



COMHAIRLE | CLARE
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

TUARASCÁIL MHÍOSÚIL ÓN PHRÍOMHFHEIDHMEANNACH

MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Eanáir / January
2023



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT p26



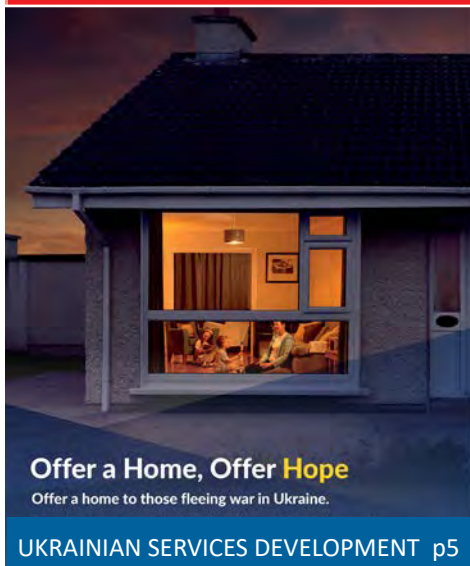
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FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

CORPORATE SERVICES

Legal Services

Contracts were signed with MHP Sellors LLP on 19th December, 2022, for the provision of Multi-Disciplinary legal services and Property, Estates and Conveyancing legal services for the Council for an initial period of two years. MHP Sellors LLP were awarded the contract following a mini-competition for supply of legal services to Clare County Council via eTenders. The tender was published by the Office of Government Procurement to form a mini-competition among the eight legal service suppliers on the OGP framework that can serve Clare County Council.



Freedom of Information & Data Protection

2022 to date – statistics to 20th December, 2022

	2020	2021	2022 to 1st December 2022
Freedom of Information Requests	152	176	119
Freedom of Information Internal Review Applications	6	13	8
Appeals to Information Commissioner	1	4	2
Data Access Requests - Subject Access Request	5	6	10
Data Requests - Erasure Request	0	1	1
Data Access Requests – Third Party Access Requests e.g. Gardaí	20	27	27

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 December included:

- Council welcomes publication of the Interim Report of the Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce
- Public urged to be vigilant and prepare for severe weather conditions

- Clare hospitality providers invited to support 'Ask For Angela' campaign
- New Ability Swing at Tír na nÓg playground in Shannon.

Áras Contae an Chláir was illuminated in red on Thursday, 1st December, 2022, in support of Glow Red for World AIDS Day.

On Wednesday, 21st December, 2022, Áras Contae an Chláir was illuminated green in support of Samaritans Ireland and Samaritans Ennis & Clare.

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 December, the Communications Office:

- Posted 22 times on Facebook, with total followers now 17,586.

- Posted 37 times on Twitter, with total followers now 7,907.
- Instagram followers are now 2,694. (Statistics accurate as of 21/12/2022)

Print and Graphic Design

The print and graphic design service continues to provide services including layout and production.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Work Area	Update
Recruitment	<p>The following recruitment competitions were progressed during December:</p> <p>Eligibility Exercises & Desktop Shortlisting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Officer (Desktop Shortlisting) • Lifeguard Instructor (Eligibility Exercise) <p>Interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Staff Officer (Final Interviews) • Information Systems Technical Support Officer • Assistant Engineer • Executive Librarian • Lifeguard Instructor Active Ennis <p>The following competitions were advertised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural & Community Development Officers • Climate Action Officer (5-year temporary post) • Plant Operator A (Confined) • Plant Operator B (Confined) • Assistant Planner • Firefighters (Kilkee, Kilrush, Shannon) - Extended Closing Date Advert
Learning and Development	<p>Online Training programmes / Webinars / Information Sessions held in December include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-Day First Aid Refresher • Competency Based Interviewer Training • Grade 4 & Analogous Officer Training • Asbestos Awareness • Serious Incidents Simulated Exercise • 3-Day New Entrant Signing, Lighting & Guarding • Operation & Maintenance of Horticultural Equipment • Safe Pass Training • Mid-Career Financial Planning <p>Essential Skillz on-line Courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyber Security • GDPR • Health & Safety Induction • Manual Handling • Slips, Trips & Falls • Working in a Covid Era <p>Health & Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Safety Refresher Online Training (Slips Trips & Falls) • Manual Handling Refresher Online Training rolled out to all staff during December

Gender Pay Gap Report	Clare County Council published its Gender Pay Gap Report for 2022 on the 20th December, 2022. The gender pay gap is the difference in the average hourly wage of men and women across the workforce. Employers with more than 250 employees in Ireland are now required to publish their gender pay gap data. The 2022 report shows a Mean Gender Pay Gap of -7.04%. This means that on average, females occupy higher paid roles than males. The Median Gender Pay Gap of -15.73% means that there is a strong representation of females in upper management roles in Clare County Council.
Employee Welfare	Employee wellbeing supports continue to be made available to staff across a range of areas.
Unions	The Human Resources Department engages with Unions on various matters.

Procurement

Short description	Response deadline
Cliffs of Moher Footpath Upgrade	16/01/2023 16:00
Supply, installation, commissioning and maintenance of Digital Cinema System, Cliffs of Moher	16/01/2023 17:00
Tender for the Construction of Two Number House Dwellings at Clarecastle, Co. Clare	16/01/2023 12:00
Engineer Led Technical Advisor Team Consultancy Services for West Clare Railway Greenway Sections 3 & 4	23/01/2023 12:00
Expression of Interest for the provision of Turnkey Housing Developments/Housing Schemes and/or Land for the Provision of Social & Affordable Housing to Clare County Council	27/01/2023 17:00
Autism Awareness training in County Clare	22/12/2022 14:00
Sub-Compact Diesel Motorised Road Sweepers, GVM 3,500kg	14/12/2022 16:00
Provision of Property and Valuation Services to Clare County Council Tourism Sites.	06/01/2023 12:00
Demolition and site clearance Monastery Lane, Ennistymon	21/12/2022 16:00
Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) County Clare	22/12/2022 17:00



UKRAINIAN SERVICES DEVELOPMENT

National Situation

As of 15th December there are 68,200 temporary protection orders granted nationally (up from 64,000 in November) with a national rolling average with a 7-day rolling average of 159 (slightly up on the report over a period last month report). There are 53,200 currently in accommodation and 13,600 children have enrolled in schools.

The proportion of females remains at 63% of the arrivals and to date the number of employments is 14,600. These indications are that our Ukrainian guests continue to integrate and contribute to local economies. There is a strong correlation between those employed and the areas in which they are settled. One role of the Department of Social Protection is to engage with all people receiving unemployment benefit with a view to enabling them into suitable employment and this activity continues with strong engagement with our Ukrainian guests locally for the benefit of all.

County Clare

At this point in the year County Clare now has 4,008 (approx.) displaced people from Ukraine with 3,806 being accommodated in 29 multi-occupancy properties across 14 settlements in the county.

In response to the recent severe weather the Department of Children and Integration (DCEDIY) asked a number of agencies for support in addressing the accommodation challenges in Knockalisheen, Meelick, and for our part Clare County Council identified and provided accommodation for 28 residents as part of that response with the assistance of both Clare Civil Defence and Mid-West Simon.

'Offer a Home'


The local authority-led 'Offer a Home' call-out was launched on 1st December, 2022. Clare County Council has received 37 offers of unoccupied homes to date. We have made contact with all those who made offers and our team have carried out 26 assessments to date. We have arranged assessments of the remaining properties for the coming weeks. Of the homes inspected only 1 did not meet the requirements, 3 require minor works and 3 are not yet available.

The Offer a Home scheme has enabled Clare County Council to support 3 Ukrainian families that were living in multi-occupancy (DCEDIY) accommodation in Kilmaley. The contract with DCEDIY was being terminated and Clare County Council, working closely with our matching partner Mid-West Simon, was able to source a home for these families in the county.

We have 20 Ukrainian people accommodated in homes under this scheme so far. We were contacted by a family who have been independently hosting a Ukrainian family and have provided assistance to them with the Ukrainian family being transferred to alternative accommodation under the 'Offer a Home' scheme.

We have a new member of staff joining us in January, he will be working with the accommodation team and will be providing support to homeowners and their Ukrainian residents. We continue to work closely with Mid-West Simon matching Ukrainian families to suitable homes in the county.


Property owners can offer homes at the newly created website: www.offerahome.ie or by contacting Clare County Council at offerahome@clarecoco.ie. Deirdre Ryan, Administrative Officer in Ukrainian Services Development, is leading on this initiative.




Offer a Home, Offer Hope
Offer a home to those fleeing war in Ukraine.

Do you have a house, apartment, or holiday home that is not in use at the moment?
Please consider offering it as temporary accommodation for those displaced by the war in Ukraine.
Go to Gov.ie/OfferAHome to offer a property or for more information.

Gov.ie/OfferAHome

 COMRAILE CORIAR AN CHLÁIR
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL

 Kialas na Sídeanna
Department of Ireland



Community Response Forum

During the month the team contributed to both the Anti-Poverty workshop and 'Integration Matters' conference with a presentation given to the Joint Policing Committee. There were two meetings of the county-wide Response Forum with a local meeting held in Shannon Town.

It is acknowledged that the key objective for any community, town or village is to remain vibrant, resilient, and sustainable – this is recognised by all members of the County Clare Community Response Forum and on 29th November, members of the Forum from across the county were invited to a workshop in Ennis. The session was well supported with over 40 in attendance from all corners.

Those present were asked initially to identify what we are doing well as a county and what could be done better. The session then began to focus on our collective future with those present being asked to identify the gaps in our communities (physical, social, economic), collaborations that might be activated over the coming 12/24 months and actions that might be facilitated by the Forum or Council.

The response was significant with a range of opportunities being identified that can become the shared 'vision' for the members of the group. To date there has been SICAP and Healthy Ireland funding provided nationally to support initiatives at community level and more recently there has been an announcement for funding in the form of a 'Community Solidarity Recognition Fund'.

While the details of this new scheme are yet to be released it is anticipated that this will be a fund of scale and as such it is an opportunity for members of the Community Response Forum within their wider structure of the LCDC to inform how that funding will be spent – at this point in time County Clare has some understanding of how we will address our new realities for a better outcomes for all.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Social Directorate continued to be extremely busy during December. Our Capital team has significantly exceeded its Housing Delivery Plan targets for 2022. Works have been finalised and properties handed over to the Council for the final phase of the development at Lifford, and AHB properties at Limerick Road, Ennis. Tenants received keys to their new homes in these properties in time for Christmas. Works have been completed at the new development in Roslevan with tenants to be in place early in January

Work on the new County Library continues at pace and great progress is now visible on site. This will prove to be a fantastic addition to the town and county when complete

2022 was a challenging year for the entire Council and for the Social Directorate as the country emerged from the Covid crisis. 2023 will bring its own challenges as the conflict in Ukraine continues with resultant effects on availability and cost of building supplies and other necessities. However, we are confident that the team in the Directorate will continue to deal with all challenges and meet and exceed targets for the coming year

HOUSING

For 2023 the housing public counter will be open to the public, without appointment, from 9am until 1pm and by appointment after 1pm. Customers who require appointments in the afternoon can call **065-6846334** to schedule same.

The Clare Homeless Action Team (HAT) office is open by appointment during office hours and can be contacted on 065-6846291

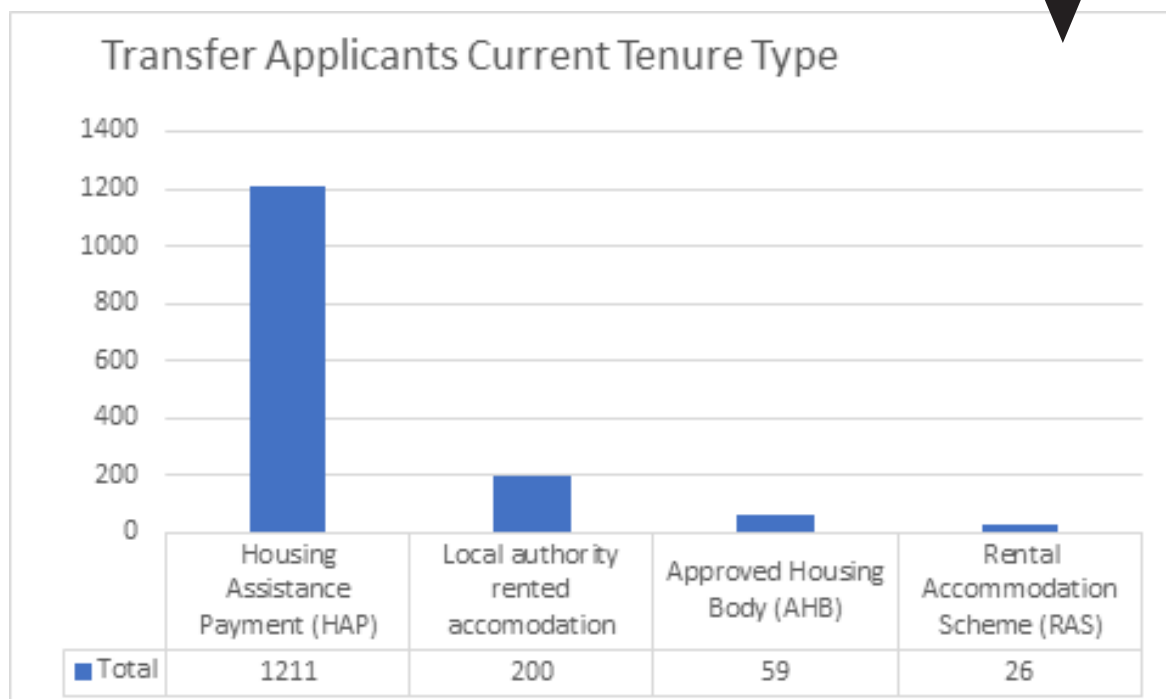
Social housing demand

The total households on the Council waiting list is currently 2,739 with 1,496 of these currently receiving support in form

of existing Council housing, HAP, RAS or AHBs. The 2,739 households are comprised of 3,796 adults and 2,096 children. This average of 2.2 people per household is reflected in large need for 1 and 2 bed properties in all areas.

