender stage. Tender completed. Contractor appointment ongoing
- Derrycon Bridge: Contractor appointed works to commence end of June. Works complete
- Cloonolia Bridge: Contractor appointed works to commence end of June. Works complete
- Finnor Beg Bridge: Contractor appointed, works to commenced



- Ardnacaraa Bridge: Contractor appointed, works commenced
- Lough North Bridge: Contractor appointed, works to commenced
- Clochan Samhan Bridge: Tender documents complete. Tenders returned and being assessed. Contractor appointed
- Furror Upper Bridge: Tender documents complete. Tenders returned and being assessed. Contractor appointed
- Cloghaun Beg Bridge: Tender documents complete and tender issued. Tenders returned and being assessed. Works due to start early September
- Honan's Bridge: Tender documents complete and tender issued. Tenders returned and being assessed. Works due to start early September
- Dereen Bridge: Topographical survey completed week commencing 24th of May. Repair options currently under review. Design ongoing, tender to be issued early September
- Ballynacally Bridge: Tender issued. Contractor appointment ongoing
- Cahircon Bridge: Tender issued. Contractor appointment ongoing.

**Other Bridge Works**

- Bolooghra Bridge: Initial survey complete, Tender documents for consultancy issued and returned, currently being assessed. Consultant appointed. Design ongoing, tender to be issued mid-September
- Clarecastle Bridges: Currently carrying out re-inspection of bridges on the R458 in Clarecastle for Roche decommissioning. Inspections complete awaiting report
- Moanangh Bridge: Emergency repair works completed, other work to be completed when water levels reduce. Rubble removed from riverbed during low flow as agreed with Inland Fisheries
- Killestry Bridge: Malachy Walsh & Partners appointed as designers, design completed and tender advertised on e-tenders. Tenders returned and assessed appointment ongoing. Contractor appointed waiting for a start date
- Wooden Bridge Springfield: Survey to be carried out, meeting to be arranged with Waterways Ireland when Covid-19 restrictions are lifted
- Check condition of bridges notified by MDs.

**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.

The Health and Safety Team continued to progress their Schedule of Workplace Risk Assessment and Safety Statement reviews and have recommenced their Programme of Safety

Inspections in accordance with the revised CCMA Local Authority Services Framework issued on 7th April on the staggered easing of restrictions.

Clare County Council has adopted the LGMA/LASOG Traffic Management Guidance Manual and training on its use and implementation has been delivered to Traffic Management Designers and Signing Lighting and Guarding at Roadworks Cardholders by the Health and Safety Team. Monitoring of the revised Traffic Management Guidance commenced from 1st June with focused Inspections of Traffic Management arrangements at Roadworks.

**General Design Office**

**Town and Village Renewal Schemes**

**Sixmilebridge:** Coir Infrastructure appointed as main contractor. Construction works to commence before the end of August 2021.



**Barefield:** Published for tender 3rd August, 2021, contractor to be appointed August/September 2021.

**Corofin:** Topographical survey scheduled, preliminary proposals ongoing.

**Ennis Digital Hub – Quin Road Campus**

Designed and project managed by the General Design Office, Minister Heather Humphreys recently officially opened the newly completed Ennis Hub at the Quin Road Campus Building in Ennis.

This is an addition to DigiClare’s high-speed broadband Digital Hub network throughout the county and comprises of 12 hot desk spaces, 2 glazed offices, 2 privacy pods, 3 innovation & enterprise offices along with a coffee station and welfare facilities.

**Cross Digital Hub**

Works completed and the facility is in constant use offering remote working with high-speed broadband. The official opening by the Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, was held on Thursday, 5th August.



**Property assessments**

Ongoing property assessments relating to Council land use and securing Council assets, interaction with other public bodies, property transfers.

**Design**

Pound Street, Kilrush – Fence, gate and turning area draft layout, at CCC property to rear of terraced houses

**Mapping**

- CPO mapping for Killaloe bypass – ongoing
- Tenant Purchase Scheme land transfer mapping – ongoing
- Draft land transfer map prepared for CCC owned plot to rear of 35 Church St, Sixmilebridge.

**Ennis Museum and Tourist Office Building Refurbishment**

The Eastern section of the Ennis Museum and Tourist Office building has undergone a complete refurbishment with the Main Contractor building works completed on Friday, 6th August. The entry to the Museum from the Tourist Office will now provide a permanent display for De Valera’s presidential car.

**Kilrush Mother and Baby Home Memorial**

Works were completed and the official opening of the Memorial by the outgoing Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr Mary Howard, was held on Thursday, 24th June.

It has already become a quiet reflective space for the people of Kilrush with positive feedback from the community.





## CAPITAL DELIVERY / PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

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As there wasn't any Council monthly meeting in August, this report covers progress across the major capital projects for the months of both July and August. The key updates are as follows.

### Cloughaninchy Coastal Protection Works

Clare County Council is continuing consultation with landowners, and it is hoped to bring these to a successful conclusion in the coming months which will enable the works to proceed. It should be noted, however, that the project cannot progress until all landowner agreements are finalised.

### Doolin Pier Visitors Services Building

Having completed preliminary layouts involving feedback and inputs from cross-directorate workshops, Clare County Council is currently investigating the use of alternative third-party lands for parking provision. This follows conclusion of ecological mapping, which rules out the development of certain lands in the area. The use of existing parking areas will also be optimised to ensure that the parking quantum necessary to support this development is achieved.

### Ennis South Flood Relief Scheme

Work is practically completed on the scheme at this stage with only minor works remaining. The construction of a pump station and the remaining sheet piling required to complete the flood defences were completed in mid-August by the contractor. The remaining works on the sluices were completed and back drains connected to the river. The landscaping works were also closed out together with the remaining accommodation works for landowners. Some fencing work remains outstanding but will be finished in early September. Handover meetings and information regarding the future operation and maintenance are now being organised.

### Ennistymon Inner Relief Road and Bridge Crossing (Blake's Corner)

Following the Oral Hearing in June, we are still awaiting the An Bord Pleanála decision regarding confirmation of the CPO. A decision is expected in late September/October and will inform our next course of action in relation to the overall project.

### Errinagh Canal Bank Walkway

While awaiting the end of the nesting season restrictions, Clare County Council has undertaken a review of the construction aspects and screening requirements to ensure that potential impacts on the immediate environment are controlled to an acceptable level. An independent Appropriate Assessment Screening report has been completed and is currently being reviewed. Invasive species monitoring and control is ongoing.

### Killaloe Bridge and By-Pass

Further to Ministerial approval to proceed to Tender, another

significant project milestone was achieved when the Main Scheme Works Tender was published via the eTenders platform on Friday, 6th August. The tender return date is October 2021 and following review and assessment it is expected that the contract will be awarded by year end and that construction on site will commence in Spring 2022 subject to Department approval.

The advance works contractor Coir Infrastructure Ltd is programmed to return to site in early October to complete some additional fencing and site clearance works. The ESB are progressing the electricity diversion works over the remainder of the year in advance of the main works contract commencing. Similarly, Eir are also progressing diversions of critical telecommunication infrastructure affected by the scheme works design.

The additional areas of archaeological works identified in Ballyvally, Killaloe have now been completed which concludes the archaeological site works. The final reports and public presentation on the findings are expected later in the year following testing and carbon dating analysis.

The project team continues to make progress finalising the remaining landowner agreements. The arbitrator's decision on the three arbitration cases held in June is still awaited with a further case listed for arbitration to be heard in November.

### Kilkee Flood Relief Scheme

The Coastal Team within RPS has completed the 'Wave & Water Level Study' and issued the draft report which is currently under review by the project consultant JBA who will start their assessment of related wave overtopping damages to be incorporated into the scheme. The Letter of Acceptance has been issued to the winning tender for the Ground Investigation contract. A kick-off meeting will be held in the coming weeks where a start date for the proposed works will be agreed.

JBA's flood model has been completed and presented to the steering group in the recent Hydraulic Workshop and is under review by CCC/OPW. JBA are currently modelling all potential options for the scheme and will provide the final list of these before the end of the month. The second phase of invasive species treatment has been approved and will commence in September. As always, Information on the project can be accessed through our online information video and associated information literature available on the scheme website, [www.kilkeefrs.ie](http://www.kilkeefrs.ie)

### Limerick Northern Distributor Road (LNDR)

The National Transport Authority (NTA) are still finalising the LSMATS Report, following which, we would expect to hear back from the Department of Transport further to our submission of the Project Appraisal suite of documents to them last November. If favourable, we will be able to progress to the next stage of development.

### Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF)

The Members will be aware of a third-party application to

seek a judicial review of the Part VIII permission approved by the Council at the September meeting. The case is currently before the courts with the next hearing date scheduled for late October 2021. We are hopeful of an early favourable resolution and once reached, we will be in a position to carry out the necessary geotechnical investigations to inform the detailed design and engage further with the relevant landowners regarding acquisition of the necessary lands.

### Miltown Malbay Flood Relief Scheme

Following advertisement for a contractor on eTenders in June, tender submissions were received and assessed. Following this assessment, a successful tenderer was recommended and a letter of intent to award the contract was issued. However, the lowest tenderer advised that they were not in a position to carry out the works and subsequently withdrew their submission. Having considered the matter, the PMO felt that the best course of action in the public interest was to retender the works. Clare County Council have now re-advertised this contract and the closing date for receipt of tender submissions is scheduled for late September.

### N19 Shannon Airport Access Road

Phase Two (Options Selection) is currently being progressed which is a three-stage process and includes: Stage 1 – Preliminary Options Assessment; Stage 2 – Project Appraisal Matrix; and Stage 3 – Selection of a Preferred Option.

Stage 1 is now complete, and work continues to progress in relation to finalising the Stage 2 (Project Appraisal Matrix) for the scheme. This involves the assessment of the potential impacts of the options, and their relative success in achieving the project objectives, under the headings of engineering, environment and economy. The observations received from the various project stakeholders (Shannon Airport, Shannon Commercial Properties, National Transport Authority, TII's Intelligent Transport Systems Department, Future Mobility Campus Ireland, Clare County Council's Fire & Building Control Department, An Garda Síochána and TII's Structures Department) are currently being assessed and considered in relation to the final preferred option selection (Stage 3) which is expected to be completed in Q3 2021. Following identification of a Preferred Option it is intended to brief the Councillors at this stage prior to the Public Consultation phase which is anticipated to take place in late Q3 2021.

On 16th August the Letter of Acceptance was issued to Priority Geotechnical Ltd for the site investigation works contract. The results of these investigatory works will help inform the emerging route selection process. Bi-monthly co-ordination meetings with the Shannon Town and Environs Flood Relief Project Team are ongoing to ensure constraints and Health and Safety impacts from investigatory survey works currently progressing from either project are managed as they are progressed independently of each other. As always, further information and associated literature on the project can be accessed through our scheme website, [www.shannonaccess.ie](http://www.shannonaccess.ie)

### N85 Upgrade at Kilnamona

Discussions took place in mid-August with the new TII Inspector for Clare as to how this much needed scheme could be progressed. Funding of €100k has been provided by TII in their 2021 allocations for this project and it is hoped to be in a position to appoint consultants to commence the design process in the coming weeks.

### Piers and Harbours

Work is progressing well on the delivery of a number of Harbour Development and Marine Leisure Schemes across the county. Works have been completed at Doolin Pier and Doonmore Pier. Construction works are due to commence at Bournapeeka, Seafield, Carrigholt and Carrowmore Piers and are expected to be completed in November.

### Remediation of sites containing ACM (Asbestos Containing Material)

Tender documents in respect of the appointment of engineering services for a final remediation plan have under-gone internal review and will be published in the coming weeks. In the interim, the sites, having been rendered safe following the carrying out of temporary works in consultation with the EPA, are routinely monitored by Council staff. New signage has been erected to replace the earlier signage following deterioration due to the weather.

### 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.

The current status of the third-party surveys for the scheme is as follows:

- The draft final report for the Geophysical Survey has been issued and is currently under review by the project consultant RPS
- The Topographical Survey fieldwork is nearing completion. Some additional survey works have been instructed and are planned for commencement in the coming weeks
- Completion of the CCTV survey has been delayed due to high silt levels and manhole access issues. However, CCC have carried out some additional works to address these issues and the works are now nearing completion. Flow monitors have now been installed in the agreed locations and the five-week continuous monitoring period has begun. The methodology for pump station tests is close to approval with a start date for same expected in the coming week
- The Site Investigation works are progressing well. There are currently three rigs onsite and approximately 50% of the boreholes are now complete. Fieldwork is on programme to finish in late September.

RPS will commence their flood model build in late August on receipt of the CCTV and topographical data.



### Springfield, Clonlara Flood Relief Scheme



Works on the Springfield Flood Relief Scheme commenced in late July.

Great news to report with the start of the long-awaited works on the Springfield Flood Relief Scheme in late July. The Minister of State with responsibility for the Office of Public Works (OPW), Mr Patrick O'Donovan TD, visited the site on Friday, 30th July, to view the works and be briefed by Council engineers and the construction team. The scheme is being constructed for Clare County Council by the staff of the OPW under the supervision of scheme consultants, Byrne Looby and Partners.

The scheme will provide protection for 18 properties in the area, and involves the construction of a flood protection embankment, land raising, penstock/slucice valves, pump station and associated works at the townlands of Springfield, Cappavilla North, Cottage and Illaunyreagan, Clonlara, Co. Clare. The site compound has been set up and access roads constructed to service the site. Work has commenced on two sections of the embankment and suitable material is being imported to construct them. Work has also begun on associated culverts, drainage ditches and sluices. A traffic management plan is in place to manage the volume of construction traffic to and from the site.

The virtual consultation event can be accessed directly by following the link <https://storage.net-fs.com/hosting/6414124/13/> or through the project website at [www.shannontownandenvironsfrs.com](http://www.shannontownandenvironsfrs.com)

### Spanish Point Coastal Protection Scheme

Design and procurement is progressing for the remaining minor improvement works such as fencing and local landscaping at Spanish Point. It is planned to complete these works in the coming weeks as the busy summer tourist season ends.

### West Clare Railway Greenway

Roughan O'Donovan Consulting Engineers have commenced working on Route Options and Constraints for Section 1 of the West Clare Railway Greenway between Kilrush and Kilkee. Landowner consultation has been continuing and landowners are invited to share their ideas on potential suitable routes in advance of public display. The next step involves public display of three potential routes emerging from all of the possible routes considered. Extensive public consultation will be carried

out at that stage following which each route will be assessed, and a final preferred route will emerge. Ecology walkover surveys have commenced and are required for all possible routes. It is hoped that the Route Options will be on public display in September where all comments, queries and suggestions will be welcome. As always, we welcome engagement from the affected landowners regarding this process.

In parallel, the PMO are finalising the tender documents for a further element of the overall Greenway, the section between Ennis to Ennistymon. It is hoped to be in a position to appoint consultants for that section in the next number of months.

### White Strand Miltown Malbay, Coastal Protection Minor Works

The preliminary design report is being updated to assess the viability of the preferred option. Landowner negotiations are continuing. Once this is complete, Clare County Council in conjunction with Scheme Consultants Byrne Looby will progress the detailed design and bring the project to planning stage.

## FIRE & BUILDING CONTROL SECTION

### Official Opening of Maintenance Workshop by Minister Darragh O'Brien TD



Pictured cutting the ribbon at the official opening of the Clare County Fire and Rescue Service maintenance workshop in Ennis, Co. Clare, on Friday, 27th August, 2021, was Darragh O'Brien TD, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, with (l-r): Carmel Kirby, Director of Physical Development, Clare County Council; Adrian Kelly, Clare Chief Fire Officer; Cllr PJ Ryan, Cathaoirleach, Clare County Council; Pat Dowling, Chief Executive, Clare County Council; and Al Meaney, Brigade Mechanic, Clare County Fire and Rescue Service. Photo: Eamon Ward.

Clare County Fire and Rescue Service Maintenance Workshop in Ennis was officially opened on Friday, 27th August, by Darragh O'Brien TD, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The €1.23 million facility, which was completed in May 2021, is located at the Central Fire Station Headquarters and has replaced a single-bay workshop in the station that was built in 1979. The fleet size and range of equipment has expanded significantly since the original workshop was built.

The new workshop features a two-bay maintenance facility and a two-bay spare appliance storage unit that will enable Clare County Fire and Rescue Service to meet today's much more onerous requirements for comprehensive inspection, testing and maintenance of plant and equipment.

Main works carried out included the demolition of older buildings, diversion of services, construction of the new workshop, and the supply, installation and commissioning of garage equipment including a truck scissors lift and brake tester. Facilities in the new workshop include a new truck wash area, welfare facilities, an office, a drying room, an energy efficient heating system, new insulated roller shutter doors and non-slip resin floors throughout the building.

This new Fire Service Maintenance Workshop will enhance Clare County Fire and Rescue Service's commitment to health and safety in maintaining its ISO 45001 Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Management System accreditation, which is the international standard for OH&S.



## Recent training courses

No training took place during the months of July and August.

## Fire hydrants

Ennistymon Fire Brigade have commenced a trial on a software system for assessing fire hydrants. The trial is showing promising results and it is hoped that it will be rolled out to the rest of the county brigades later in the year.

## 4 new Equipment Transfer Vehicles

Four new equipment transfer vans have been delivered by Volkswagen Ireland. The vans are currently being fitted out with lighting, sirens and other ancillary equipment and are expected to be ready for operational use in September. It is intended that the vans will be based in Shannon, Ennistymon, Scarriff and Kilkee Fire Stations and will replace older four-wheel drive vehicles at these stations.

## Fire & Building Control Activities

Fire and Building Control Section Main Activities	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021 (Up to 27.08.21)	Year to date
Number of Emergency Calls Attended	77	77	57	560
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Received	6	17	3	50
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Granted	2	8	7	41
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Invalidated	0	0	0	1
Number of Disability Access Certificates Received	3	9	1	26
Number of Disability Access Certificates Granted	2	4	2	25
Number of Commencement Notices Received	29	35	29	265
Number of Dangerous Structures/Places Complaints	1	0	1	9

(Note: In the July Monthly Management Report, the June figures related to 1st to 29th June due to timing of report)

## Clare Civil Defence

### Operational Duties

Civil Defence provided medical cover for the following events:

- Tuam Athletics Club in National University of Ireland, Galway
- Ennis Community Games in John O'Sullivan Park
- Junior Munster Football Match for Clare Ladies GAA
- Senior Munster Football Match for Clare Ladies GAA.

Civil Defence also provided the following operational duties:

- Members provided transport for patients to hospital appointments in Galway
- Members assisted the Irish Blood Transfusion Board with their blood donation clinics in Ennis
- Members took part in the annual clean up of the River Fergus. This was done in conjunction with Ennis Subaqua, Ennis Tidy Towns and Clare County Council.