Current housing need as of 21/12/2022

Total Households on Waiting List	2,739
Transfer Applicants (see below)	1,496
Nett Need	1,243



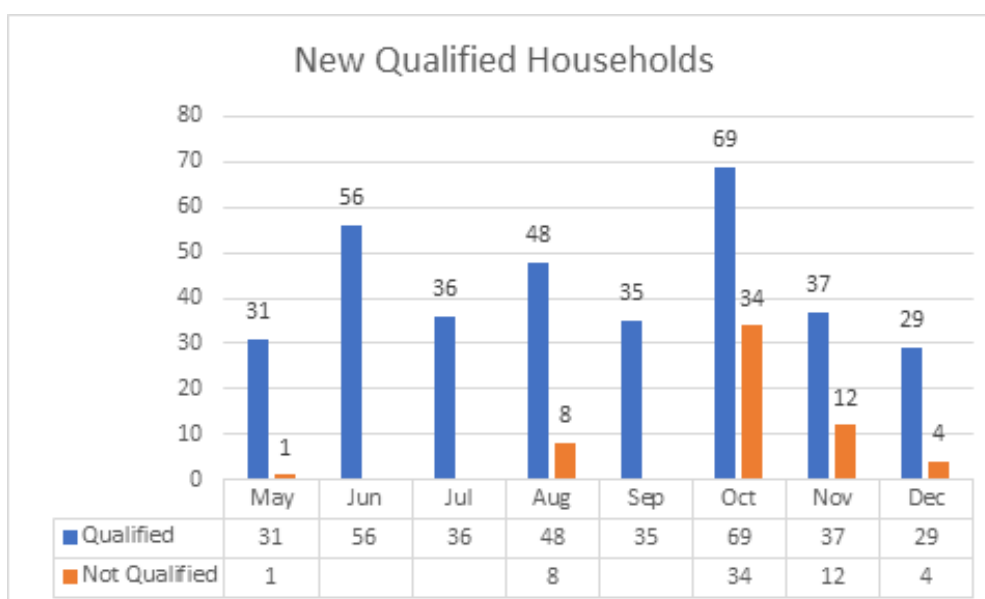
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Housing need by Area of choice and number of beds approved:

BEDS APPROVED					
FIRST AREA OF CHOICE	1 & 2 Beds	3 Beds	4 beds	5 beds	Total
ENNIS	888	169	75	1	1133
SHANNON	180	24	15		219
CLARECASTLE	127	26	12		165
INAGH/ENNISTYMON/LAHINCH	120	24	4		148
KILRUSH	102	30	7		139
FEAKLE/SCARIFF/WHITEGATE	107	21	4		132
MEELICK/PARTEEN/WESTBURY	74	37	10		121
M'TOWN MALBAY/MULLAGH/QUILTY	67	10	5		82
KILKEE/CROSS/CARRIGAHOLT	68	9	1		78
NEWMARKET-ON-FERGUS	55	15	4		74
COROFIN/RUAN	52	18	2		72
KILLALOE	56	12	2		70
LISDOONVARNA/BALLYVAUGHAN	41	9	3		53
SIXMILEBRIDGE	35	6	7		48
COORACLARE/DOONBEG	35	8	2		45
TULLA/KILKISHEN/BROADFORD	35	7	3		45
KILDYSART/BALLYNACALLY	22	4	2		28
CLONLARA	17	7	2		26
QUIN	18	6	1		25
KILMIHIL	9	5	2		16
KILMALEY	10	2			12
KILFENORA	7	1			8
Grand Total	2125	450	163	1	2739

Newly qualified applicants

New requirements around calculating income eligibility for housing applicants was introduced in 2021 which has made the process of assessment more strenuous, and added increased pressure on applicants in providing 12-month complete income data. Notwithstanding that we continue to process a large volume of applications each month, with an average processing time on valid applications of 8 weeks.



Increased numbers in October as we held off on decisions due to introduction of new limits on 1st October. This was to afford applicants opportunity to qualify under increased rates.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

New income limits from 1st January, 2023

Income thresholds for housing applicants will increase from 1st January, 2023. This will see the income threshold for a single person rise from €30,000 to €35,000. There is an increase for additional adults of 5% each up to maximum 10%. There is a further increase of 2.5% for each additional child, with no maximum. It is anticipated that this will lead to a further increase in qualified housing applicants over the coming months.

01-Jan-23	No Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children	4 Children	5 Children	6 Children
1 Adult	€35,000	€35,875	€36,750	€37,625	€38,500	€39,375	€40,250
2 Adults	€36,750	€37,625	€38,500	€39,375	€40,250	€41,125	€42,000
3 + Adults	€38,500	€39,375	€40,250	€41,125	€42,000	€42,875	€43,750

Housing allocations 2022

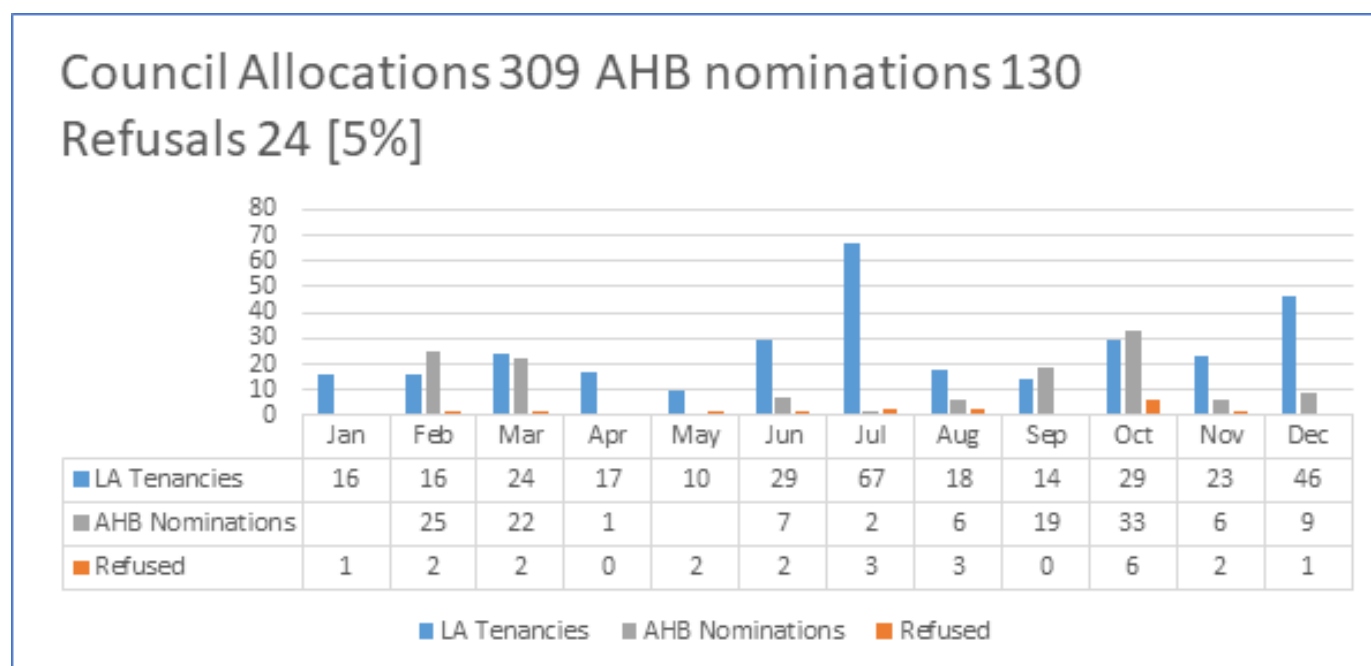
The third and final phase of the new turnkey social housing development at Cluain Greine, Drehidnagower, which comprises 21 units, is allocated and pre-tenancy meetings for the new tenants are presently taking place now that keys of this development are available. The entire development includes a mix of two, three and four-bedroomed houses together with one and two-bedroomed ground and first-floor apartments. The allocation of these new 61 properties is now completed.

Phase 1 of the Clúid social housing development, which is located at Hogans Place, Limerick Road, Ennis, is completed and pre-tenancy meetings are currently being held. This phase

comprises nine units and contains three bedroomed two storey houses and two bedroomed level access bungalow type accommodation.

The assessment process in relation to the new 8 units at Clos an Eidgean, located on the Tulla Road, Ennis, is completed and letters of offer of accommodation have issued to applicant households. This development comprises 5 three-bedroomed two-story houses and 3 specially adapted two-bedroomed bungalow-type properties.

A total 309 Council tenancies were allocated in 2022, with a further 130 nominations to AHBs.



New Tenancies signed up in December	46
Tenancies sign up in progress to be completed Dec/ January	18
Tenancies terminated in December [incl Transfers and Tenant Purchases]	19

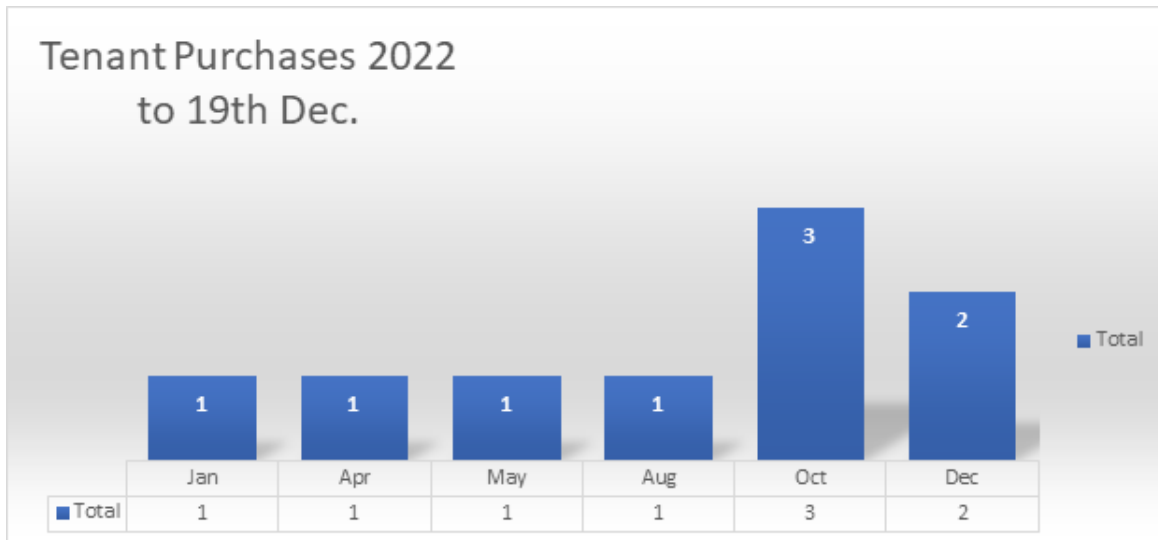
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Nine units at Hogan's Place, Limerick Road, Ennis, delivered by Cluid Housing Association on 12th December, 2022



Tenant Purchase Incremental Scheme

There remains significant interest in the LA Tenant Purchase Incremental Scheme. To date in 2022, we have disposed of 9 properties to tenants under this scheme.



Housing tenancies

*Breakdown of tenancies by Municipal District (including RAS; long- and short-term leasing; PPP; Traveller accommodation and Mortgage to Rent. *Excludes AHBs*):

PROPERTY STATUS				
Municipal District	Allocated	Occupied	Vacant	Total
Ennis MD	20	1262	39	1321
Killaloe MD	1	359	7	365
Shannon MD	3	723	7	732
West Clare MD	3	952	36	998
Grand Total	27	3296	89	3412

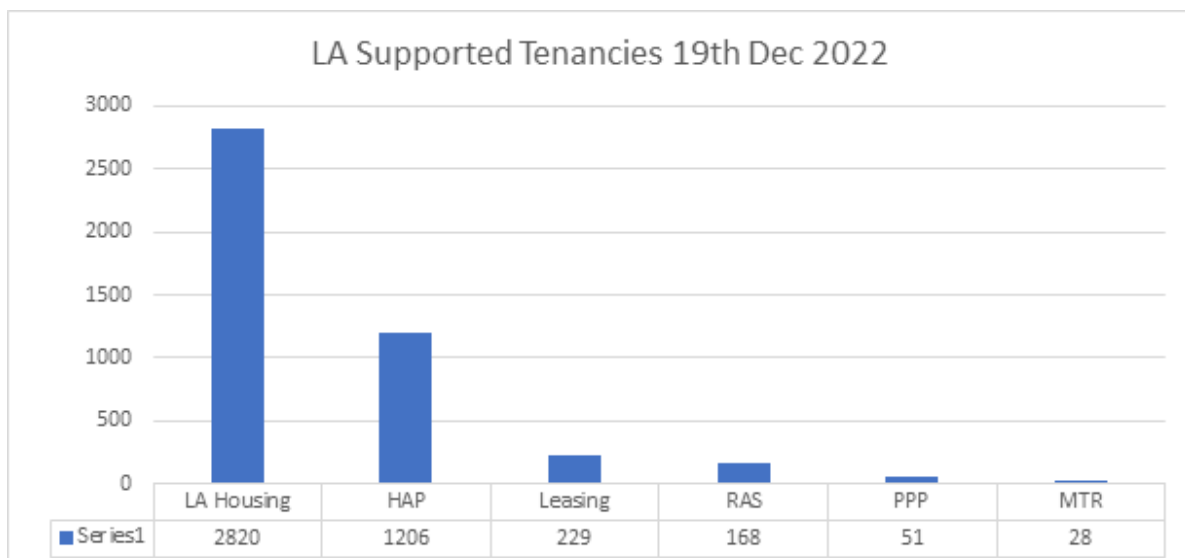
3,296 households comprise 5,568 adults and 3,384 children. Total people 8,952, or 2.7 per household average

Vacancies by Municipal District

Vacant Stock*	Ennis MD	West Clare MD	Shannon MD	Killaloe MD	Total
Traveller accommodation	5	6	2	0	13
Derelict properties	0	0	0	0	0
Projects	2	5	0	0	7
Casual vacancies	32	25	5	7	69
TOTAL	39	36	7	7	89

*Increase in Ennis from November due to existing tenants transferring to new properties.

Tenancies



Estate management

The Tenancy Enforcement Team continue to undertake regular routine and response calls to tenants to manage and mitigate against complaints of antisocial behaviour.