### Members' Training and Professional Development

- Members successfully completed a Missing Persons Search Responders course given by Clare Civil Defence's Search Responder Instructor
- Members carried out boating training and swiftwater training on the River Fergus
- Members completed introductory training on the new national mapping system deployed by the Civil Defence as an aid to searches carried out by Civil Defence members
- Members travelled to Roscrea for recertification as Manual and People Handling Instructors
- Members successfully completed a Manual and People Handling course given by Clare Civil Defence's Manual and People Handling Instructor
- Members provided a certified Cardiac First Responder course for managers and players of Clare Ladies GAA
- Members attended training on a new technologically advanced Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (drone) which has been recently purchased by Clare Civil Defence with the aid of the Department of Defence, Civil Defence Branch.



## ENVIRONMENT

### Covid-19

The Covid-19 pandemic continues to impact operations in the Environment section but our adaptable business continuity planning mitigates the effects. To date, all essential services in the environment section have continued uninterrupted. The current restrictions will affect our output in terms of inspections, interaction with the public, businesses, contractors and other agencies.

### Water Enforcement and Scientific Services

#### Water Pollution Complaints

A total of 99 complaints (incl. Section 4 licensed sites, wastewater and agriculture) have been received and investigated to date, with 26 of those received in July and August. Enforcement notices/letters have issued where required under the Water Pollution Acts and the Good Agriculture Practice for the Protection of Water Regulations 2017, as amended.

#### Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (DWWTS)

To date, 8 DWWTS inspections have been completed as part of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) National Inspection programme.

#### Planning referrals from Planning Department

The number of single house development assessment reports prepared to date are 305 including 64 in the months of July and August. It is necessary that all proposed developments comply with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 2021 Code of Practice for Domestic Waste water Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent  $\leq 10$ ) in order to protect public health and water quality.

A total of 239 forestry reports have been prepared to date including 26 reports in July and August. The forestry proposals have been examined and planning conditions recommended in order to ensure that mitigation measures are taken to protect water quality in sensitive locations. Forestry applications include applications for planting, felling and forestry roads which were referred from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

#### Water Framework Directive and River Basin Management Plans

The publication of the 3rd Cycle draft River Basin Management Plan 2022 -2027 is imminent, followed by a six-month public consultation period. The Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO) has engaged RPS Group to develop and host virtual consultation. Consultation rooms will open approximately two weeks after the plan launches and will remain open through the public consultation process. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) aims to publish the final plan near the end of 2021.

#### Lake Sampling Programme 2021

TMS Environmental have carried out monitoring at 20 lakes to date in 2021. All samples are transported to the EPA laboratory in Castlebar for analysis.

#### BallyduffBeg 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 & Technical Support

#### 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 Irish Water Service Level Agreement. The level of monitoring required is agreed with Irish Water and is based on the population served. Clare County Council also undertake unscheduled monitoring when issues arise. This was the case with the Castlake supply in early August. Increased manganese levels were detected in the supply network which resulted in a 'Do Not Consume' notice being issued. Considerable monitoring was undertaken with the likely source of the manganese traced back to temperature variations in Castle Lake.

#### Historic Landfills

The application for Certificate of Authorisation for Whitegate Historic Landfill was lodged with the EPA in mid-August. This is the second Historic Landfill application by Clare County Council, with the Kilrush Landfill application still under consideration by the licencing section of the EPA.

#### River Monitoring Programme 2021

The Environment Section has completed eight rounds of River Sampling to date. Our sampling programme has been agreed in advance with the EPA.

#### Bathing Waters

The bathing water season is approaching an end with the official season ending on 15th September. All 14 designated bathing areas have been monitored on a weekly or fortnightly schedule since the end of May. For the most part, the bathing water quality in County Clare has maintained Excellent status throughout the season. Analysis results and beach profiles can be viewed on [www.beaches.ie](http://www.beaches.ie). This website is updated hourly throughout the bathing season.

### Gardening

In July and August the Gardening team continued to maintain the plants and flowers around Ennis town. Planter boxes were also added to the town centre.

To promote the circular economy ethos we have begun to use

compost that has been produced from green waste in our compost facility in Inagh Civic Amenity Site. This will be used as a soil conditioner going forward.

Clearance works were carried out on the second courtyard at the Áras with a view to planting more biodiverse and perennial species.

The team is also preparing for landscape works at Drumbiggie Public Park and the Central Waste Management Facility in Inagh in the coming months. All works will comply with the All Ireland Pollinator Plan will add to the visual impact of both locations.

The team also met with the Shannon MD to develop a plan for improvement works around the MD office and as a back-drop to a newly constructed bus shelter.

## Waste Management

### Doora – Men's Shed

The final work shed arrived on site during the month of August. When restrictions allow this will provide for a sizable work shop for the group to carry out carpentry and other crafts. Vegetables and plants have been growing very successfully over the summer. A number of bird boxes have also been installed at the site. The Environment Section will continue to work with the Men's Shed to produce some bird and owl boxes and we are currently looking at making Fairy doors for the Drumbiggie Public Park.

### Closure Restoration and Aftercare Management Plan (CRAMP)

A number of tender submissions have been received for the construction element of this project which effectively entails the capping of the remaining cell and construction of an integrated constructed wetland. Tenders are being assessed and we expect to appoint a contractor in the coming weeks.

### Bring Banks

Repair and improvement works to the Kilrush Bring Bank have been approved and works will commence shortly.

## Waste Enforcement

### Amnesty Days

A Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Day is planned for the Central Waste Management Facility, Ballyduffbeg. The event will give householders the opportunity to dispose of household hazardous wastes such as paint, ink, empty oil cans, detergents, medicines, pesticides, aerosols, oil filters, vegetable oil, and mixed fuels.

### Anti-Litter Capital Infrastructure Grant

The €125,000 allocated to Clare County Council under this grant funding scheme, to assist with Litter Management during the peak summer season of 2021 has now been fully utilised. Additional bins were purchased for popular amenities, ie. Ballycuggeran, Lahinch, Kilrush and Kilkee.

Support was provided to a total of 14 Tidy Towns groups throughout the county, who provided volunteers to carry out additional litter picks and clean-ups to supplement the work of local businesses and council staff.

### Annual River Fergus Clean-Up



On 26th July the annual clean-up of the River Fergus took place. Ennis Sub-Aqua club, Ennis Tidy Towns, Clare Civil Defence and the Environment Section of the Council collaborated to carry out this vital work.

Members of the Sub-Aqua club entered the river and removed waste material, including three bicycles, road signs, bollards, metal and plastic railings, beverage bottles and cans. This waste was taken out by the Civil Defence, assisted by Ennis Tidy Towns members.

Clare County Council's Waste Enforcement Unit supported the initiative by collecting and delivering the waste to the Central Waste Management facility in Inagh.

This endeavour has left the River Fergus and its environs much cleaner and safer for the multiple species of fish and wildlife that inhabit it. The "Green Clare" page in the *Clare Echo* also covered this event.

### Liaising with Business Owners in Relation to Litter Management

Ongoing engagement with businesses in relation to Litter Management was carried out throughout the summer. In response to the opening of outdoor dining, businesses in busy tourist locations were written to, advising them of their responsibilities under the Litter Pollution Act. Follow-up calls were made, asking business-owners to demonstrate the additional measures they had taken to manage litter generated by their premises. Positive responses were received from businesses. A meeting will be arranged with all relevant stakeholders in



## Beaches

### Beach Bye Law Patrols

The Clare County Council Beach Byelaws 2021 came into effect on 15th July, 2021. The Community Wardens have been patrolling the beaches at weekends since 5th June checking for compliance with the Beach Bye Laws.

### Beaches

Lifeguards continue to monitor our beaches during the busy summer months. Due to additional staycationing we have seen an increase in activity at all beaches. Additional life-guard cover will be provided at our four big beaches up to mid-September.



Lahinch to put further preventative measures in place for next summer, ie. reduced packaging.

### Notifications of Controlled Burning

The Enforcement Team have received six notifications of controlled burning from farmers in August. Notification Numbers have issued to all applicants. The notification numbers are used in correspondence with the Fire Service.

### Waste Management Bye Laws

The Waste Enforcement Team continues to investigate ongoing illegal dumping in various locations throughout the County using the tools available to them such as the Waste Management Bye Laws. In August, eight Waste Management Surveys were carried

out under the Waste Management Bye Laws.

### Environmental Monitoring (Illegal Dumping/Litter)

So far, two Section 14 Notices have been issued in August, instructing the landowners to carry out various tasks to clean their sites. These are being monitored and appropriate action will be taken where necessary.

The Environment Section received three complaints relating to litter in August. A total of 52 complaints relating to waste have been received in August and all are being investigated with appropriate enforcement action to follow if deemed necessary.

A total of six litter fines were issued in August to date, based on evidence found by the Environment Section in illegally dumped waste.



## Water Refill Station

The Environment Section, the West Clare MD and Irish Water in collaboration with Senator Róisín Garvey, the Ennistymon Tidy Towns and the Local Authorities Waters Programme have successfully installed a Drinking Water refill station in Ennistymon Square. This refill station provides for filling of drinking water in reusable bottles to create a more sustainable future by reducing the number of single use plastic bottles.



Drinking Water refill station in Ennistymon Square.

## WATER SERVICES



### Annual Service Plan

The Water Services Section 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. All protocols and working procedures relating to Covid-19 are being adhered to in the delivery of the service.

### Water Services Operations

#### Water and Wastewater Operations

The following statistics provide an indication of the level of activity/work being carried out by the water and wastewater teams throughout the county from 25th June to 19th August 2021. The figures do not, however, reflect the time invested by the teams which is required to resolve each complaint/issue.

- 38 Customer Complaints were dealt with and closed out
- 0 Emergency Work Order was received during the timeframe
- 932 Reactive Maintenance Work Orders were dealt with and closed out
- 2 Customer Asset Flooding Work Orders were received
- 471 Service Requests (SRs) were raised for Field Requests and Follow On Work Orders for Reactive Maintenance work
- 85 Outage Notices were placed on the IW portal during the period. 73 accounted for unplanned works for water outages and burst water mains, leak repairs and reservoir interruption. 1 accounted for planned works for ESB outage and the remainder 11 notices were for mains flushing and reduced water pressure.

#### Water Operations

A number of outages occurred in the Hermitage, Bishop's Court, Childers Rd, Beech Park and Cloughleigh in the Mid Clare Area. In West Clare, a number of outages in water supply due to the aging asbestos pipe network occurred in Alva, Tullabrack, Cooraclare and Doonmore, Doonbeg, Bansha, Moveen (affecting the Loop Head Peninsula) and Lisdeen.

Outages for various reasons occurred in the Doolin, Turlough and Bell Harbour areas of North Clare. Increased demand in North Clare and Kilkee areas required supplementary tankering of water To Ballymacravan WTP and to Moveen Reservoir during the hot spell in mid-July.





Tankering of water to north and west Clare.



IBCs in place at Clonmoney N.S.

In the Shannon Sixmilebridge Water Supply Zone A “Do Not Consume” Notice was issued to more than 8,000, consumers due to increased levels of magnesium in the water supply from August 7th to 17th. The Water Services staff in Shannon and the support staff from the Environment Section worked long hours over a three-week period to restore the water to drinking quality standard. An alternative water supply was provided in Quin, Kilkishen, Kilmurry, Sixmilebridge, Cratloe and Clonmoney using IBCs which were refilled twice daily during the period. An external contractor was engaged to carry out emergency cleaning of the clear water tank at Castle Lake WTP and Moygalla Reservoir immediately on receipt of information that the water supply contained high levels of manganese. The cleaning process is continuing and cleaning of Clonmoney Reservoir will begin when Moygalla Reservoir cleaning is complete.

A number of outages occurred in the East Clare Area in Killaloe, Woodcock Hill, Tulla, Westbury, O’Briensbridge and Meelick.

### Water Conservation

The 2021 leakage reduction target for Clare County Council is to achieve a 1.2MLD average leakage saving. This 1.2MLD reduction



Cleaning Clearwater Tank At Castlelake WTP.



Tankers at Moveen, Kilkee Reservoir.



Cleaning Moygalla Reservoir.

is the equivalent demand of supplying circa 3,200 housing units.

In July and August, the Leakage Find Crews continued water conservation activity throughout the county reacting to various increases in demand primarily in Ennis (Cloughleigh and Kilmaley Road) and Shannon (Smithstown and North/South Free Zones) District Metering Areas (DMAs).

The Find & Fix Crews concentrated activities in East Clare with leaks repaired in Broadford, Sixmilebridge and Newmarket-on-Fergus DMAs. Leak detection works are currently taking place in Mountshannon and Bellharbour DMAs.

### Wastewater Operations

Rehabilitation work was successfully carried out on the Glen Abhainn WWTP, Meelick. This involved specialist work to the Rotating Biological Contactor (RBC) unit.

### Irish Water Capital programme

#### Shannon Wastewater Treatment Plant Interim upgrade

The upgrade works at Shannon wastewater treatment plant are complete. The capacity of the plant is now 28,500 PE. The plant treats wastewater from Shannon and Bunratty.

### Kilrush Wastewater Treatment Plant

Works will commence on site in early November on the Kilrush wastewater treatment plant project. The new scheme will comprise of a new wastewater treatment plant near Skagh Point, a new rising main, additional storm storage and upgrade of the existing Francis St pumping station. Irish Water purchased the site for the WWTP from Clare County Council by agreement on 19th August Irish Water took possession of the lands which were the subject of a CPO. EPS is the main Contractor. Completion of the scheme is due in mid-2023.

When complete, this scheme will end the discharge of raw sewage to the sea near Skagh Point.

### Clarecastle Sewerage Scheme

This scheme consists of a new pumping facility at Quay Road and new rising main from Quay Road to connect to the Clareabbey Wastewater Treatment Plant inlet.

Tenders have been issued to an Irish Water Framework and construction works are programmed to start on site in January 2022. Approx. 311m of the rising main was already constructed by Irish Water under an advance contract to facilitate the Clarecastle village renewal scheme. It is anticipated that the upgrade works at Clareabbey WWTP will run concurrently with this project such that flows can be pumped from Clarecastle to Clareabbey WWTP for treatment.

### Liscannor Wastewater Treatment Plant

Works will commence on site by early September on the Liscannor wastewater treatment plant project. The new scheme will comprise of a new wastewater treatment plant at Corcomroe, a pumping station, rising main and gravity sewer. Completion is due in early 2023. EPS is the main Contractor. Irish Water held separate on-line briefings for County Clare public representatives and the public on 19th August, 2021. EPS is the main Contractor.

When complete, this scheme will end the discharge of raw sewage to the sea near the pier in Liscannor.

### Ballyvaughan Wastewater Treatment Plant

A new wastewater treatment plant, pumping station including pipe work extensions are proposed in Ballyvaughan. Irish Water's design team are producing a revised route and site selection report following withdrawal of the previous CPO. The report is due by the end of September 2021 and will be issued to Irish Water for their approval. It is planned to use the existing outfall west of the village. Following Irish Water approval of the site and route, it is intended that the environmental, land acquisition, planning and archaeology reports and other documentation will be prepared. Subsequent to this process planning approval will be sought and construction is anticipated to commence in early 2024 with completion in autumn 2025.

### Kilkee Wastewater Treatment Plant

A new wastewater treatment plant, pumping station and rising main are planned for Kilkee. A revised route and site selection report has been prepared and is under review by Irish Water.

Once agreed by Irish Water, the environmental, land acquisition, planning and archaeology reports and documentation will be prepared. Following planning approval, construction is now anticipated to commence by late 2023 with completion in early 2025. A relining contract for the two existing rising mains is being considered by Irish Water and is currently under investigation with surveys to commence in September after the bathing season has ended. With regard to the Kilkee Flood Defence scheme information regarding proposed works is being shared with Irish Water.

### Ennistymon and Lahinch Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

Upgrades of wastewater treatment facilities for Ennistymon and Lahinch are required as both existing plants do not meet the emission limit values required by their wastewater discharge licences. The draft Feasibility Study Report studies various options including locations for a new plant in each town or a new combined plant which would serve both towns. Irish Water is considering the impact on the Inagh River of any proposed discharge, before a decision is made on the Feasibility Study Report.

### Newmarket on Fergus Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

It is proposed to construct a new pumped rising main which would outfall to the Rine River thereby ceasing discharge of treated effluent from the existing wastewater treatment plant to the Lough Gash Turlough. Additional storm storage capacity is also likely to be required at the treatment plant and the design process is ongoing. It is anticipated that the planning application for the upgrade scheme will be lodged in November 2021. Following planning approval construction is anticipated to commence in early 2023 and be completed by mid-2024.

### Kilfenora Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

Works will commence on site in early November on an upgrade of the existing Kilfenora wastewater treatment plant and construction of a new percolation area. Demolition of some elements of the existing plant will be required. Improvements to the existing network are also planned the extent of which will be determined by surveys of the existing sewers. EPS is the main Contractor. On 19th August Irish Water took possession of the lands which were the subject of a CPO. The project is anticipated to be completed in mid-2023.

### Quin Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

This project aims to provide additional capacity and treatment capability by constructing a new wastewater treatment plant on the existing site while maintaining the operation of the existing plant during the construction period.

All construction works are now complete at the plant. The plant is now receiving full flow from the village and is treating effluent to a higher standard than the original plant. Process optimisation is being carried out by the contractor. The final testing phase has been successfully completed on the plant and snagging works are being completed.



### Remedial Action Lists 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:

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

Designs for New Doolough and Corofin plants are currently being progressed with Ballymacravan to follow. Construction of a new rising main between the New Doolough and Old Doolough Water treatment plants is now fifty per cent complete. This main will facilitate the future decommissioning of the Old Doolough water treatment plant. Construction works at Corofin and New Doolough Treatment plants have commenced.

### Mullagh/Miltown Malbay Pipeline

These works involve the replacement of 4.7km of existing sub-standard water supply pipe work which was identified to Irish Water as requiring replacement. These works were completed in July 2021 and final reinstatement will be completed by the Kilrush Municipal District.

### Clareabbey Wastewater Treatment Plant Inlet and Storm Tank Upgrade Works

Work at this location includes the construction of a new inlet works and screens, and a new storm tank. The inlet works will provide improved screening of materials coming into the plant to both protect and optimise the downstream treatment process to improve discharge standards. The storm water tank will allow capture of flow during rainfall events for later treatment through the plant. The work will also involve the construction of a new ESB substation. The works are currently at tender stage. It is anticipated that works will start on the upgrade this year.

### Asset Transfer

Following an assessment of the water and wastewater networks in County Clare, 381 sites have been identified for potential transfer to Irish Water to date. Following on-site surveys, 50 of these assets have been determined to be non-operational assets which Irish Water will not accept. Of the remaining 331 assets, 203 have now been transferred to Irish Water.