	Dec 2022 to 6th Dec	Total year to date
TEO Call Outs	93	6,897

Any matters that need to be brought to the attention of the Estate Management unit can be done so by emailing 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**

Private rented inspections

The target for private rented inspections of 1,025 was achieved, with 90 physical inspections being carried out in December, 2023. These inspections were carried out on HAP, RTB, RAS and leased properties, as well as in response to complaints that were received. The team continue to follow up where properties do not meet the minimum rented standards.

Housing grants

Grants Approved for December 2022:

Grant type	Number of approvals	Value of works €
Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability	6	95,705
Housing Aid for Older People	5	21,220
Mobility Aids Grant	9	44,816
Total	20	161,741



Local Authority Home Loan

Full details on the Local Authority Home Loan (LAHL) and eligibility criteria including the Loan Calculator and Information Booklet can be found on www.localauthorityhomeloan.ie Loans data for 2022 up to 14/12/2022:



The Housing Finance Agency (HFA) has advised that the fixed interest rate for all new loans drawn down under the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan (RIHL) and Local Authority Home Loan (LAHL) schemes will increase from 10th December, 2022. The fixed rate payable by new borrowers after this date will be 3.35% annually for loans up to 25 years and 3.45% for loans between 25 and 30 years.

Homeless Services [Homeless Action Team; HAT]

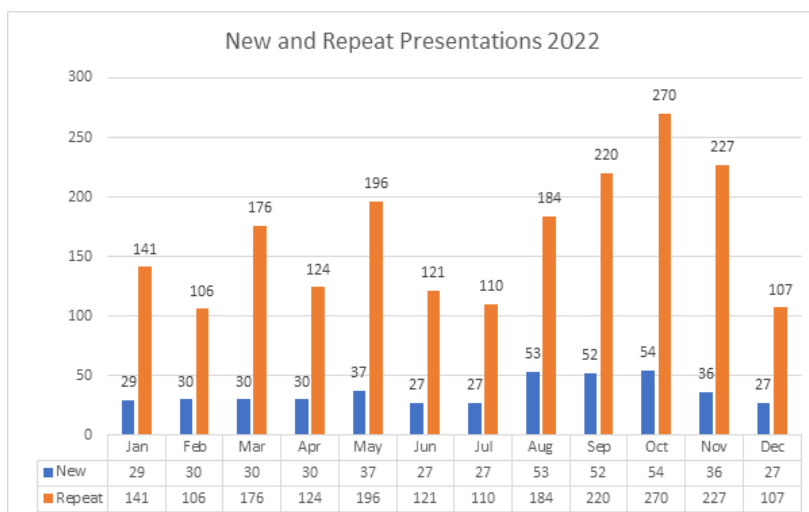
Clare HAT continue our focus on exits from homeless services and during the period 18th November, 2022, to 8th December, 2022, a total of 2 households exited from homeless services:

- 1 to LA housing:
- 1 discharged due to Breach of Code of Conduct.

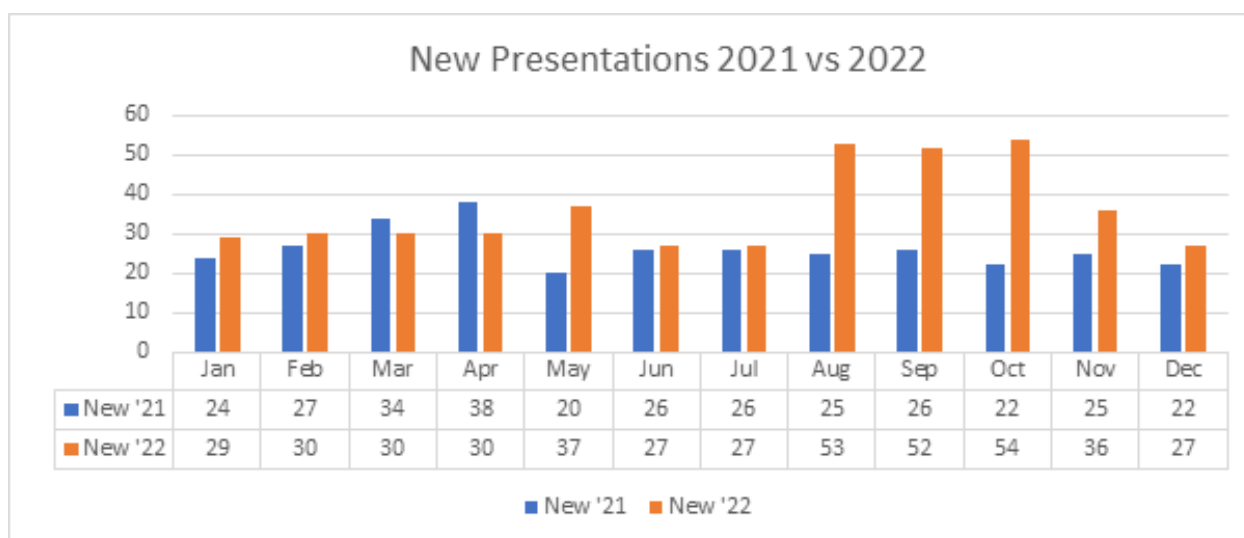
27 new clients contacted HAT during December 2022, with 107 repeat engagements. Many of the new clients were contacting HAT as they had fears about possible homeless situations into the future. Thankfully, many of those presenting with difficulties avoided entering a homeless situation due to early intervention by the team. Advice regarding legislation on NTQs, support from the HAP Placefinder, allocations in advance of homelessness situations, and other supports offered by the team ensured many of these clients avoided actually seeking emergency accommodation and shows the positive effect the prevention measures taken by the HAT team can have when people engage at an early stage.

The weather initiative in association with Mid West Simon commenced on 1st December and during the extremely cold spell in mid-December all rough sleepers were encouraged to avail of extra temporary emergency beds. It is hoped some of these may continue to avail of supports and seek to exit homelessness.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



Repeat presentations are enquiries from existing clients relating to their housing and/or EA status



Emergency Accommodation Status as of 8th December, 2022:

	Families	Adults	Dependents	Providers
Laurel Lodge	0	14	0	1
Laurel Lodge Weather Initiative	0	4	0	
Cusack Lodge	5	7	9	1
Westbrook	0	15	0	1
Ashford Court	11	19	25	1
EA Families	4	5	10	2
EA Individuals	0	5	0	3
TOTAL	20	69	44	9

Vacant Properties

The Vacant Homes Section continues to tackle vacant properties throughout the towns and villages of County Clare with a strong focus on suitable properties which can be delivered as social homes through the Capital Investment Programme.

A decision to amalgamate the Vacant Homes Officer role with the Derelict Sites function under the Economic Directorate

will be implemented in January 2023. This change will see the Vacant Homes Officer continue to administer the Croi Conaithe Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant while the Ready to Build Scheme under Croi Conaithe will remain with the Housing Capital Delivery team in the Social Directorate. Engagement will continue between the Economic and Social Directorates in relation to vacant properties suitable for social housing solutions.

Status as at 16th December, 2022:

	Owner Engagement	Site Inspections	Website entries
Ennis	10		0
Killaloe	12	1	2
West Clare	12	3	0
Shannon	5		2
TOTAL	39	4	4

The public are encouraged to register vacant properties on the website www.vacanthomes.ie. Properties registered on this website are investigated and assessed for suitability for redevelopment/purchase.

Croi Conaithe (Towns Fund)

There is a strong interest in the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant to include the derelict property top-up grant as a means of providing assistance to homeowners to bring vacant properties back into use. Properties considered for inclusion must be vacant for two years or more and built before 1993. The scheme is exclusively available to individuals or households for which the vacant property following refurbishment works will be their principal private residence.

To date, 31 applications have been received seeking funding under the Scheme. The applications are currently being assessed and are at various stages of the application process. Three applications have been approved, three applications have been referred for technical inspection, 14 applications have a request for further information before they can proceed for the initial technical inspection. Three applications previously rejected due to not meeting location requirements are still awaited to be resubmitted by the applicants following the recent expansion of the grant to now apply to qualifying properties in rural parts of the county. Seven applications are currently being checked and verified. One application has been withdrawn by the applicant.

The Department recently advised that approximately 532 applications have been submitted nationally under the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant.

The vacant homes section is responding to a large volume of queries received daily in connection with the vacant property refurbishment grant from interested homeowners.

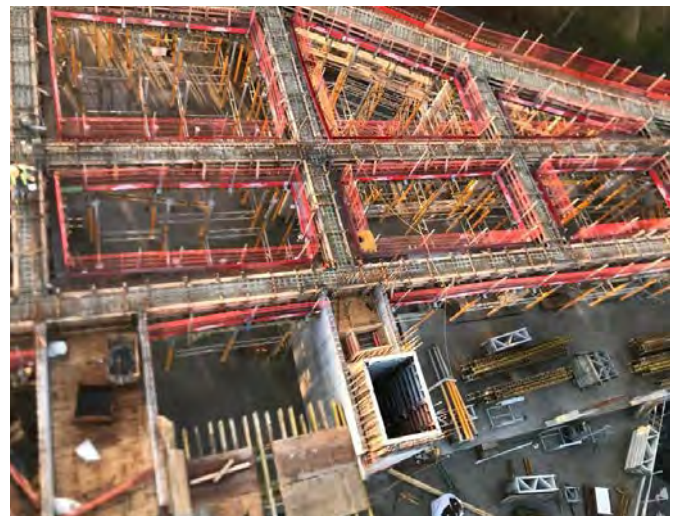
Defective Concrete Blocks Grant Scheme

Clare County Council continue to engage with the Department of Housing in relation to the Enhanced Defective Blocks Grants Scheme. Staff from the Department visited County Clare in late November to meet with our technical team and while here also took the opportunity to visit a number of sites where we have identified affected properties. Clare County Council also met with the (CPAG) Clare Pyrite Action Group in early December to keep them updated on progress with the scheme. Clare County Council has received a controlled copy of the draft regulations for technical input by 6th January. The DHLGH has advised that wider engagement with all stakeholders will commence in January by the Minister's appointed Liaison Officer.

New County Library construction project

Construction commenced on the new library building on Thursday, 28th April, 2022. All substructure works are now complete and all vertical works between ground floor and first floor are complete. First floor beams are also complete. Columns, beams and lift shaft concrete pours will continue up to Christmas. Preparation for second-floor slab pour is ongoing and planned for concrete pour in early January. Techrete concrete panels to façade of building to commence in late January/early February, due to concreting delays with current cold spell.

The project involves the construction of a 2,321m² building on the glór site, comprising two floors of public library space. The local studies centre will be accommodated in this building, along with a separate art gallery. Additionally, the County Library HQ will be located on the third floor. The state-of-the-art new build will provide a key resource for research, study, recreation and art in a centralised location adjacent to the well-established glór theatre.



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Update on capital programme:

SHIP Capital	No. approved	Current stage	Start Date	Completion Date
Newmarket on Fergus	18	Completed.	-	Q1 2022
Ashline	40	Completed.	-	Q2 2022
Tulla	25	Completed.	-	Q2 2022
Milltown Malbay	27	Completed.	-	Q4 2022
Roslevan, Tulla Rd.	8	Completed.	-	Q4 2022
Cluain Gréine, Lifford, Ennis	61	Completed.	-	Q4 2022
Main Street, Mountshannon	4	Completed	-	Q4 2022
Killaloe	4	Completed.	-	Q2 2022
Scarriff	18	Part VIII Approved. Tender process complete. Contract signing is 13th January, 2023	Q1 2022	Q3 2024
Doonbeg Lands	8	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH. Design re-commenced.	Q2 2023	Q3 2024
Clarecastle	2	Stage 1-3 approved by DHLGH. About to go to tender.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023
Drumcliff Rd. Ennis	26	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH. Part VIII Withdrawn. Determination issued to ABP and awaiting outcome.	Q2 2023	Q4 2024
Sixmilebridge	15	Stage 3 approved by DHLGH. About to go to tender.	Q1 2023	Q2 2024
Ennistymon	30	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH. Stage 3 application currently being prepared.	Q2 2023	Q4 2024
Gort Rd. Ennis	20	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH. Planning application being prepared for submission to ABP.	Q2 2023	Q4 2024
Ballaghboy, Quin Road, Ennis (TA)	5	Stage 1 approved by DHPLG. CENA appointed to support project development.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023
Subtotal	311			
Bruachlan, Westbury (Cooperative Housing Ireland)	22	CALF - Property transfer complete, reapply for planning permission	Q2 2022	Q4 2023
Limerick Road, Ennis (Cluid Housing Assoc)	24	CALF Acquisition - Under construction 9 in Q4 2022 15 in Q3 2023	Q4 2021 Q3 2022	Q4 2022 Q3 2023
Roslevan, Tulla Road, Ennis (Cooperative Housing Ireland)	40	CALF Turnkey (14 units delivered in Q4 2021) (15 units delivered in Q1 2022) (24 units delivered in Q2/2022) 16 units to be delivered in Q4 2022	Q4 2021	Q4 2022
Limerick Road, Ennis (Inis Housing)	18	CALF Turnkey - construction in progress	Q1 2022	Q2 2023
Market Street, Ennis (Peter McVerry Trust)	14	CAS Turnkey - Department approval received	Q4 2022	Q4 2023
Cluain na Laoi, Kilkishen	16	CALF Turnkey - Department approved 6 units to be delivered in Q4 2023 10 units to be delivered in Q1 2024	Q4 2022 Q1 2023	Q4 2023 Q1 2024
Church Road, Tulla	2	CALF Turnkey (Part V) - under construction	Q1 2022	Q1 2023
Subtotal	136			
Total	447			

CULTURAL SERVICES - LIBRARY, ARTS, MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

Clare County Library



Recycled Christmas Tree in Kilkee Library.

There was a “green theme” for many of this month’s events including recycling Christmas craft activities, talks on biodiversity and birdwatching in winter.

22 deliveries were made this month to those housebound.