The 128 assets remaining to be dealt with are divided into the following four categories:

- **Report prepared/pending (25 assets)** – These consist of assets for which a report is being prepared or which need further investigation or information /approval from another council section to proceed. At present there are 17 assets under further query and 12 reports ready to issue to Irish Water.
- **National Special Projects Office (NSPO) (13 assets)** – This is a department within Irish Water dealing with special projects which includes facilitating the Asset Transfers from Local Authorities – 13 assets are with the NSPO for

agreement for transfer or to ascertain or if they are to be considered as underground assets. Underground assets are transferred by S.I. 13 of 2015. When they are approved Irish Water will issue a letter to Clare County Council confirming their approval.

- **Property Registration Authority Ireland (0 assets)** – At present there are no assets submitted to the PRAI to be subdivided.
- **Outstanding assets to be transferred (90 assets)** – These are 3rd Party/Unregistered assets. In order to transfer these, detailed searches through historical Council records are required in order to make a robust case for first registration with the PRAI in the Council's name. These will then be transferred to Irish Water. Irish Water is examining new routes to register assets for which inadequate evidence is available to allow the PRAI to carry out a first registration in the Councils name. Surveys are completed on 43 of these remaining 90.

### Rural Water Programme

The contract for the rehabilitation of 1.9km of mains of Ballinruane GWS (Whitegate) has been signed with construction to commence in early September. Works are being carried out through funding under the 2019-2021 Multi Annual Rural Water Programme (MARWP). Works on the Mountrivers Group Sewerage Scheme (Doonbeg) commenced in July and are ongoing with necessary rehabilitation works to the sewer and significant upgrade works to the holding tank/pumping station. The aforementioned works are being completed under Measure 5 of the Programme which is the 'Transfer of Existing Schemes into the Public Network'. Funding under this measure is granted at 100% of the value of the works.

Under Measure 2 of the programme (Water Quality) significant works have commenced on the Leitra GWS (Boston) treatment plant to address long standing water quality issues with a view to removal of Boil Notice that are currently in place. Works are also set to commence on the Carrowcore GWS with the replacement of their existing reservoir and upgrade to treatment and automation of the Funding under this measure is also granted at 100%.

Newton GWSS (Ballyvaughan); Ballingaddy – Knockbrack GWSS (Ennistymon), and Drummaun East GWSS (Whitegate) were taken in charge by Irish Water in August.

Cloonoolia GWSS was submitted for Taking in Charge in August and this now brings the number of GWSS's submitted by the Clare Rural Water Programme awaiting Taking in Charge to 13.

The assessment and processing of grants under the 'Grant for Improvement Works to a Private Water Supply' is continuing under the Rural Water Programme with the uptake of grants continuing to be significant with a total of 71 applications received to date in 2021. Payment has been made on 35 successful applications 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

### Daniel O'Connell Monument



Conservation works on the Daniel O'Connell Monument.

The conservation works have commenced and are ongoing. A custom designed and built scaffolding and security hoarding solution has been installed around the 17.25m tall Protected Structure (RPS 702). The scaffolding has been designed to have minimal movement and minimal transfer of wind loads onto the structure.

The scaffolding and hoarding are positioned so as to preserve the pedestrian and wheelchair access to the business premises adjacent. With the scaffolding in place, the detailed examination of the structure commenced.

The close-up examination of the monument revealed that there is considerably more cracking than had been apparent from the sky lift. The cloak area and the head of the figure will require considerably more pinning and stitching than originally thought. The scaffolding is expected to remain in place until the end of September.

### Ennis public realm

Cabey's Lane and Parnell Street through to Wood Quay are now once again reopened to traffic since Wednesday, 21st July. Civil work and paving are continuing to progress throughout the pedestrian section of Parnell Street with the paving complete from Salthouse Lane as far as Merchant's Square. Works to the various laneways throughout the town are also continuing with 14 of the 21 lanes substantially complete. Works are ongoing to Enright's Bow and Salthouse Lane.

### Traffic calming: Abbey Ville and Abbey Court

The traffic calming project in Abbey Ville and Abbey Court is now complete. This project was funded under the 2020 Active Travel programme and will provide safer access/egress to this residential development.

### Public realm works, Clarecastle

Public realm works in Clarecastle are progressing well with works expected to be completed by September.



Traffic calming project in Abbey Ville and Abbey Court is complete.



Public realm works in Clarecastle.



### Update: Temporary Covid-19 Ennis Town Centre Mobility Plan

The Temporary Covid-19 Ennis Town Centre Mobility Plan taskforce met on Wednesday, 11th August, to review the current implementation of the plan. Based on their assessment and taking into account current public health guidelines, children returning to school, and facilitating outdoor dining, the following exit strategy was agreed.

With effect from 30th August, 2021, current restrictions on vehicular traffic will be lifted within the town centre with the following exceptions:

- Monday-Friday, 11:00am to 2:00pm
- Saturday-Sunday, 11:00am to 6:00pm until 30th September
- Lower Parnell Street, where the current road closure will apply until 30th September.

This taskforce has now been dissolved. The representative group has worked very well together and achieved its objectives, ensuring Ennis was and remains a safe place to live, visit and do business during the Covid-19 pandemic.



## LAUNCH OF ENNIS AS AN AGE FRIENDLY TOWN



Pictured at the launch of Ennis as an Age Friendly Town on Friday, 27th August, 2021, are (l-r): Carmel Kirby, Director of Service, Ennis Municipal District; Pat Dowling, Chief Executive, Clare County Council; Councillor Ann Norton, Mayor of Ennis Municipal District; Chief Superintendent Sean Colleran, An Garda Síochána; Leonore O'Neill, Ennis Municipal District and Chair, Ennis Age Friendly Town Team; and Larry Hally, Clare Older People's Council. Photo: Eamon Ward.

Ennis in County Clare was launched as an Age Friendly Town at an event held in the garden of the Old Ground Hotel on Friday, 27th August, 2021.

As part of the Clare Age Friendly Strategy, Ennis is joining the national Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme which aims to make Ireland a truly great place in which to grow old. The Ennis Age Friendly Town initiative is built on the recognition of the valuable role that older people can and should play in shaping their communities for the better. The Age Friendly Town Team have worked with the Clare Older People's Council in this regard.

Ennis Municipal District is progressing a number of projects throughout Ennis Town and its environs to make

the town more accessible, which will include shared surfaces, table-top crossing points, dropped kerbs, pedestrian crossings, age-friendly parking spaces and age-friendly seating areas. Funding of €10.5m was secured under the Government's Urban Regeneration and Development Fund projects for public realm enhancements, with a further €950,000 secured for various works from the National Transport Authority under Active Travel grants.

Some of the other initiatives as part of the project include: an age-friendly business programme with Ennis Chamber of Commerce, physical activity programmes for older adults by Active Ennis and Clare Sports Partnership, community policing and crime prevention initiatives by Ennis Gardaí as well as valuable input provided by the Alzheimer's Society.



# PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Atlantic Green Digital Basin

The Government has nominated Michael Noonan TD to chair the Shannon Estuary Taskforce. The remit of the Taskforce is awaited however it will lead to the realisation of the economic opportunities that renewable energy and digitalisation can bring to the Estuary and the Mid-West region. This Council awaits further communication from The Tánaiste's Department.

### Clare Economic Task Force

The Clare Economic Task Force met in July and included a presentation from Mr Pat Keating, CEO of the SFPCo on the development potential of the Shannon Estuary. Clare County Council continues to engage with the Shannon Group, ESB, IDA and EI to align, where appropriate, with strategic objectives set out in the Clare County Development Plan, the SIFP, Ennis 2040 and our economic strategies.

### Ennis Data Centre

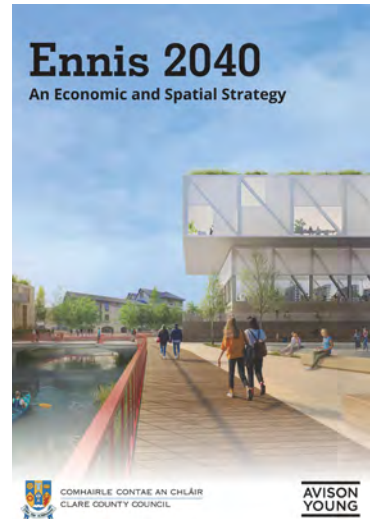
Over the past months the Council's Planning Department, Roads, Environment and other sections have engaged with the Data Centre applicant, Art Data Centre Ltd. in detailed pre-planning discussions. The 1.3m sqft Data Centre application was lodged with the Council in July 2021 and in parallel a gas-powered generation station application will be lodged with An Bord Pleanála under the Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) process.

### Ennis 2040 Economic and Spatial Strategy

At the June Council meeting, a resolution was passed to approve a €10m loan facility to Clare County Council to be drawn down for the activation and development of strategic sites as required by the Ennis 2040 Strategic Development DAC. The last stage in the process, i.e. Ministerial approval, has been sought for this loan.

The recruitment of the Chief Operating Officer (COO) to lead the Executive Team for the Ennis 2040 DAC has concluded and Mr Kevin Corrigan is due to take up his position in September.

Arrangements are in hand to hold the official launch of the Ennis 2040 Strategy and it is hoped that the launch date will soon be announced.



## STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PROJECTS

### Living Shannon

#### DELIVERABLES

*A new **Main Street** and improved **green boulevards** linking to the estuary*

*An expanded and reinvigorated **green Town Square area***

*A **mixture** of new residential housing types*

*A more **varied retail** offer, showcasing **local products** and services*

*A new **'One Shannon'** community, civic and cultural hub*

***New amenities** and **better connections** to the new **Town Park & Estuary Park** to support healthy lifestyles*

*An **innovation district** to showcase the Best of Shannon*

*A **refreshed identity** for Shannon rooted in its history of innovation, enterprise and connectivity with nature*



### Spatial and Economic Masterplan for Shannon Town Centre

This Masterplan, which is funded by Government's Urban Regeneration Development Fund (URDF) and Clare County Council, will drive the future economic and spatial pattern for the centre of Shannon Town.

Following the presentation on 1st July to the Shannon MD Members on the working draft of the Masterplan, and the agreement of the format and timescale of the consultation, public consultation on the Masterplan commenced on 16th July. Consultation was hosted on a new interactive web-based portal. Elements of the masterplan were displayed in libraries

and Area Office and a presentation was displayed at the Big Screen outdoor viewing of the Cork v Clare Hurling Qualifier on 24th July. Following the request by the Elected Members at the recent Shannon MD meeting, and due in part to the significant positive level of engagement from members of the public (approximately 1,800 visits/hits to the Shannon Masterplan web portal and circa 70 written submissions were received at that stage) the deadline for making submissions was subsequently extended to Friday, 3rd September. In addition, throughout the public consultation period, the planning team have facilitated requests from a number of community groups and individuals with a number of meetings.

## STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PROJECTS

### Killaloe-Ballina Town Enhancement and Mobility Plan

Clare County Council, in conjunction with Tipperary County Council, is working on 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.

Following consultation and endorsement in late June by both Killaloe and Nenagh MDs, the draft plan went on public display for over six weeks of public consultation from 6th July to 20th August. In addition to the display of the draft plan, an interactive public webinar was hosted by both local authorities on the Draft Plan on Wednesday, 21st July, from 7pm to 9pm, where there was significant engagement with a wide range of individuals and community groups.

Currently, the planning team are collating, analysing and considering the submissions to the Draft Plan with a view to consulting with the Elected Members from both Authorities and informing the final document.

It is anticipated that a final plan will be in place by end of the year and will inform the future co-ordinated development of both settlements and leverage private sector investment and a range of national and EU funding opportunities.



### Roche Masterplan

Following the grant in early February 2021, of a 10-year planning permission for the phased demolition and remediation of the Roche Facility in Clarecastle, 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 will be informed significantly by the preparation and outcome of the Draft Clare County Development Plan and the development and remediation on site. Engagement with Roche on the scope of the proposed masterplan is continuing.

### Clare Maritime Economic Zone (Clare MEZ)

The recent positive announcements regarding Moneypoint and other developments along the Shannon Estuary have added focus to the significant potential the maritime industry has in terms of economic, social and rural development of County Clare. Such developments reflect the vision and policy support of the Elected Members and Executive as set out in the current Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 and the SIFP for the Shannon Estuary.

Clare County Council, through the Economic Directorate, is committed to translating this vision into a socio-economic project and leading the establishment a Maritime Training Centre facility. There are numerous advantages, both for the project and for the area, if such a maritime training centre was located in West Clare.

Currently the focus is on seeking funding from a range of funding sources and schemes while also at the same time creating the most advantageous property solution required to develop such a specialised facility.

In July, an application under Category 2 - Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) was made for the purchase of land and a property solution in Kilrush to develop the maritime training centre. Significant support for the project was obtained from a wide range of community groups and maritime and renewable energy organisations as part of the application, reflecting the positive engagement with all stakeholders and the opportunities such a Higher Education Maritime Training facility could have. It is hoped a favourable and successful outcome would occur when the RRDF funding awards are announced in October.

Work continued on the marketing of the proposal and the finalisation of documents required for an Expressions of Interest for a preferred partner, anticipated to be sought in early September. Detailed site design and survey work on the required infrastructure of pool building, fire yard, rescue davit and class room accommodation has continued throughout the period together with detailed preparation the Business Plan.

Subject to the achievement of funding streams and a property solution together with the procurement of a suitable maritime operator with extensive knowledge of this sector, the project could be open for training in late 2022/early 2023.

During August, discussions with the maritime and renewable energy industry continued and assistance from the SEI team was provided for the hosting of a Foreshore Licence application for a Tidal Test Device in waters off Cahercon Pier.



## FORWARD PLANNING

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### Clare County Development Plan 2022-2028

The Draft Clare County Development Plan 2022-2028 was issued on 16th June, 2021, to the Elected Members for their consideration prior to its adoption and period of public consultation. Since then a new piece of legislation, the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2021, was enacted on 16th July, 2021, which includes provisions that enable a planning authority to extend the development plan process by up to a period of one year due to the impacts of Covid-19.

The Elected Members decided in July to avail of the provisions of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2021 to initiate the process to extend the period by up to 7 months to prepare the new Clare County Development Plan 2022-2028. A necessary consequence of this is to first extend the duration of the existing Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023, as varied and in the first instance, to examine the impact of the proposed extension of duration of the existing development plan with regard to the effects on the environment and on European sites.

Subject to the outcome of the AA and SEA processes to assess any potential impact of the proposed extension of duration of the existing development plan with regards to the effects on the environment and European sites in the county, the Planning Authority is then required to undertake a minimum four-week public consultation period on the proposed extension of duration. A Chief Executive's Report will be prepared on submissions received for consideration by the Elected Members, based on the reasons for seeking the additional time to prepare a new development plan (due to the impact of Covid-19) and the environmental implications of extending the duration of the existing Development Plan. If the Elected Members decide to extend the duration of the existing Development Plan they may then decide to take the additional time to complete the preparation of the new Clare County Development Plan 2022-2028, which is anticipated in early November 2021.

In tandem with progressing the process set out in the new legislation, engagement will re-commence with the Elected Members to facilitate their consideration of the draft County Development Plan. Thirteen workshops for elected members have been organised for the month of September.

### 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 a new signage strategy and streetscape enhancement plan, which seeks to improve both the visitor and residents experience. The first round of public consultation concluded in August, which saw the Design Team engage with the local community through a robust and intensive consultation plan. The outcomes and observations obtained from the first round of public consultations will richly inform the design process, which is due to commence in September.

### Corofin Enhancement Strategy

Clare County Council and National Parks & Wildlife Services (NPWS) 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. A multi-disciplinary design team led by the award-winning practice Hall McKnight Architects have been appointed. The project was initiated in August with a visit to the village, which was attended by the design team and representatives from Clare County Council. The public consultation process will begin in September where the design team will approach key stakeholders and the wider public to discuss their aspirations for the project.

### The Manchester Martyrs Monument

Clare County Council was successful in securing a grant from The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in respect of its Historic Structures Fund. This capital investment fund seeks to promote the conservation of historic structures for the broader benefit of communities and the public. Clare County Council submitted an application to this fund for the repair and restoration of the Manchester Martyrs Monument in Kilrush. This monument was erected in the heart of Kilrush Town in 1903 and is one in a series of monuments built around Ireland to commemorate the memory of the Manchester Martyrs. In recent years it has fallen into disrepair, and the grant will allow works to progress on the restoration of this important cultural artefact. The tender process is ongoing and will be concluded in late September.

**The Outdoor Public Space Scheme**

Clare County Council has submitted an application to the Outdoor Public Space Scheme as promoted by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. This funding stream asks us to reimagine how we use our outdoor public spaces. Clare is a county with rich festival traditions. They are an intrinsic part of our culture and traditional way of life. This project looks to support this culture, offering new ways to diversify and enhance its experience while prompting us to consider new ways and new settings in which they can occur. The proposal has been designed by the forward planning department in Clare County Council, and proposes a series of demountable outdoor structures for use during festivals and outdoor events. The application was submitted in mid-July and the outcome is expected in September.



**DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT – PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The table below summarises the activity in relation to planning applications during the two-month period of July and August and also gives the year to date totals. In comparison to the same period in 2020, this is an increase in the number of planning applications received of 255, representing a substantial increase of 58% year on year. In addition, the number of decisions issued in the year to date is ahead of the same period last year by 225.

The graph below shows the trend in planning applications received for the first six months of 2021 and the corresponding periods in 2020 and 2019.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS	July 2021	August 2021	Year to date 2021
No. of planning applications received	127	99	916
No. of planning decisions made	125	91	757
No. of decisions notified by An Bord Pleanála	3	3	21
No. of pre-planning enquiries received	27	26	254
No. of Section 5 applications	9	5	52
No. of Section 97 Exemption Cert applications (in respect of Part V of the Planning & Dev Act 2000)	9	2	42
Submissions received regarding Compliance	24	24	236





## DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT – PLANNING APPLICATIONS

During the month, a number of significant planning applications were received for the following development proposals:

Planning Ref No	Location	Description of Development	Applicant
P21/576	Tullyvarraga, Shannon	Construction of Primary School	BoM Gaelscoil Donncha Rua
P21/664	Ballymaley, Ennis	Construction of 24 No. 4 Bedroom detached	EKO Integrated Services Ltd
P21/663	Drumbiggle Road, Ennis	Construction of 46 residential units	EKO Integrated Services Ltd
P21/599	Drumbiggle, Ennis	Construction of 58 residential units	Leadlane (Drumbiggle Ltd)
P21/639	Roslevan, Ennis	Construction of 7 residential units	Padraig Howard

### PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

The table below summarises the activity in relation to planning enforcement during the two months of July and August, together with the year to date totals.