Online resources usage as follows: the trend continues with high demand for e-audiobooks and e-books

1522 E-Books	2686 E-Audiobooks	647 E-Magazines
471 Online courses	1871 Press Reader	70 Transparent Languages

Marketing & social media

	New Followers	Total Followers	No of Posts & stories (Insta only)	Likes	Shares/ Retweets/ Reach	Comments
	48	6680	123	1206	1472 (E)	0
	-13	2071	39	75	215	0
	29	1768	130	1241	191	88

Total number of live events	143
Total attendances at live events	1371



Storytime in Scariff Library.

Right to Read

There was a range of events for children and adults this month including book clubs, story times and films. “Family Time at your Library” activities are provided to engage family members in the enjoyment of reading and sharing stories. The whole family are also introduced to collections of children’s books, e-books, and e-audio books. Reading support events took place in all fifteen library branches in Clare and including Christmas arts, crafts and music and online story readings on the Library’s YouTube channel.

Local storyteller Ruth Marshall brought a selection of warm winter tales to families in Ennistymon and Kilrush, music workshops were provided by Music Generation Clare and author Maeve Devoy celebrated Christmas creativity in workshops in Scariff, Sixmilebridge and Shannon libraries where parents and children wrote their personal stories to hang from their Christmas trees.

The “Family Time at your Library” events aim to support a family-focused approach to reading with children, as part of the national Right to Read programme and to increase awareness of the benefits of reading as a fun, recreational activity for children.



Christmas wreaths in Scariff Library.

Creative Ireland

The Creative Ireland Programme will be extended for a further 5 years up to 2027 and the following five pillars have been agreed: Creative Youth, Creative Communities, Creative Industries, Creative Health and Wellbeing and Creative Climate Action and Sustainability.

Clare County Council will continue to deliver the Creative Ireland Programme under the Creative Communities pillar and Creative Youth for Cruinniú na nÓg. It will also continue to partner with stakeholders under the other pillars. The new Clare Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023-2027 was adopted by the Social Development SPC on 6th December.

Clare Archives

The Barrett collection continues to be rehoused and catalogued. Certain elements within the collection have been identified and will need conservation. A review on the Managers' Orders collection from Clare Local Authorities is underway and additional material is being catalogued. Sections have been requested to identify such material within their areas and send to the archives for long-term preservation.

Each month the archives service continues to deal with queries from the public wishing to view the material from the Archives' collections. The digital scanner is out of order due to a delay with the delivery of a new hard drive. It is hoped it will be restored before Christmas.

Clare Arts Office

The annual Christmas Embrace Arts & Disability event took place in Cois na hAbhna, Ennis, and featured over 100 participants making Christmas decorations and taking part in singing workshops.

The Arts Officer conducted 1 Arts in Clare slots on Clare FM this month. Culturlann Sweeney, Kilkee, held a film screening and a concert. Clare Youth Theatre continue to meet in glór and Kilkee. Three exhibitions took place countywide. Hospital radio

continued twice a week in St Joseph's Hospital, Ennis, along with visits by musicians to the wards. Arts activities continued in Raheen Hospital.

The Arts Office completed a pilot mapping exercise for cultural venues for the Arts Council as part of the Night-time Economy Task Force.

There were 199 posts on Clare Arts social media channels with a reach of 18,954 people. "Breith – A Clare Celebration of Irish Independence" took place in glór to a packed house and was livestreamed throughout the world.

Clare Museum

Museum staff are continuing to develop the museum website. Currently there are 450 images of artefacts and six stories on objects and the work that goes on behind the scenes on the website.

Social media posts also continued during the month and the Museum has provided two photographs for future publications, one for a book and the other for a newspaper article in the *Irish Examiner* in January.

The museum hopes to host the 'Reading the Landscape' course during next 2023. This course is provided by the LCETB and Clare Heritage Office.

Work continues on the new library for Ennis which is now going vertical at a pace.



KILLALOE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)

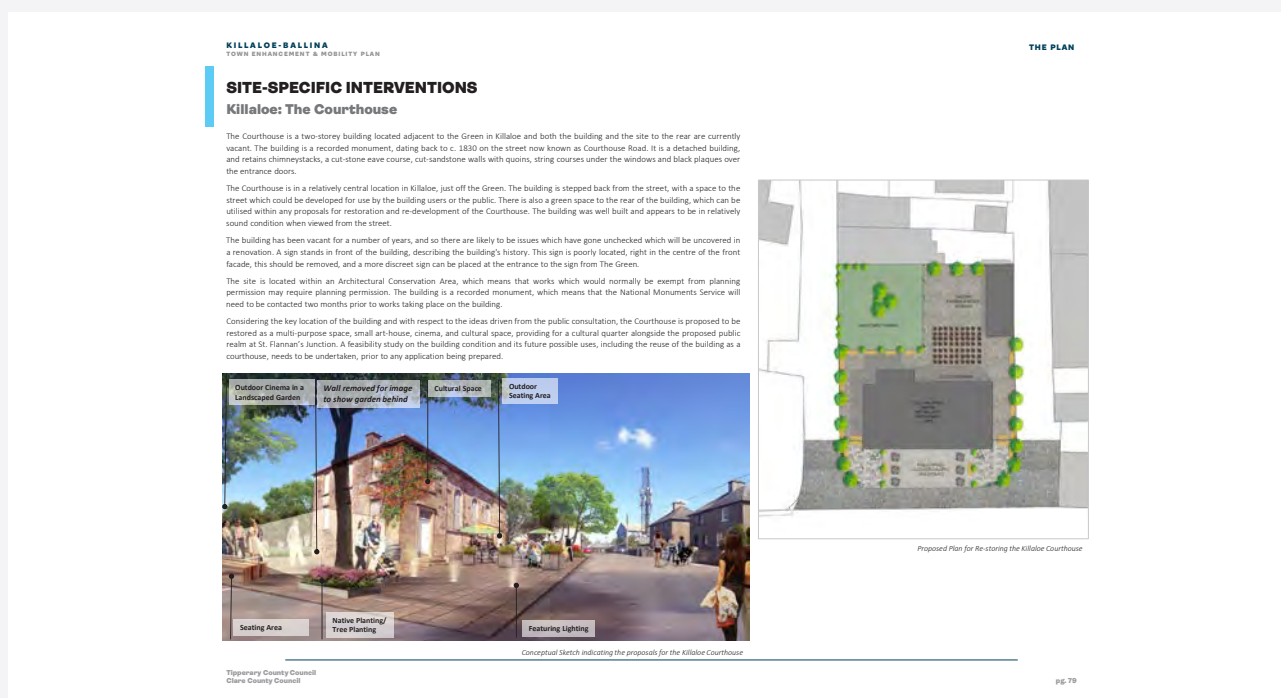
In December, following the announcement of Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) funding of €180,900 for the upgrading of facilities at Ballycuggeran Lake/Two Mile Gate to allow them to be universally accessible, including works to facilitate universal access to the water and the connection of Moylussa walking trail and Ballycuggeran lake amenity via a Pedestrian Crossing, stakeholder engagement took place on matters of implementation of the fund in order to coordinate an overall approach to Ballycuggeran.

Town and Village Renewal

In December, following the preparation and assistance by Killaloe MD, two projects in the MD were awarded funding by the Department of Rural and Community Development, under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme. These were for:

- a) A feasibility study or Project Development Measure (PDM) for Killaloe Courthouse grant funded for €49,500.
- b) Works to Quin Village Park grant funded for €151,495.

It is noted the Courthouse is identified in the *Killaloe-Ballina Town Enhancement and Mobility Strategy* as an opportunity site and the feasibility can assist in the focused approach to its potential enhancement.



Killaloe-Ballina Town Enhancement and Mobility Strategy

The development of a Town Centre Health Check for Killaloe continued in December with survey work. In conjunction with colleagues in Tipperary County Council it is envisaged that Town Centre Health checks for Killaloe-Ballina would be developed to enable an evidence-based approach to the development and monitoring of the both settlements jointly.

Engagement with a number of landowners by the Municipal District on key sites within the Killaloe continued with a view to activating development of several opportunity sites and areas.

Roads Maintenance and Enhancements

In addition to the treatment of public roads and areas in the MD following the Winter Alerts in December the staff and crews of the MD continued with a number of projects, including surface water and flood alleviation works at Bealkelly; installation of Broadford town signage; road drainage works; roadside drainage and pothole repairs on the outskirts of Tulla and Feakle.

Low Cost Safety Improvement works commenced in Kilkishen with drainage works and build outs for the raised table which is due for completion in January together with the installation of gateway signage for the approaches to Kilkishen. Footpath works for Tulla and Killaloe were delayed due to the recent weather event and are now due for commencement in January 2023. In December footpath improvements were completed in Whitegate, Mounsthannon and at Ballycuggaraun pier.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Clare hospitality providers invited to support 'Ask For Angela' campaign



Hospitality providers across County Clare, including bar, restaurant, café and hotel owners, are being invited to help make Clare a safer destination in which to socialise by committing to the 'Ask For Angela' code-word campaign. The Clare Joint Policing Committee (JPC), comprising Clare County Council, An Garda Síochána, Elected Members and community representatives, have teamed up with the Clare branch of the Vintners' Federation of Ireland (VFI) and Ennis Chamber to support the roll-out of the campaign, which encourages people who find themselves in an uncomfortable situation while socialising to 'Ask For Angela' at the bar or service counter. The phrase alerts staff that something is amiss and they can proceed to safely diffuse the situation. Participating businesses and venues will display signage in discreet locations to indicate they are taking part in the programme.

The Ask For Angela campaign was first piloted in Ennis in 2018 and this campaign has proven to be an effective method of encouraging people who feel unsafe or vulnerable in hotels, pubs, clubs or restaurants, but feel they are not able to openly seek support, to ask a staff member for assistance. The members of the Clare JPC, Vintners' Federation and Ennis Chamber are committed to supporting the roll-out of this initiative across the county.

An Garda Síochána work closely with local businesses, Clare County Council and Ennis Chamber on the Purple Flag initiative, to ensure that anyone socialising in Ennis has a fun and safe

experience. However, in some cases, people may feel at risk and isolated or afraid to seek help. The Ask for Angela initiative gives patrons at participating venues a simple way to seek assistance if they feel at all at risk.

Cllr John Crowe, Chair of Clare Joint Policing Committee, said: "On behalf of the Joint Policing Committee, I am delighted to see this initiative being re-launched and advancing here in Clare. We are leading the way in promoting Clare as a safe place to socialise."

Superintendent John Galvin said: "I believe this is an excellent initiative and fully support it within the Clare Garda Division. We know from experience that on a night out, people can find themselves in very uncomfortable and threatening situations and need the support of others. This is particularly true when they are in unfamiliar surroundings or separated from their friends. To have hospitality staff who are aware of the Ask for Angela initiative provides that support and comfort and will undoubtedly ensure they remain safe when faced with these challenges."

Charlie O'Meara, Chair of the Clare branch of the Vintners' Federation of Ireland, said: "The Clare branch of the Vintners' Federation of Ireland is delighted to be part of the Ask For Angela initiative and support it in any way possible. In conjunction with the Ennis Purple Flag initiative, we are helping to make the night-time economy safer for everyone."

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme projects



Cahermurphy

A grant of €20,000 was awarded to Clare Walks Ltd under Measure 1 of the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) 2021 to carry out repair works on the Cahermurphy Looped Walk. The walk is a 9km looped walk which starts at an area known as the White Sands, about 2km outside Flagmount village in East Clare. The loop takes in forest track, quiet roads, paths, and boreens along the shore of Lough Graney and its environs, an unspoilt area of natural beauty. This looped walk is part of the network of walks under the Shannon Region Trails Programme and it is maintained by Clare Walks Ltd. The completion of the works will ensure the future accessibility of the looped walk and improve the experience for the walker.

O'Briensbridge

A committed group of volunteers in O'Brien's Bridge have helped revive a historic 2km stretch, linking the south-east Clare village to Errina Canal near Clonlara. The works were enabled with funding of €13,500 granted under Measure 1 of the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme 2022.

The 2km walkway from the playground in O'Briensbridge had become so overgrown that the gap between both sides had reduced down to about 12 inches in some places. Scrub, briars and branches of trees were making it extremely difficult for two people to walk side by side, particularly any adult with a child buggy. However, now the gap on this walkway is about five foot wide, which provides pedestrians with great comfort as they enjoy splendid views of the River Shannon.

The walk was reopened at the end of November.



Council welcomes Town & Village Renewal Scheme funding

Clare County Council has welcomed the announcement by Minister for Rural and Community Development Heather Humphreys TD on Wednesday, 14th December, 2022, of over €775,000 for County Clare projects. Over €27 million in funding has been announced with the aim of combatting dereliction and breathing new life into rural towns and villages.

The announcement represents the largest ever investment under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme and will see a range of landmark projects delivered across Rural Ireland. Announcing the funding, Minister Humphreys said: “I am delighted to announce a record €27 million in funding under my Department’s Town and Village Renewal Scheme. This is all about tackling the scourge of vacancy and dereliction in our rural towns and villages. It’s about taking old buildings and giving them a new lease of life.

“And it’s about rejuvenating the centre of our towns by developing public plazas, town parks, community gardens and sports facilities for the benefit of local families. This investment today will breathe new life into rural towns and villages across every single county.

“It’s the largest ever investment under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme and demonstrates my passion and ambition for our rural communities.”

Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr Tony O’Brien, welcomed the funding, saying: “I would like to thank Minister Humphreys and her Department for their continued commitment to funding Rural Ireland and, in particular, County Clare. The announcement of over €700,000 worth of funding for County Clare projects is very welcome and will go a long way in breathing new life into five deserving communities.”

The five County Clare projects which will receive total funding

of €776,573 under the scheme are:

- Cappa Public Realm Project - €249,005
- Ennistymon Public Realm Project - €226,143
- Quin Village Park Project - €151,925
- Lisdoonvarna Streetscape Enhancement Measure - €100,000
- Killaloe Courthouse Project Development Measure - €49,500.

Leonard Cleary, Director of Rural Development, Clare County Council, said: “I am delighted that these projects will receive much needed funding. Public realm and streetscape enhancement projects are crucial to the future of rural towns and villages across the county. I look forward to seeing these projects progress in 2023.”

Community Centres Investment Fund

Community Halls in Clare that were successful in their funding applications under the Community Centres Investment fund were announced recently.

- This Scheme was administered directly by the Department and applications closed in July.
- Funding was available under 3 categories with grants of up to 300k available.
- Cat 1 projects were small scale project for improvement works up to 25k – Funding for these were announced on 12 October.
- Cat 2 and Cat 3 are for larger (up to 100k) and major (up to 300k) projects and today’s announcement relates to these.
- Funding is for capital works such as works to improve communal facilities such as kitchens and toilet facilities, upgrade to lighting systems and stage areas, energy retrofitting, new window/door/heating systems, works to improve disability access etc



Rialtas
na hÉireann
Government
of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040

Ár dTodhchaí
Tuaithe
Our Rural
Future



Clare	Kilfenora Community Centre	€6,800.00
	Ballynacally Development Association	€25,000.00
	Lissycasey Pastoral Church	€25,000.00
	Saint Patrick's Hall, Corofin	€57,400.00
	Newmarket-on-Fergus Community Centre CLG	€285,000.00
	12th Clare Tulla Scout Group	€200,000.00
	Broadford Development Association CLG	€194,625.00

The Department of Rural and Community Development Press Release (Minister Humphreys and Tánaiste announce over €33 million to upgrade 278 Community Centres nationwide) is available at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/65770-minister-humphreys-and-tanaiste-announce-over-33-million-to-upgrade-280-community-centres-nationwide/>

Travel Tales with Fergal – What is unique about County Clare?



Fergal O'Keefe of Travel Tales with Fergal interviewed 8 people from around Clare for his 2-part Clare Destination Special. In episode 1, Fergal interviewed Cllr Tony O'Brien, Cathaoirleach, Clare County Council, who gives a tourism overview of the county.

Clare is synonymous with traditional music, we hear from Charles Monod of Doolin Tourism and Tunes from Doolin. Next, we hear from Nuala Mulqueeny of the award-winning Aillwee Burren Experience and finally Arlene White of East Clare Tourism and Clare Walks shares highlights of East Clare.

In episode 2 Fergal interviewed Cllr Clare Colleran Molloy, the Mayor of Ennis Municipal District, who shares why Ennis has become "friendliest and tidiest town in Ireland". Next, we hear from the wonderful Mike Glynn from Bunratty Castle and Folk Park. Mike is a fountain of knowledge as he regails us with some great Clare folklore stories. Dave Merrins of Burren Gold Cheese tells us about the Burren Geopark and the award winning Geofood producers. Finally, we hear from Rosie McMahon from the Shannon Estuary Way Retreat.

This Clare destination special launched as a 2-part podcast on Travel Tales with Fergal; a full-page article in the *Nationalist* newspaper, Tipperary and on travel slots with both Clare FM and Tipperary FM.

Clare Twinning Committee



At the December meeting of the full Council, the Clare Twinning Policy was adopted. This policy sets out the context, members, procedure to enter Twinning arrangements, current twinning arrangements and the available resources.

Kilrush Amenity Trust Site Visit to the new Stable Block



The Board of Kilrush Amenity Trust were brought on a detailed site visit to the new Stable block of Vandeleur Walled Garden. Ruth Hurley, Project Manager and Senior Executive Architect, led the site visit.

Santa Experience at Vandeleur Walled Gardens



Santa and his elves visited The Vandeleur Walled Garden on 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th December, 2022. The garden was beautifully decorated with snow on each evening adding to the atmosphere! It was a busy weekend with each family having a wonderful private visit with Santa Claus in his magical kingdom followed up with a festive treat from the café.

WEST CLARE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT – KILRUSH LEA

Works undertaken by the West Clare MD in December 2022 included:

- Footpath Works (funded by IPB & Active Travel) in Kilrush, Kilkee, Kilmihil, Connolly, Quilty and Labasheeda. Works were carried out before the current cold spell of weather.



- Upgrade to the roadside drainage in Moveen, Kilkee (DoT – Climate change adaptation and resilience works funding).



- Lighting columns erected in Lissycasey (along N67).



- Road surface overlay at Parknamomey, Kilrush. Overlay is on the N67 Kilrush to Ennis Road (outside Tesco, Kilrush). Funding is from TII and Lagan carried out the works.



- Local improvement Scheme (LIS) works at Clonmacken.



- Removal of illegally dumped waste at Lisroe and Tiermaclane (Fern Celtic Road – 2nd time in 2 years).



- Works on the provision of a (*tarmacadam*) footpath in Ballynacally village. We had to wait for an ESB pole to be moved and have a small bit of work remaining. Footpath works (*CLAR funding*) and stone wall works (*own resources*) are approximately 95% complete.



- Completed Carrowore Sea Wall.



- We are currently experiencing our coldest weather in some years. Crews are gritting roads that are not on priority list of Winter Maintenance Plan. Crews are also gritting some footpaths in towns and villages – shops, chemists, doctors' surgeries, churches, etc. are prioritised.



North Clare

December brought challenging road conditions for the county with a sustained period of low (minus) temperatures. The MD staff responded and endeavoured to ensure roads were passable and that access was maintained to necessary services including schools. It should be noted, however, that we have finite resources and that it is not feasible to respond to all the calls.

Schedule of Municipal District Works 2022

The SMDW 2022 programme is complete. All restoration improvement and restoration maintenance works are 100% complete.

Restoration Improvement Regional	100%
Restoration Improvement Local	100%
Restoration Maintenance Regional	100%
Restoration Maintenance Local	100%

Works have also been completed on five CIS and eight LIS roads in 2022.

Active Travel 2022 Summary

Project	Status
Lahinch	Works complete
Doolin Pedestrian Crossing	Works Complete
Miltown Malbay	Works ongoing
Spanish Point	Works ongoing
Lisdoonvarna	Works 90% complete

Miltown Malbay

Resurfacing works commenced on Hills Lane in December and preparation works commenced on Ennis Road for new footpaths.





Inagh National School Safe Route to Schools

Approximately 75% of works are complete on the Inagh NS Safe Route to Schools programme. The access road to the back of the school was recently resurfaced.



SPORTS & RECREATION

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our customers for their continued support during 2022. Please be advised that we will be introducing new pricing structures for our outdoor facilities during the first quarter of 2023 to counter the ever increasing costs of running the facilities. We will engage with the clubs in advance to advise on likely increases and lead in times.



Active Ennis Leisure Complex

- Following a tender process Brendan McGrath has been appointed to deliver the swimming lesson programme for Clare County Council for a period of 2 years with an option to extend the contract for a further 2 years. The new swimming lesson programme will commence in January, the application process has changed and an application form must be completed for all participants. Some ~200 children participate in this programme and it provides a pathway for children to progress through the ranks and is ultimately a feeder programme for the provision of lifeguards to service our amenities in the county.
- The New Year sees an intensification in activities at our facilities with many setting New Year resolutions seeking to achieve healthier lifestyles following the Christmas excess. Active Ennis have promotions to encourage membership subscriptions, with full details available on the website or from staff at the facility.

Full details of all classes and programmes are available on www.activeennis.ie

Active Ennis Lees Road / Tim Smythe Park

Facilities are open and available for booking via the website www.activeennis.ie

All clubs and patrons are requested to leave facilities as they find them.

Any operational issues or queries can be reported by email to info@activeennis.ie

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGIC PROJECTS

Roche Masterplan

As a strategic project for County Clare and one of the nine transformational projects identified in the Ennis 2040 Strategy, Clare County Council continues to work with Roche Ltd on the development of a Masterplan for the Roche site in Clarecastle with the objective to present a draft Masterplan for public consultation in Q1 2023.

TOWN CENTRE FIRST / CROÍ CONÁITHE

A presentation on Town Centre First was made to the Social Strategic Policy Committee in December outlining key objectives of the policy framework and work to date on the current masterplan for Sixmilebridge, the first pathfinder Town Centre First town in Clare.

Shannon Town Centre Masterplan

Clare County Council continues to actively engage with stakeholders and landowners in the regeneration of the Shannon Town Centre to deliver upon the objectives of the Masterplan. Tenders for a design team and project management team for the 'One Shannon Hub' – a key intervention of the Masterplan – have been assessed and the Design Team are due to be appointed in January 2023. Various funding streams are being identified to enable delivery of this development.

Sixmilebridge Masterplan

As part of ongoing public consultation in the development of the Sixmilebridge Masterplan, over 100 people completed the detailed 'Have your Say' online survey to feed into the Masterplan objectives and projects, as well as separate submissions and observations. Further engagement with stakeholders and landowners continued throughout December. A feedback session with senior classes in the local primary school is planned for January 2023. It is anticipated that a draft proposal of the Masterplan will go on public consultation in February/March 2023, following initial consultation by the design team, Allies & Morrison, with stakeholders to be held in January.

FORWARD PLANNING

Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029

The Draft Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 – Proposed Amendments documents were placed on public display on 28th November, 2022, until 3rd January, 2023, inclusive, with relevant publicity around same in local press and on the Council's website.

The Chief Executive's Report on submissions received is currently being prepared by the Forward Planning Team. This will then be issued to the Elected Members for their consideration at the end of January/early February. A special Council meeting is scheduled for mid-March 2023 for the Elected Members to conclude their considerations and by resolution make the plan, with or without proposed amendments to the Draft Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029.



Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT)

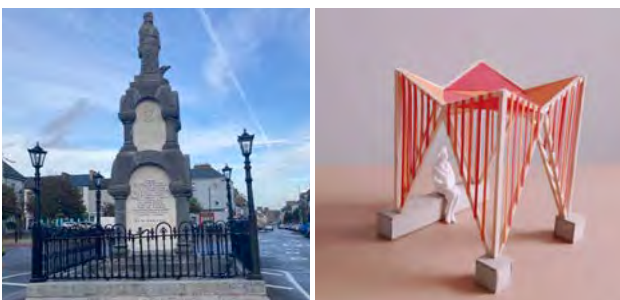
The RZLT is a new tax which will come into effect from 2024. The purpose of the tax is to activate existing planning permissions as well as zoned and serviced residential and mixed-use lands to increase housing supply and to ensure regeneration of vacant and idle lands in urban locations.

underway with an event held at Corofin Community Hall, where preliminary proposals were exhibited. The online consultation has concluded and received a high level of engagement from the community. A series of targeted consultation meetings with key stakeholders got underway in October and were concluded in early December. The design team have issued a draft public consultation report to the steering group to review and they will now begin adapting the design proposals based on the feedback from the second stage of consultation. It is envisaged that a display of the final proposals will be exhibited in Corofin in early 2023.



The Manchester Martyrs’ Monument

The Manchester Martyrs’ Monument in Kilrush has been repaired and restored with grant aid from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage under the Historic Structures Fund. The project has now reached practical completion and has resulted in the full restoration of the monument’s stonework and the historic ironmongery. All elements of the work have been undertaken by heritage craftspeople. The repair and restoration of the Monument is a significant step in safeguarding the heritage of Kilrush Town Centre and is a further continuation of heritage-led works in Kilrush, for which the local and visiting community will greatly benefit. It is expected that the restored monument will be officially launched in early 2023.



Flexible Outdoor Structures

Clare County Council has received funding under 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 and proposes a series of flexible outdoor structures which can be erected in outdoor locations during one-off events. The project team concluded the tender process in early December and Alan Meredith Studio Ltd have been appointed to fabricate the structures. It is expected that fabrication will commence in early 2023.

Hastings’ Farmhouse, Shannon

With funding from the Heritage Council’s Heritage Stewardship Fund, Clare County Council and Dúchas na Sionna have done works in relation to Hastings Farmhouse, Shannon, which is a protected structure of historic and architectural significance. The Fund provides support to bodies who have responsibility for the care of heritage objects and those who play a key role in the heritage infrastructure of Ireland and are vital to the delivery of national policy and plans. The partnership between the Council and Dúchas na Sionna is a key step in safeguarding the heritage of Hastings’ Farmhouse. With this funding, we have put in place key structures and frameworks which will guide the future of this protected structure and a cost plan for proposals has been developed. It also funded training in vernacular construction for adult learners with a view to increasing inclusivity in heritage initiatives. This training was delivered in partnership with the LCETB and Dúchas na Sionna and was attended by members of the local community as well as members of the Ukrainian community. The grant also covers site works which look to increase accessibility to the site and they got underway in November and will be concluded in early 2023.



Training in vernacular forms of construction at Hastings Farmhouse.



Site works underway at Hastings Farmhouse to improve accessibility.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT – PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The table below shows the number of planning applications processed during the month of December (up to 19th December) and also gives the year-to-date totals. It is intended that the final figures for December will be provided in the January report.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS	December 2022 – up to 19th Dec	Year to date 2022
No. of planning applications received	72	1149
No. of Planning Decisions made	68	1024
No. of decisions notified by An Bord Pleanála	0	25
No. of pre-planning enquiries received	12	229
No. of Section 5 applications	4	85
No. of Section 97 Exemption Cert applications (in respect of Part V of the Planning & Dev Act 2000)	4	57
Submissions received regarding Compliance	10	356

PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

The year 2022 was a very busy year in Planning Enforcement with almost 200 complaints received in the year, some of which related to the same sites. The full details of activity for the year in terms of warning letters, enforcement notices and

enforcement proceedings issued will be provided in the January report, the activity in relation to planning enforcement during the month of December, together with the year to date totals.

HERITAGE

The Heritage Council have announced the following Heritage Grants:

- Heritage Capacity Fund 2023 – to support operational costs for not-for-profit heritage NGOs
- Heritage Stewardship Fund 2023 – to support public body employees to deliver heritage projects
- Historic Towns Initiative 2023 – for local authorities only to promote the heritage-led regeneration of Ireland’s historic towns.

The Heritage Council Community Heritage Grant scheme will be announced on 16th January, 2023.

The Heritage Officer is meeting with various community groups and individuals to discuss these opportunities for funding.

Further details available here: <https://www.heritagecouncil.ie/funding/funding-schemes>

Clare Invasive Species Database

The Clare Invasive Alien Species (IAS) database is about to be updated showing records of all IAS throughout County Clare. This database will assist Clare County Council to qualify the extent of the problem and provide information on how this serious problem can be tackled. It will help to quantify the costs and provide information to justify a dedicated fund to tackle the problem.