PLANNING ENFORCEMENT	July 2021	August 2021	Year to date 2021
No. of new complaints received	17	9	239
No of Files Opened * includes complaints received in June & July 2021 (also update of files opened in March to 17 therefore ytd now 88)	13	9	88
No. of Warning Letters issued	5	5	60
No. of Enforcement Notices served	2	3	23
No. of Legal Cases initiated	0	1	2
No. of Enforcement files closed	0	1	25

### TAKING IN CHARGE OF HOUSING ESTATES

**Dun Ri (Phase 2), Bunratty** was taken in charge at Shannon Municipal District Meeting on 29th July, 2021.

**Remedial works were advanced on the following estates:**

Housing Estate	Status
<b>Woodstock Hill, Shanaway Road, Ennis</b>	Remedial works are nearing completion.
<b>Woodstock View, Shanaway Road, Ennis</b>	Remedial works were completed in July.
<b>Woodstock Drive, Shanaway Road, Ennis</b>	Remedial works recently commenced on this development.
<b>Garran Percy French, Kilkee</b>	Works complete except for the erection of a name plaque.
<b>Clochan na Mara/Blackthorn Drive, Liscannor</b>	Landscaping works are nearing completion.
<b>Aughanteeroe, Gort Road, Ennis</b>	Jada Projects Ltd commenced remedial works on 29th June 2021.

We continue to monitor the progress on new housing developments with the addition of those that commenced during the months of July and August 2021.

We are currently arranging for the preparation of Taking in Charge maps on a number of estates which we hope to commence the statutory process on, early in September 2021.

Claims on our bonds are closely monitored on an ongoing basis and during July and August we were successful in receiving bond monies in relation to two developments. These monies will be applied to remedial works in the relevant estates.

## HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY

### Heritage Week

Over 50 projects and in-person cultural, natural and built heritage events featured throughout County Clare during National Heritage Week which took place from 14th -22nd August. Projects will continue to be submitted online until the end of August and are now eligible for numerous heritage awards. To see the list of events featured and find out more go to <https://www.heritageweek.ie/projects?q=&where%5B%5D=clare#listings>



One of the many in-person events as part of Heritage Week was a tour of the Turret Lodge in Kilrush, organised by Kilrush and District Historical Society. The Turret Lodge was built in 1845 and is a notable landmark in Kilrush town controlling access between the town and the Vandeleur estate demesne. This project received funding under the Historic Towns Initiative 2019, which is a partnership between the Heritage Council and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, where Clare County Council managed the project and provided match funding.

### Conservation Plan for Hastings Cottage, Shannon

Work has started on the preparation of a new Conservation Plan for Hastings Farmhouse in Shannon, co-funded by Clare County Council and the Heritage Council. A multi-disciplinary team is preparing the plan for Clare County Council on behalf of Dúchas na Sionna. Running concurrent to the Conservation Plan, Dúchas na Sionna have commissioned Kittiwake Solutions to undertake a Feasibility Study with funding from the Clare Local Development Company. In addition, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Heritage Council are funding consolidation of the existing walls. The Conservation Plan will look at the setting and long-term protection and maintenance of this heritage building. The public are being consulted on both plans.

### Clare County Council website update

This project will update online heritage service on the Council's website ([www.clarecoco.ie/services/planning/heritage](http://www.clarecoco.ie/services/planning/heritage)) to provide accessible, meaningful, useful and up-to-date heritage information for all users of the site. The aim of this project is to ensure best available information and to ensure that the online

heritage services offered by Clare County Council remain at a high standard. This project is being undertaken with the support of the Heritage Council and is in keeping with the main objective of the County Clare Heritage Plan 2017-2023 – to collect and make available heritage information.

### Clare Heritage Map Viewer

This project is underway with data gathering and public consultation underway to provide a piloted, costed template for the expansion and upgrade the current Burren GeoparkLIFE Map Viewer model to provide a public repository on natural and cultural heritage and its management in County Clare for the general public, communities, organisations, developers and planners.

### Community Monuments Fund 2021

Four Clare built heritage projects received funding from the Community Monuments Fund 2021. Further details available at <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/c0a0e-minister-noonan-announces-2021-community-monuments-fund-grants-of-over-4-million/> Clonrush Burial Ground €30,351.00, Kilkerrin Battery €29,129.00, Templemaley Church and Burial Ground €13,478.00 and Kilfenora Cathedral €29,950.00 and these projects are underway at present.

### Clare Holy Wells Project

The Clare Holy Wells Project aims to create awareness of the many holy wells of County Clare and to celebrate their built, natural and cultural heritage significance. It also aims to encourage the continuation of the holy well visitation traditions and their ongoing conservation, preservation and enjoyment. The online resource provides information on the holy wells of County Clare which have been surveyed to date, explores the traditions associated with these holy wells, the historical accounts relating to the customs at the sites and provides information about the landscape in which each well sits. These web pages are not a static resource, but will develop as research on the holy wells of Clare continues. At present, the web pages represent just a portion of the holy wells in County Clare. More entries will be added over the coming weeks and months. Visit <https://heritage.clareheritage.org/category/places/holy-wells>

### Reading Your Local Landscape

Between 2018 and 2021, six *Reading Your Local Landscape* training courses have been delivered in County Clare. These have involved over 70 community members based in Scariff, Miltown Malbay, Kilrush, Killaloe, Carron and Kilkishen.

The courses have been funded by Creative Ireland and organised by Clare County Council and Limerick & Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB). The central aim of *Reading Your Local Landscape* training is to enable course participants to identify, examine and record the built, natural and cultural



heritage features of their own local area through desk research and fieldwork. Instruction and tuition is provided in landscape heritage resource identification and recording techniques, focusing on the immediate local area in which the course is based, while providing a wider countywide and nationwide overview. A range of training techniques are employed, including class based lectures, case studies, group exercises, field trips and project work. For more details see the wealth and legacy of the student project work on <https://heritage.clareheritage.org/places/reading-your-local-landscape/about-the-reading-your-local-landscape-course>



Deputy Cathaoirleach Cllr Joe Killeen at the graduation of students from *Reading Your Local Landscape* course in the Burren.

### Daoine agus Áit: Connecting Our Communities

Over the summer of 2021, members of the Clare Community Archive Network (iCAN) worked together to create a Heritage Postcard Collection under the theme of 'people & place'. Four community groups, Clarecastle, Shannon, Kilkee and Scattery Island heritage groups, participated in a series of creative workshops to equip and inspire them to document their local heritage through photography and creative writing. Participants were encouraged to explore their locality with fresh eyes and experiment with different creative techniques. Each group then chose some of their imagery and text to feature on the front of their postcard. On the reverse, each group's community archive website, social media and email are detailed, serving as an open invitation for both senders and recipients to connect with our iCAN communities in Clare, see [Clareheritage.org](http://Clareheritage.org)



Daoine agus Áit: Connecting Our Communities. Postcard of Carrigaholt from Kilkee Heritage Group.

### National Biodiversity Action Plan Funding

Seven projects are supported with funding from the National Biodiversity Action Plan awards 2021 to Clare County Council include the following:

1. Produce an educational strategy to enhance biodiversity learning within Clare County Council, leading to improved work practices. This work will expand into community support, school education and training leading to practical outcomes. €26,000.
2. Build capacity and raise awareness of wetlands throughout County Clare by seeking interest from landowner candidates to pilot the installation or creation of new pond on their lands, or to restore, enhance and maintain existing wetland habitats. €22,400.
3. Update and strengthen the ongoing monitoring programme to record and mitigate visitor impacts on dunes at Fanore. €5,000.
4. Japanese Knotweed eradication in Ennis.
5. A Knotweed Survey, action plans, purchase of Knotweed treatment equipment and a development of an app. €13,565.
6. An elimination programme of Giant Hogweed from the areas identified at the uppermost part of the River Blackwater catchment. The elimination programme of Giant Hogweed will commence from the most upstream record and systematically working downstream, ensuring a better chance of effective elimination and a reduced potential for spread. €10,000.
7. Development of online IAS resource for the general public, community groups as well as Local Authority staff. €6,000.

### Tidy Towns Local Authority Pollinator Awards 2021

This year eight towns and villages in Clare have entered the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan Awards 2021 including Ennis and Ennistymon along with the first time entrants from Shannon, Kilrush, Doonbeg, Labasheeda, Knock and Kilmurray McMahon, which illustrates the further success of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan approach.

### National Irish Heritage Apple Tree Collection at Irish Seed Savers

The Heritage Officer attended a tree planting ceremony and plaque unveiling officiated by Minister of State for Forestry, Land Use and Biodiversity, Senator Pippa Hackett at Irish Seed Savers Association on Thursday, 17th June, to celebrate the International Year of Plant Health. The ceremonial tree is a very special variety of Irish heritage apple tree known as 'Sweet William', missing for many decades and returned to Irish in soil in 2018. The 'Sweet William' will be planted by Minister Pippa Hackett into the National Irish Heritage Apple Tree Collection at Irish Seed Savers as a mother tree to provide the genetic material to re-establish the variety in Irish Orchards.

### Traveller Heritage Project

Clare County Council are working with the Burren Outdoor Education and Training Centre (OETC) on the Traveller and

Heritage Initiative. This follows on from a very successful 2020 initiative whereby Traveller dads and teachers from Scoil Chríost Rí, Ennis, supported and facilitated by the Burren Outdoor Education and Training Centre, participated on an eight-week kayaking programme on the River Fergus and Ballyalla Lake. The project is based on the ORBITAL\* programme. This unique programme, developed with Ennis Community College 15 years ago, delivered engaging and effective heritage experiences by bringing students to heritage sites (Kilmacduagh, Poulabrone, Corcomroe Abbey, Holywells and Cahercumaun)

and archaeological digs (Caherconnell). This programme highlighted the importance of place based, experiential learning and the importance of collaboration with a range of partners. This new initiative will again involve place based, experiential learning and will involve collaborating with Traveller families and the other partners to identify heritage areas of importance and facilitate outdoor experiences in these heritage areas.

## LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

### Covid-19 Supports

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

- **The Trading Online Voucher Scheme**, which provides grant support to small businesses to develop an ecommerce website, has seen strong interest. In the months of July and August a further 13 vouchers were approved bringing the number already approved in 2021 to 92. A further 26 vouchers (€59,789) were paid out during the month which were originally approved previously. This brings to a total of 249 draw downs amounting to €572,300 in 2021.
- **Online Webinars and Training:** Over 130 clients registered in the month of July and August to partake in our range of online webinars and training courses. Events included a two hour Start Your Own Business programme, Trading Online Voucher workshop and a Facebook Adverts Workshop, Digital Marketing Course and a LEAN information evening.
- **Mentoring:** There were 42 applicants in July and August for a free three-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, starting a food business, digital marketing, Brexit and Export Development among others.

### Training & Development Brochure

Local Enterprise Clare launched their new Training & Development Brochure for July to December 2021 with Cathaoirleach PJ Ryan. The Brochure includes twenty four online training programmes and workshops which include Start our own Business, Digital Marketing and Green for Micro Programmes. The document can be found on [www.localenterprise.ie/clare](http://www.localenterprise.ie/clare)

### Grant Supports

Local Enterprise Office Clare accepted applications in the months of June and July for the recent Small Business Assistance Scheme Phase II. In total 75 were approved for funding under the scheme totalling €279,000. In the first scheme in Q1 of 2021 €300,000 was approved and paid out to local businesses.

### LEO Clare Look for Local Campaign

Local Enterprise Office Clare is part of a national campaign called Look for Local. Over the summer month LEO Clare continued to promote Local Businesses. As part of the campaign, LEO Clare has created a list of clients and their websites on the Local Enterprise Clare Site and can be found at <https://www.localenterprise.ie/Clare/Enterprise-Development/Look-for-Local/>.

To date, over 190 local businesses ranging from hospitality provider to retail outlets to general service providers have joined the local directory. Businesses are encouraged to contact LEO Clare to have their name and website added to the list.

### LEO Clare Social Media

A recent analysis of Local Enterprise Office Clare's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts showed that over the months of July and August posts made by the LEO were seen by over 9,000 members of the public for Facebook and Instagram while over 11,000 members of the public saw tweets made by the office. It was also noted that on each account over the month the number of subscribers increased.



## PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

### Refurbishment works to County Museum building

The construction and refurbishment work is now completed on the County Museum building, and it has re-opened to the public in the last week of August. Improved signage for visitors is currently being installed. A meeting is being arranged with Fáilte Ireland with regard to the fit out of the tourist information space and their re-opening arrangements. The improvements to the upstairs areas have delivered new officespace and boardroom and it is hoped that fit out will be completed in September. This project will breathe new life into the County Museum building and increase footfall in the town centre.

### Property Transactions

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

Transaction	July 2021	August 2021	Year to date 2021
Lease of Property / Building	1		3
Licence to use property / building		1	10
Grazing Agreement for Lands			21
Deed of Transfer signed			5
Contract for Sale signed			3
Deed of Right of Way signed			1
Deed of Rectification signed	1		3
Allotment Agreements signed			39

### Casual Trading

A full review of the Casual Trading Bye-Laws took place over the last number of months, which included the Draft Bye-Laws being on public display for a month.

As part of the process, a number of submissions were received and following consideration of these submissions all four Municipal Districts have now adopted Casual Trading Bye-Laws as set out below.

Three new locations have been included in the new Casual Trading Bye-Laws 2021, i.e. Fanore Beach, Dromaan Lake, Whitegate, and Ballyalla Lake, Ennis. The first casual trading licence for Fanore Beach has already been issued and has proved to be very successful so far.

Updated licences under the new Bye-Laws have been issued for all of the existing traders.

Municipal District	Date Casual Trading Bye-Laws adopted	Casual Trading Bye-Laws effective Date
Shannon	18th June, 2021.	26th July, 2021.
Ennis	22nd June, 2021.	26th July, 2021.
West Clare	24th June, 2021.	26th July, 2021.
Killaloe	24th June, 2021.	26th July, 2021.

The Casual Trading Bye-Laws 2021 for each Municipal District are now available to view on the Council's website.

### Derelict Sites

The Council welcomes the focus at national level on the numbers of vacant and derelict properties in the country and it is now well recognised that there is significant potential for re-development of such properties. This is not to say that there will not be challenges in many such properties and in dealing with derelict sites, we come across many issues to be resolved. However, with time and effort, working with owners and other departments, there are definitely options for positive re-development and re-vitalisation of many such derelict sites.

This is a time to assess options for rural regeneration with a focus on vacant and derelict properties and in particular their re-use for housing purposes. There continues to be some positive response to engagement with owners of derelict sites and where such engagement is not happening, we will use our powers under the Derelict Sites Act, 1990. The table below provides a snapshot of the activity in July and August 2021 and the year to date.

Three properties have been upgraded by owners and are no longer derelict. To date this year, a total of 17 properties have been rendered non-derelict and the co-operation of owners is appreciated. A few derelict sites have also been sold on and we will work with new owners as they make plans to re-develop the properties.



Derelict Sites	July 2021	August 2021	Year to date 2021
No. of new Complaints / new files opened	12	4	48
No. of Section 8(2) Notices issued – Intention to enter site on Derelict Sites Register	5		15
No. of Section 8(7) Notices issued – Entry onto Derelict Sites Register			2
No. of Section 11 Notices issued – Measures required to render the site non-derelict			2
No of sites added to Derelict Sites register			2
No. of files closed / property removed from Register		3	17
No. of Notices served to Compulsorily Purchase (CPO)			0

### Shannon Allotments

During the project phase of the Shannon Allotments, the Council worked with the allotment holders and the Shannon Community Development Officer to establish an Allotment Association. The Shannon Allotment Association has really embraced the new location for the Shannon Allotments and this is to be greatly welcomed. They have carried out a number of projects since the allotment site was opened, including rain water harvesting and the development of a poly-tunnel. The latter project was part funded under the Shannon MD community grants scheme.



## SHANNON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

*The following is an example of one of the recent successes in this area. It is a property at 32 Pound Street Kilrush, which has lain vacant and derelict since at least 2015.*



**BEFORE** – overgrown and boarded up for many years.



**AFTER** – Fully repainted, all overgrowth cleared and entrance improved.

Over the summer months the planned Restoration Improvement works (overlay) for the Shannon Municipal District were largely completed with eight identified locations benefiting. A recent decision by Irish Water to upgrade a mains line between Westbury and Larkins has meant that the proposed works for that section of road have been held back for the moment: We will schedule our works again when the mains works have been completed.

The Surface Dressing programme of works has also been completed with sections of road in Sixmilebridge, Meelick, Clonlara (Garraun/Derryfadda), Shannon and Newmarket on Fergus (Ballygireen) being surface dressed.

The summer rain caused a number of drainage issues in the Municipal District with Councillors responding to highlight affected areas. Our crews responded, with works carried out at a range of locations including Ballymorris and Portdrine.

Works have commenced on the new pedestrian crossing at the National School in Clonlara in the last week. This project, a ‘low cost safety measure’, was approved by MD Councillors at the July meeting of the Shannon Municipal District.

Other physical works of note in the MD carried out during the summer months included road marking, such as that at Stonehall National School, and the installation of bollards at various locations to improve pedestrian safety in urban areas.

Over the summer the riverbank walkway in Shannon Banks was upgraded to improve accessibility and enhance the route. This 400m upgrade was funded under the National Transport

Authorities 'Active Travel' programme and marks the first in a series of projects identified across the MD. Other projects being progressed include the footpath in the Ballycasey green area as well as works in Parteen and Meelick.



The footpath contract for the district was also signed recently with works to commence in September while the 2021 grass cutting programme will be coming to an end in the coming weeks with 12 of the planned 16 cuts across the District completed to date.

The crew in the Municipal District installed two accessible bus stops at the Town Hall, (Bóthar Linne, Shannon) over the last number of months. A wider upgrade programme is ongoing across the district currently.



In July, the team in the Municipal District was supported by our councillors and a number of stakeholders including community/sports groups, Shannon Group and Shannon Chamber in developing funding applications under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Fund (ORIS) and the Town and Village Renewal Scheme. Project proposals were developed and submitted to upgrade the retail centre in Drumgeely, improve the walkway from the rear of Drumgeely to the riverbank, to enhance the centre of Clonlara Village and develop walking routes in Newmarket on Fergus.

Bike maintenance kits and racks along with new signage were installed in Shannon Town (at the park and along the loop walk) over the summer following a previously successful funding application.

In July, the team in the Municipal District worked with the School of Architecture from UL on a project focussed on Sixmilebridge. The research being carried out by the university is iterative in nature and is aimed at assisting the Council in the 're-imagining' of these settlements for future project development.