Invasive Alien Species (IAS) in the Lower River Shannon

A meeting was held online to discuss IAS in the Lower River Shannon, the Blackwater River and the Errina Canal between the relevant agencies, looking more specifically at Giant Hogweed, American Skunk Cabbage and Himalayan Balsam. Waterways Ireland, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Planning Section, Shannon MD Team and NUI Dublin were represented at the meeting and further meetings are planned for 2023.

Barn Owl Nest Box Update

Records and information of breeding Barn Owls in Clare from this summer are still being reported. Birdwatch Ireland continue to work to ensure that the remainder of the allocation of Barn Owl nest boxes are installed in suitable locations

Heritage Launch and Presentation

The Heritage Officer attended the launch of the new Cuimhneamh an Chláir/Clare Memories strategy and website. The organisation is an independent voluntary group preserving the oral history, heritage and folklore of County Clare.

The Heritage Officer made a presentation to the Economic Development SPC on the Clare County Council Biodiversity programme 2022.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

- **The Trading Online Voucher Scheme**, which provides grant support to small businesses to develop an ecommerce website, has continued to see strong interest. Forty-six applications have been approved in 2022.
- **Mentoring:** LEO Clare continue to experience a demand for mentoring support primarily in the areas of Starting a Business, Finance, Digital Marketing, Export Development and Brexit. In December, 11 further mentors have been assigned bringing our total annual number of mentoring assignments to 170
- **Productivity Supports:** With rising prices affecting all businesses, LEO Clare have various productivity supports to assist businesses offset higher input costs. In 2022 LEO Clare have approved 16 Green for Micro applications, 15 LEAN applications and 8 Digital Start Applications
- **Training:** LEO Clare held three training courses and events over the month of December which saw over 60 participants register. These included training Instagram Reels, Start Your Own Business Workshop, and our final Women in Business Network Event. Throughout 2022 Local Enterprise Office Clare organised 79 Training and network events with over 1,500 attendees.

December Evaluation Committee Meeting

The Local Enterprise Office Evaluation and Approvals Committee (EVAC) held their sixth and final evaluation meeting of 2022 in December. Two Business Expansion projects totalling €61,758 were approved for funding. In total Local Enterprise Office Clare approved 31 projects including 4 Priming, 8 TAME and 19 Business Expansion applications which totalled €704,041 in funding.

2023 Training Programme

Throughout December Local Enterprise Clare have been organising their 2023 Training programme. Currently 51 training courses and workshops have been organised with further programmes to follow. Training courses include our Start Your Own Business, Digital Marketing courses, LEAN and Management Development Programmes.



PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Property Transactions and Conveyancing

The table below shows the number of property transactions completed by Property Management Unit in December, together with the totals for 2022 to date.

We continue to assist many solicitors on issues associated with title, boundaries, old leasehold folios et and the activity levels are indicative of an active property market in the County generally. In addition to the table below, significant property transactions are underway which will add to the economic development of the county and these are related to individual projects.

Transaction	December 2022	Year to date 2022	Full year 2021
Lease / Sub Lease of Property / Building	1	4	4
Licence to use property / building	1	13	11
Grazing Agreement for Lands	0	22	22
Deed of Transfer signed	4	19	12
Contract for Sale signed	2	2	3
Deed of Right of Way / Wayleave signed	1	6	3
Deed of Rectification / Variation signed	1	10	7
Allotment Agreements signed	0	39	39

Grazing of Lands 2023

The annual advertisement for grazing of Council owned lands for an 11-month period will be advertised in early January 2023. This has been competitive in recent years and the opening of the tenders will take place in mid-January.

Shannon Allotments

The renewal of the agreements for the Shannon allotments is almost finalized for the year 2023. It has been possible, with improved management of the allotments and ensuring that all are maintaining their allotment, to allocate a few allotments to those on the waiting list.

Tullyvarraga Hall, Shannon

The Property Management Team are working with the Committee of Tullyvarraga Hall in Shannon to improve the condition of this building, which is about 60 years old. The building is the ownership of Clare County Council and leased to the Community Group. With a grant from POBAL, plans are underway to refurbish the toilets to make them accessible. The Working Group for the Community Grants scheme has also allocated the sum of €10,000 to upgrade the oil heating system and tank to current standards and to upgrade fire prevention systems and emergency lighting. These two investments will make a significant difference to the Hall and with the installation of a replacement kitchen planned for early 2022, it will open up additional opportunities for the community to use this facility.



Acquisition of Inagh Garda Station

The Council has recently signed contracts for the acquisition of the former Inagh Garda Station from the Office of Public Works. This is a further example of moving to acquire vacant buildings and work with local groups to find a use for them. In this case, it is proposed to lease the small building to the Local Housing Association, who will base staff in the building and use it as their office. Such collaborations are key to local community development. When the acquisition is completed, the proposal for leasing will be brought to Council for approval.



Energy Management for Public buildings

In line with the Government’s campaign to reduce our energy usage, a range of measures have been put in place in our Corporate and other buildings to reduce usage on lighting and heating and IT related equipment. Energy management will be closely monitored by the Energy Management Committee.



Casual Trading

As most of the events and festivals were held in the summer time, no additional casual trading licences were issued in December. The renewals of current licences for 2023 is being done at present.

Derelict Sites

To date this year, 69 new derelict site files have been opened and represents a significant effort by the Derelict Sites Team to take action against derelict properties throughout the County. This is the highest level of activity in any one year since the Act was first introduced in 1990/1991 and we now have 202 active files. Compared to 2021, it is a doubling of the level of activity on new sites. Initial engagement with owners or their representatives is key to resolution of the issues of dereliction and to understand the various reasons why the properties are in a derelict stage. A number of properties have been brought to the market and some are at ‘sale agreed’ stage and we continue the engagement with the new owners of those properties to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities under the Derelict Sites Act, 1990.

We are also seeing the outcome of sales agreed in 2021 and 2022, with planning applications for refurbishment increasing and some works commencing on individual properties. This is not to say that there are not many challenges in dealing with derelict sites as we come across many issues which need to be resolved. However, with time and effort, working with owners, financial institutions and other departments, there are definitely options for positive re-development and revitalisation of many such derelict sites.

The table below provides a snapshot of the activity in November 2022 to date, together with comparative figures for the full year 2021. This is a very significant increase on activity throughout the whole county.

Derelict Sites	Dec 2022	Year to date 2022	Full year 2021
No. of new files opened	11	69	35
No. of Section 8(2) Notices issued - Intention to enter site on Derelict Sites Register	0	33	20
No. of Section 8(7) Notices issued – Entry of site onto Derelict Sites Register	0	22	4
No. of Section 11 Notices issued - Measures required to render the site non-derelict	0	0	2
No. of files closed / property removed from Derelict Sites Register	1	21	0
No. of Notices served to Compulsorily Purchase (CPO) (see note below)	0	6	0
No of Vesting Orders signed	0	4	0

Compulsory acquisition of Derelict sites

To date in 2022, three of the four derelict sites acquired by CPO have been vested in Clare County Council and one is outstanding in the Property Registration Authority. The CPO process has been initiated in two more properties and we are dealing with objections in relation to those. We are working with the Housing Department to return the first three properties to living accommodation, following refurbishment or re-development. These are the first CPO's of Derelict sites initiated by the Council since 2014.

Grants Scheme for Vacant and Derelict Properties

The announcement by Government of grant aid for the refurbishment of vacant and / or derelict properties in towns and villages, for occupation as a principal private residence is very welcome. Details of the scheme for towns and villages can be found on the website with all the information on the scheme, frequently asked questions and the application form for the Grants scheme – gov.ie - www.gov.ie - Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund Scheme (www.gov.ie) We continually bring this grants scheme to the attention of property owners that we are engaging with. The grants scheme has been extended to properties in rural areas and this has the potential to make a difference in many parts of rural County Clare.

Amalgamation of Vacant homes and Derelict Sites

In order to ensure engagement with owners is more efficient, the amalgamation of the Derelict Sites team with the Vacant Homes Officer will take effect in January 2023. This is a further step in putting a key focus on this area and will allow us to strengthen the Unit, which did not exist until late 2019. Arrangements will be made for briefings to the elected Members in Quarter 1 2023 and a communications strategy for the public and property owners, with road shows being proposed around the county.

Working Group with Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government

Carmel Greene, Senior Executive Officer is a member of a working group established by the Department to review the effectiveness of the Derelict Sites Act, 1990 and to assess if any amendments or improvements are required.

SHANNON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



Pictured (l-r): Cathaoirleach of Shannon Municipal District, Cllr Michael Begley; Sean Haugh, Executive Technician; Anne Griffin, A/Senior Executive Officer; Orla Lynch, Assistant Staff Officer; Cllr Donna McGettigan; and Cllr Gerry Flynn.

New Ability Swing for Tir na Nóg playground in Shannon

Shannon Municipal District introduced a new piece of inclusive playground equipment, the Ability Swing, to its existing playground at Tir na nÓg in Shannon Town. The Ability Swing is suitable for children that use a wheelchair and it comprises a wheelchair platform and swing frame. This additional piece

of playground equipment enhances the existing play facilities which incorporates a soft flooring play surface throughout and over 12 other different pieces of equipment. The provision of the ability swing was funded through the General Municipal Allocation (GMA) in Shannon MD and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.



Cathaoirleach of Shannon Municipal District, Cllr Michael Begley, and Director of Services Liam Conneally pictured with Shannon MD Councillors, Council officials and ESB staff in front of a turbine water feature at Moneypoint power station.

Visit to Ardnacrusha power station by elected members and staff of Shannon MD

The elected members together with the Director of Services and staff of Shannon MD recently attended a briefing with ESB engineering staff on the operations of the Ardnacrusha Power Plant. The ESB informed the group that the spillway gate will be utilised during Winter 2022/2023 due to the essential maintenance of one of the turbine units which is currently out of service. The role of Parteen Weir was discussed as well as the

importance of ensuring a coordinated approach to flood risk management by all the relevant Agencies. Shannon MD staff work very closely with ESB staff in this regard.

A guided tour of the facility was also provided which proved very informative. The Ardnacrusha Hydro Station was the first electricity generating station operated by the ESB and was pivotal in the development of Ireland in the 20th century and beyond.

Attendance at Shannon Chamber President's lunch in Dromoland Castle

Shannon Chamber's President's lunch event was held in Dromoland Castle on 14th December, 2022. This corporate networking lunch included many businesses and companies in the wider Shannon Area. The event was part-sponsored by Clare County Council. Representatives from the secondary schools

of St Caimin's and St Patrick's Comprehensive in Shannon were also in attendance. The keynote speaker was Peter Mannion, a Partner in McKinsey & Company's Sustainability Practice, and he shared his perspective on sustainability in the global context. He also focused on the imperative for climate action and the commercial opportunities that it creates for businesses.



Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr Tony O'Brien; Eoin Gavin, President, Shannon Chamber; Anne Griffin, A/Senior Executive Officer; and Cathaoirleach of Shannon Municipal District, Cllr Michael Begley.



Anne Griffin, A/Senior Executive Officer, and Caroline O'Connor, Management Accountant, at the Shannon Chamber President's lunch.



Cathaoirleach of Shannon Municipal District, Cllr Michael Begley, participating at the Shannon Chamber event.

Santa and Mrs Claus pay a visit to Shannon Town Park

Shannon Municipal District Council was delighted to welcome Santa and Mrs Claus to a wonderfully magical Shannon Town Park on Friday, 16th December, 2022. Our hugely talented Cllr Donna McGettigan did the honours of dressing up as Mrs Claus and Sergeant Joe O'Donoghue, Shannon Garda Station, donned the Santa suit! It was a great opportunity for families to get photos of their children with Santa and Mrs Claus free of charge particularly given this ongoing cost of living crisis. The Christmas lights were sparkling and shining and gave a stunning festive glow.

The crowd was entertained by the local Gaelscoil children who sang beautiful carols on the night. Cathaoirleach of Shannon Municipal District Cllr Michael Begley welcomed everyone and had a special greeting in the Ukrainian language for all the Ukrainians that are living in Shannon Municipal District. A talented saxophone player from Shannon performed some

beautiful Christmas tunes and Shannon MD staff were on hand to give sweet treats and Santa hats to all the children and ensure safety for all.

Summary of other works

- Drainage works for 2022 completed in early December.
- Refurbishment of the Westbury housing estate wall completed in mid-December.
- Low-cost safety scheme for George's Street in Sixmilebridge will be substantially complete by mid-December.
- Work has started on the Active Travel project for Ballycasey Park in Shannon.
- The Shannon MD footpath capital project was awarded in early December, works to start in January 2023.
- Contractor was appointed to the refurbishment and installation of new bus stop infrastructure in the Shannon MD, works to start in January 2023.



Pictured (l-r): Cathaoirleach of Shannon Municipal District, Cllr Michael Begley, Santa Claus (Sergeant Joe O'Donoghue, Shannon Garda Station), and Mrs Claus (Cllr Donna McGettigan).



Pictured (l-r): Santa and Mrs Claus and Cllr Pat O'Gorman.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

TRANSPORTATION

Roadworks Programme and Operations

The preparation of the 2023 Schedule of Municipal District Works will commence when the grant allocations from the TII, DoT and NTA are announced and will be presented to the Municipal Districts in March.

Strategic Transportation

Connecting Ireland/Bus Connects

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. The local link from Kildysart to Kilrush was rolled out during 2021 as part of this project by the NTA.

Clare County Council Transportation section attended a workshop on Wednesday, 26th October with representatives of Limerick City & County Council, Bus Éireann, the National Transport Authority (NTA) and the NTA's consultants Jarrett Walker & Associates (JWA) and Systra.

Active Travel Programme 2022

Funding for the Active Travel 2022 programme was announced by the NTA for County Clare on 24th January, 2022. The total allocation for projects across all MDs in the county is €5,298,000.

The total funding drawn down for the year as of 7th December 2022 was €3,969,698. Committed expenditure for ongoing projects is €1,853,695.

The following is a brief overview of the status of ongoing projects:

- Construction works complete in Quin, Kilmurry, Boston, Doolin, Ruan, Lahinch, Kilmaley, Dromindoora & Lisdoonvarna
- Construction works ongoing in Ennis (including Ballybeg), Tulla, Spanish Point, Clarisford (Killaloe) & Sixmilebridge
- Construction works ongoing at St. Flannans National School in Inagh under 'Safe Routes To School' programme
- Construction works recently commenced in Miltown

- Malbay & Ballycasey Close (Shannon)
- Public lighting installation completed in The People's Park (Clarecastle)
- Public lighting installation ongoing in Ballybeg (Ennis)
- Consultants appointed to advance Option Selection phase & Preliminary Design phase for permeability across bridges throughout the county
- Preliminary design being advanced for Clonmoney National School in consultation with An Taisce under 'Safe Routes To School' programme
- Preliminary design completed with landowner engagement ongoing for scheme in Roslevan
- Preliminary design completed with landowner engagement ongoing for scheme in Meelick
- Option Selection phase being advanced for cycling schemes at Limerick Road (incl. St Flannan's Drive), Tulla Road and Lahinch Road as part of development of the cycling network within Ennis
- Option Selection phase being advanced in conjunction with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and NTA for a proposed Active Travel scheme in Lissycasey

The Active Travel programme is multi-annual and the above projects that have advanced to the Construction phase will continue into 2023. The process has now begun – in consultation with all Municipal Districts – to identify suitable new projects to commence in 2023. All schemes that fulfil the relevant criteria have been forwarded to the NTA for consideration in the forthcoming funding announcement. The approved schemes are expected to be announced by the NTA in January 2023.



Dromindoora



Kilmaley



Inagh

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. Following the successful conclusion of the procurement process a contractor has been appointed as the Design Build Works Contract for this regional project. At present 52% 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 – <https://enerveo.com/report-a-fault/republic-of-ireland/>

Phone: Eneveo (Formerly SEE Airtricity) dedicated call centre at 0818-372772

Local Authority Identification – via Local Authority’s website or contact number. <https://www.clarecoco.ie/services/roads-and-transport/road-maintenance-issues/report-a-broken-streetlight/>

Road Design Office

Current Projects: December 2022

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 September, 2022.

Project	Progress Update
TII HD 15 Sites	<p>For the N85:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. The TII are of the view that any proposed design for the Lahinch Rd/Shanaway Rd junction should be incorporated in the Active Travel Strategy and plan for the wider area. The RDO carried out an extensive topographical survey of the N85 from Claureen roundabout to the start of the speed limit zone and are currently developing conceptual designs for this area. <p>For the N68:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Derrycrossaun junction is now substantially completed.
TII HD 17 Sites	<p>For the N68:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A topographical survey of the Monvana Rd. junction N68/L2510 is complete and conceptual designs are progressing. Interim measure proposed and being developed for N68/L2138. <p>For the N67:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topographical surveys of junctions N67/L1022, N67/50222/, N67/L50221 & N67/L1016 now completed, conceptual designs for N67/L50222 and N67/L50221 are completed, and Feasibility Reports are being developed. Conceptual designs progressing for N67/L1022 and N67/1016. Gateway 1 approval has been received from the TII for the proposed safety scheme at Minister Place, Kilkee. The TII have analysed the proposed junction layout and are satisfied that there will be no capacity issues, concerns were raised in this regard in a meeting arranged with community groups. Issues raised in the Road Safety Audit have been worked through and accepted by the Auditor, a public lighting designs has been completed. The Design Report is progressing with a competition for EIA and AA screening reports underway. Work is also progressing on a photomontage of the proposed scheme for public consultation. The junction between Mount Charles Terrace and the N67 has been surveyed and a preliminary design to improve visibility has been developed. A Stage 1/2 Road Safety Audit for this junction has been carried out and accepted. A Feasibility Report is being prepared for submission to the TII.

Other Projects 2022

Project	Progress Update
Low Cost Safety Schemes 2022	The projects progressing in 2022 are substantially completed. A number of projects will be continuing into 2023. The funding application for LCS for 2023 was submitted to the DoT in November 2022.
EuroVelo 1	The project is substantially completed. All the signage has now been installed.
Liaison with NTA regarding bus stops	Construction works are completed.
Liaison with NTA regarding bus shelters	The NTA has approved 15 no. bus shelters for the 2023 programme. The tender process has been completed with construction works to commence in early 2023.
Road Schedule & Queries	Search requests from the public and Municipal Districts regarding the road schedule are being carried out on an ongoing basis. Updates to the roads schedule is carried out as updates are being received.
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 2022 feeding into the Clare County Cycling Network Project
Ennis Pedestrian Friendly & Park and Stride Assessments	Completed.
Kilrush Cycle Routes Project	Road Design are currently collaborating with West Clare Municipal District to develop three new cycle routes throughout the Kilrush area. The cycle routes will incorporate a town, estuary, and heritage loop totalling 26km.
R352 Henchy's Cross Junction	This project is substantially completed.
National Cycling Network	This is a project initiated by the TII and is being developed in conjunction with the RDO, Clare County Council. This project seeks to develop a cycling network connecting settlements with a population 5,000. At public consultation stage. Presented to Physical SPC in June.
Clare County Cycle Network	Draft strategy commenced in conjunction with the NTA and AECOM. Public consultation expected to commence in late Quarter 4 2022.
Latoon Cycling Infrastructure	Tender documents are currently being prepared.
Climate Adaptation	The funding application for 2023 Climate Adaptation Grant was submitted to the DoT in November 2022.

River Fergus Walk

Road Design have liaised with Clare County Council's Capital Projects Team and multiple stakeholders to develop signage and mapboards for the River Fergus Walk. These mapboards will shortly be installed along the route.

Bridge Rehabilitation Programme

The 2023 Rehabilitation Programme was submitted to the DoT in November 2022. The Bridge Rehabilitation grant for 2022 was €602,000.

The 2022 Bridge Rehabilitation Programme consisted of the following:

Bolooghra Bridge:	Works complete. Snagging ongoing.
Killestry Bridge:	Works complete.
Scariff Bridge:	Works complete.
Cavanagh's Bridge:	Works complete.
Cooraclare Bridge:	Works complete.
Drumullan Bridge:	Works complete.
Gortnamearacaun Bridge:	Works complete.
Ahaclare Bridge:	Works complete.

D' Esterres Bridge:	Works complete.
Annagore Bridge:	Works complete.
Roadford Bridge:	Contractor on Site.
Ballynalacken Bridge:	Contractor on Site.
Drehidnalacken Bridge:	Contractor on Site.
Cloghaun Beg:	Works complete.
Friars Bridge:	Works complete.
Mauricesmills Bridge:	Works complete.
Carrowkeel Bridge:	Works complete.
Clooncat Bridge:	Works complete.
Addroon Bridge:	Works complete.
Drummindoorra:	Tenders returned contractor appointment ongoing.
Turkenagh:	Tenders returned contractor appointment ongoing.
Drehidunagh Bridge:	Contractor on Site.
Silvergrove Bridge:	Works complete.
Cloonaleary & Annagapple Bridge:	Works complete

Health and Safety

The Health & Safety Team's schedule of Annual Safety Statement & Risk Assessment reviews in addition to their schedule of Safety Inspections and Internal H&S Audit is complete for 2022.

The following Top Level H&S Objectives approved by the Safety Management Committee in February 2022 are completed:

- Enhance communication and awareness around H&S post Covid – H&S Briefings delivered to all outdoor staff by H&S and Line Management. Online H&S modules issued to Indoor Staff supported by a Safety Poster Campaign.
- Roll out further Serious Incident Simulated Exercises at MD Level for Outdoor Staff and Line Management.
- Deliver bespoke training on contact with Underground Services for all staff undertaking excavation works – delivered to all Roads staff trained in the Location of Underground Services CSCS Skills Card.
- Continually Revise, Update, Implement and Monitor the Clare County Council Covid 19 Response Plan in accordance with the Government Transitional Plan.

General Design Office

Scarriff Rural Regeneration Project



Further to the Part 8 Planning Application, Fire Safety Certificate and Disabled Access Certificate submissions the requisite external consultants, i.e. Structural Engineer, QS & M&E Engineer have now been appointed. It is anticipated that we will be in a position to go out to tender for the construction works of the building refurbishments and car park in early April 2023.

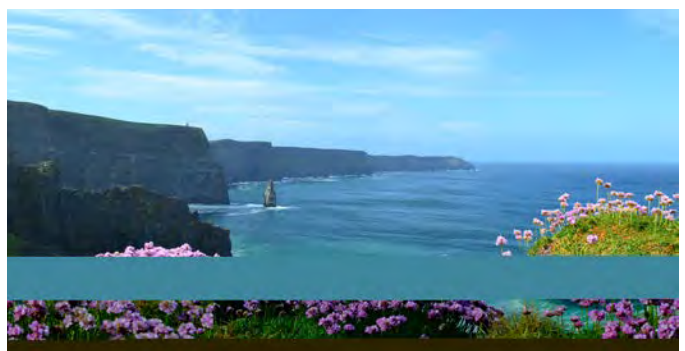
Ennistymon Digital Hub

The refurbishment of the Basement Level of the Ennistymon Digital Hub is due for completion by mid-January.



Cliffs of Moher North – Costal Walk

At the Cliffs of Moher, funding of €500,000 will be used to carry out repair and upgrade works on a section of the Cliffs of Moher North Coastal Walk to improve visitor safety. The works include the repair of a 1.3km section of the existing walkway, part of which links in with the historical Doolin Road. In addition to the upgrade of the gravel paths, works will include drainage, fencing, stone wall repairs, handrails and the erection of safety signage.



Active Travel – Roslevan, Newpark & Gaurus

Works ongoing on the proposed footpath on Newpark Road, Ennis. Active Travel are currently in talks with the NTA acquiring funding for upcoming projects in 2023. Land Dedication Agreements have been signed and there is one Land Transfer currently which will progress once funding has been agreed from the NTA.

Town and Village Renewal Schemes

Corofin Town & Village Renewal Scheme – topographical survey finalised and on file. Preliminary design investigations ongoing.

Clonlara Town & Village Renewal Scheme – Section 38 placed in *Clare Champion*, 18th November. Proposals put before Shannon MD members on Tuesday, 15th November. QS procured. Tender package to be published on eTenders late January/early February 2023.

Sixmilebridge Access Steps Handrail – Works completed, inspected and approved. See photo below.



CAPITAL DELIVERY / PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

While Project Team meetings continue throughout the month, December is traditionally a quieter period for Major Projects where the time is spent on finalising payments, claims, accounts, etc. We also spend time on setting our programmes, objectives, and milestones for the year ahead. An update on the main capital projects during December is as follows:

Doolin Pier Visitor Services Building – After pausing the Design Team to allow for surveying, monitoring and assessment of some of the more significant environmental considerations, a Cross Directorate Meeting took place in early December to review the brief for the VSB and associated car parking as well as to discuss the overall strategy with reference to the recent AA assessment and the Draft County Development Plan. A further meeting is scheduled for mid-January after which, we would hope to be able to complete the detailed design and submit to An Bord Pleanála for planning approval at the earliest juncture.

Ennis South Flood Relief Scheme/Riverside Walk Project. - Work was completed during the week on the installation of the street furniture along the new River Fergus Walk. This includes park benches and seating, bicycle stands, bicycle repair station as well as safety and directional signage. Information boards were provided at the entrances and at the rest areas along the route. These information boards explain the operation of the Ennis South Flood Relief Scheme, provide a map of the walkway and other connecting routes, the history of the Clare Abbey Monastery and information on the flora and fauna that are present in the area. Members are reminded that the Walkway is constructed within the Clare Abbey flood plain and may on occasion be subject to flooding itself as was experienced at the

early part of the month following heavy rainfall. For the most part, it will be universally accessible and is proving to be a very popular addition to the amenity infrastructure in the Ennis and environs area.

Ennistymon Inner Relief Road and Bridge Crossing (Blake's Corner) – As reported last month, a third party has sought leave to have the decision of An Bord Pleanála judicially reviewed. We now await the outcome from the Courts, with the case being down for mention before the High Court in late January 2023. Thereafter, we will be better informed on our next course of action.

Killaloe Bridge and By-Pass – The Main Works Contractor, Sisk, in conjunction with their appointed piling subcontractor PJ Edwards, have commenced piling works for the main Shannon Bridge Crossing on the Eastern (Tipperary) side of the river. Piling to the eastern side of the river will run throughout the months of December and January with piling works then focusing to the Western (Clare) side of the river. The excavation and replacement of unsuitable material from the site compound towards the Clare side of the river crossing at Clarisford is progressing well. This will facilitate access to the bridge location for larger plant including the piling rig and craneage early in the new year. Sisk's other piling subcontractor, Terradrive Piling & Foundations Ltd have commenced piling works for the new Kilmastulla River bridge crossing on the R494.

The construction of the R494 Upgrade is progressing with site clearance and enabling works been carried out. This involves the widening of the existing northbound carriageway to enable

future traffic management and site clearance on the south-bound carriageway. Utility services diversions are also being carried out on the R494 and utility investigations are progressing elsewhere via slit trench identification and ongoing coordination with the relevant providers. There are no major traffic management operations planned for the remainder of the year however there will be long term Traffic Management arrangements in place from 09/01/2023 until 31/05/2023 to facilitate the construction of the R494 road realignment. All major temporary traffic management arrangements will be included on the MapAlerter system which can be accessed at <https://www.mapalerter.com>

Works to the Main Construction Compound adjacent to the Shantraud Woods Housing Development on the R463 are now almost complete with final connection awaited from ESB Networks. The construction of the Killaloe Bypass section is progressing with site clearance and enabling works advancing from the Shantraud Roundabout to the Ballyvally / Kincora roundabout with the construction of haul roads within the site and commencement of the earthwork's operations for this section of the project. Other works include archaeological monitoring, ecological monitoring & property pre-condition surveys. The remaining Land Acquisitions are currently being progressed mostly by agreement. The last Arbitration was held in the Lakeside Hotel on 8th November. The matter has been referred by the Property Arbitrator to the High Court for a "Case stated" on several legal points raised.

Kilkee Flood Relief Scheme – The Multi Criteria Assessment (MCA) for the fluvial/pluvial options has been completed during the period. Plans for a public presentation of the preferred option (fluvial/pluvial) are still on course for early 2023. Consultation with Irish Water has been ongoing in recent weeks and significant useful information continues to be shared between the relevant project teams. The new year will see these collaboration workshops continue. An updated draft costings estimate for the emerging fluvial/pluvial options has been issued to CCC and OPW for review.

A topographical survey of Kilkee beach was carried out in early December to supplement previous surveys and advise the design team on the mechanics of sediment transportation within the bay. The information collected will be a significant consideration for the design of the coastal defence element for the scheme. Initial results from the wintering bird surveys have been issued by the scheme consultants. This information will be added to the environmental database maintained for the scheme. Further information is available on the Project Website www.kilkeefrs.ie

Kilkee Seawall Minor Works Scheme - Clare County Council recently completed a minor works scheme at Marine Parade, Kilkee. The Scheme involved the underpinning with reinforced concrete of 90m of the sea wall and repairs to some of the existing masonry. This included a section of the ball wall. The wall was showing signs of failure due to undermining of the exist-

ing foundations and had moved slightly. The works were carried out by the West Clare Municipal District office and a local contractor. Funding for the project was provided by the Office of Public Works under the Minor Works Scheme.

Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF) – RPS Consulting Engineers are currently reviewing data obtained from the recent site investigation survey works as completed by Priority Geotechnical Ltd which will assist with the final road design, land-take requirements, preparation of the scheme drawings and specifications for a competitive Tender process for the works in 2023. A progress meeting was held with RPS on 20th of December to review landowner accommodation works to facilitate ongoing engagement with landowners regarding the acquisition of the necessary lands required for the road element of the scheme. We also continue to liaise closely with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage regarding the proposed delivery of this LIHAF scheme.

N19 Shannon Airport Access Road – The Phase 3 (Design and Environmental Evaluation) stage is currently ongoing. Significant progress has been made in terms of junction design development, active travel measures, access strategies, scheme land-take requirements, construction methodologies and works sequencing. The scheme consultants FTC & Co have now addressed most of the comments received in respect to ongoing consultations with, TII Road Safety Section, the NTA, the Gardaí, Shannon Airport and Shannon Commercial Properties.

Clare County Council intends to submit a development consent application to An Bord Pleanála for the Project accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). This Scoping Report provides details regarding the proposed development and the subject site. It also sets out the proposed scope of work for the EIAR. The purpose of the EIA scoping process is to identify the key points and issues which are likely to be important during the environmental impact assessment (EIA) and to eliminate those that are not. All consultation received as part of this scoping process will be considered in the preparation of the EIAR to accompany the development consent application. It is available to view via the scheme website (link below) under the Consultations tab. Phase 3 is expected to take up to mid-2023 to complete. Further information and associated literature on the project can be accessed via the scheme website www.shannonaccess.ie

N85 Kilnamona Road Improvement Scheme – Preparation of tender documentation for the appointment of Technical Advisors for an extended scheme from Fountain to west of Kilnamona Cross continues. We now await confirmation of the TII Funding allocations for 2023, where if favourable, we would expect to be in a position to appoint Technical Advisors in early 2023, subject to TII approval.

Public Realm Regeneration Project (Ennis) – Following our meeting with the Departments URDF Team in November, we have now submitted all the additional information and clari-

fication which they requested and await their response and approval to move to the next stage of the process. In parallel, we are discussing additional improvement works to the main Foul Sewer that Irish Water wish to carry out as part of the main scheme works to future proof and improve their services within the town.

Quin Flood Relief Scheme – Clare County Council continue to liaise with the archaeological consultant for a suitable weather window to complete the trial excavations required as part of the Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIS). These works will be coordinated with the OPW for commencement of the main construction works in 2023.

Remediation of sites containing ACM – Work is progressing well on completing the detailed design necessary to go to the market for a suitable Contractor to carry out the works required. In the meantime, the sites continue to be routinely monitored and maintained as required by Council staff in accordance with our agreed approach following discussion and consultation with the EPA.

Shannon Town & Environs Flood Relief Scheme – The recently updated fluvial baseline model has been submitted by RPS. CCC and OPW have submitted comments on the model following a technical meeting held last week and have largely agreed the model. The associated Hydraulic Report is currently under our review. An as-built topographical survey of the Shannon Airport Authority (SAA) embankments was carried out in early December to record the finished levels following the recent maintenance works completed by SAA. Survey data will be issued in the new year. This information will be considered in the ongoing design of potential upgrades to these embankments.

Following a technical meeting with the RPS coastal modelling team, a design note has issued with recommendations on the proposed wave overtopping analysis strategy. The proposal is currently under our review. Interaction between the N19 Shannon Airport Access Road (SAAR) design team and the flood relief scheme has been ongoing. Estimated peak flows for the N19 culverts has been shared with the N19 SAAR team to assist in the progression of their design. RPS ecologists continue to attend site regularly for completion of this year's wintering bird surveys. Further information on the scheme is available on www.shannontownandenvironsfrs.com

Springfield, Clonlara FRS – Works have ceased on the scheme at this point due to weather conditions and the construction team has moved off site. Work is expected to recommence in

March when the weather improves. In the interim the scheme provides the level of protection as per the design to the Community at risk. The outstanding works include the installation of the permanent pumps, completion of the pumping platform and associated pipework, installation of boundary fencing and landscaping. Representatives of the Design Team, OPW and Clare County Council visited the Gorman Rupp factory in The Netherlands last week to witness the Factory Acceptance Test. This involved operating both pumps in a laboratory situation and recording and assessing the results in different setups. The test was satisfactory, and the pumps will now be delivered to a storage facility in Limerick. They will be installed on site in March. Discharge of water by the ESB at Parteen Weir has now reverted to the statutory 10 cumecs minimum level and the River Shannon is no longer in flood.

West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 1: Kilrush to Kilkee) – The Project Team continue working through the requirements of the Greenway Code of Practice. It is planned on holding "Public Consultation 3" in Q2 of 2023. Tender submissions for the procurement of the topographical survey are being assessed and it is planned on appointing the successful tenderer early in the new year. Winter ecological field surveys continue

West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 2: Ennis to Ennistymon) – Clare County Council are advancing preparation for "Public Consultation 2" which will be held in February 2023. Landowners, members of the public and interested parties will have an opportunity to comment on a variety of route options which will then be assessed by the Project Team. We welcome comments or suggestions from interested parties and members of the public which can be emailed to pmoadmin@clarecoco.ie.

West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 3 & 4: Ennistymon to Miltown Malbay and Miltown Malbay to Moyasta) – Clare County Council have recently advertised a tender competition for the Appointment of Technical Advisors for Sections 3 & 4: Ennistymon to Miltown Malbay and Miltown Malbay to Moyasta. It is expected that subject to TII approval and availability of funding, the 'Route Option Selection' phases will commence for these sections in 2023.

Other Greenway Proposals – The PMO continues to engage with TII and other interested stakeholders to progress Greenway Proposals between Shannon and Bunratty/Sixmilebridge as well as being part of the Steering Group in the Waterways Ireland led proposal between Limerick/UL and Scarriff. This project proposes to utilise the active travel measures included as part of the Killaloe Bridge and Bypass works.

FIRE & BUILDING CONTROL SECTION

Recent Training Courses

The following brigade training courses were held during December:

- QQI Accredited Fire Fighter Breathing Apparatus Course held in Bray.

Fire & Building Control Section Main Activities	Nov 2022	Nov 2022 (Up to 25.11.22)	Year to Date 2022
Number of Emergency Calls Attended	91	37	955
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Received	5	2	87
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Granted	5	6	88
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Invalidated	0	0	1
Number of Disability Access Certificates Received	5	1	72
Number of Disability Access Certificates Granted	5	3	69
Number of Commencement Notices Received	23	12	372
Number of Dangerous Structures/Places Complaints	2	0	19

(Note: In the December Monthly Report, the November figures related to 1st to 25th November due to timing of report)

CLARE CIVIL DEFENCE

Operational Duties

Civil Defence provided medical cover for the following events:

- Teenage Discos held in the Queens Hotel, Ennis as part of a joint initiative between Clare CD and An Garda Síochána.
- Clarecastle Cross Country Run.
- Ennis Christmas Market held in Abbey Street, Ennis.
- Christmas Carol Singing, Shannon.
- Old Folks Christmas Party held in Woodstock Hotel.

Civil Defence also provided the following operational duties:

- Members participated in an ongoing search for a missing person in the Liscannor Bay and Cliffs of Moher area. Clare Civil Defence were tasked by An Garda Síochána to conduct a search for a person reported missing.
- Members trained in severe weather driving used CD 4x4 jeep to transport a Public Health Nurse to patients in their homes.

Members Training & Professional Development

- Weekly training has resumed for members on Thursday nights.
- Recruits Basic Training (RBT) course has commenced for 8 new recruits.
- The Clare Civil Defence Drone Team attended training as part of the Data Protection Impact Assessment document. Training was provided by Fiona Mooney, Data Protection Officer, Clare County Council.

ENVIRONMENT

Environmental Awareness

Invasive Alien Species online toolkit

We launched a new online information resource for Invasive Alien Species (IAS) on 8th December, 2022. The purpose of this webpage is to help private landowners, communities and Local Authority staff easily identify, record, report, prevent the introduction, and control the spread of IAS. This resource can be viewed at: yoursay.clarecoco.ie/invasive-species-clare.

To promote this resource, a media release was issued in December and a week-long social media campaign took place across Greener Clare social media channels using #InvasiveSpeciesClare. Adverts were also placed on *The Clare Champion* and the *Clare Echo*.

Green Christmas campaign

This year our Greener Clare team worked in conjunction with Healthy Clare to deliver a five-week ‘Healthy and Greener Christmas and New Year’ campaign. The campaign was launched on Monday, 12th December, 2022, and is to continue until Sunday, 15th January, 2023.

The purpose of the campaign is to promote healthier and greener actions over the Christmas and New Year season. The weekly themes of the campaign are: reducing food waste, bringing your reusable water bottle, creatively upcycling, using less chemicals in the home, and quitting tobacco littering. The campaign can be viewed by visiting <https://yoursay.clarecoco.ie/healthy-greener-christmas>.

To promote this resource a media release was issued. Adverts were placed on the *Clare Echo*, *The Clare Champion* and Clare FM. This campaign can be followed across Clare County Council social media channels – Corporate Account, Greener Clare and Healthy Clare.

Air Quality

The Department of Environment Climate and Communication “Lets Clear the Air” campaign was supported during December through promotion on Clare County Council social media channels and placing an advert on the *Clare Echo*. This campaign advises the public of the harmful effects of smoky fuels to both health and the environment.

ENVIRONMENT

Water Enforcement and Laboratory Scientific Services

The table below summarises the work of the scientific team to date in 2022:

Water Enforcement Scientific Team	December 2022	Jan-December 2022
Planning applications (Domestic)	28	459
Planning applications (Large Developments)	0	32
Planning applications (Forestry)	0	137
Planning applications (Agriculture)	0	10
Inspection of Section 4 licenced premises	12	76
Domestic Wastewater Treatment Plant Inspections (NIP Plan)	0	53
Pollution complaints received	1	118
Warning & advisory letters issued	3	11
Enforcement actions (\$12 issued or number of 'active' cases)	2	2
Private Commercial Drinking Water Supplies	-	54
Private Group Water Scheme supplies	-	53
Public Group Water Scheme Supplies	-	149
Public Water Supplies	-	386
Bathing Water	-	179

Historic landfills

A Whitegate historic landfill further information response was issued to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in December. This closes out all queries raised by the EPA regarding the landfill waste body. The next step is for the EPA to make a determination on the issuing of a Certificate of Authorisation.



Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI)

The EPA held a workshop in December to detail requirements for completion of the RMCEI report for 2022 and the plan for 2023. The workshop also outlines changes to the 2022-2024 National Priorities. The preparation of the RMCEI plan has commenced in December.

Gardening

The dramatic drop in temperatures experienced in December posed difficulties for the Gardening Team's planned work schedule. Planters and baskets that have already been prepared for springtime required particular attention and protection to ensure that early flowering plants did not succumb to frost damage and die.



While planned winter maintenance works such as tree pruning were temporarily suspended due to the icy conditions. Such works could have a detrimental impact on tree health during the extremely cold weather. These temporary delays will be addressed before Christmas and all planned works will be completed on schedule.

Based upon the success of the woodland garden at Áras Contae on Chláir, the Gardening Team in conjunction with Ennis Men's Shed have constructed a number of additional bug hotels that will be installed at suitable public locations in 2023.



Waste Management

Bottle Banks

Bring Bank sites will continue to be monitored throughout the Christmas period with additional collections put in place where required.

Waste Services Tender for Civic Amenity Sites

The Environment Section are finalising the tender for Waste Services at all the Civic Amenity Sites in the county. The competition will be run through the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) where a National Framework is in place. The process will take approximately 20 weeks.

Recycling Centres:

Recycling Centres will open between Christmas and New Years to continue to provide waste management services to the public. Ennis Recycling Centre will have an additional cardboard skip on site to help cater for the large amounts of material that come in at this time of year.

Waste Enforcement

Solid Fuel Regulations

Clare County Council's Environment Section has implemented an inspection programme, comprising visits to retailers and distributors to raise awareness of the implications of the new Solid Fuel Regulations, Air Pollution Act 1987 (Solid Fuels) Regulations 2022.

In total, 28 premises throughout the county were visited. This was primarily an Awareness and Education exercise. Retailers were informed that the new Regulations are now in place and that follow up enforcement inspections will take place in January 2023.

Notifications of Controlled Burning

In total, 5 notifications of controlled burning were received and processed in December to date, as per the Waste Management (Prohibition of Waste Disposal by Burning) Regulations 2009. The exemption to the provisions of the Waste Management (Prohibition of Waste disposal by burning) (Amendment) Regulations 2022 is due to expire in January 2023. Thereafter no applications will be accepted or processed.

RMCEI Inspections

As per the RMCEI programme inspections of Waste Facility Permitted sites were carried out in December. End of Life Vehicle sites were the focus this month.

Environmental Monitoring (Illegal Dumping/Litter)

The Waste Enforcement Team continued to respond to complaints relating to waste and litter. In total, 28 complaints relating to waste and litter were received in December to date. They have all been investigated and are being closed out.

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 2022 Annual Service Plan with Irish Water. Expenditure to date is currently running at 1% under budget.

Future Delivery of Water Services

The WRC published a framework document on 24th June for the future delivery of water services for consideration by the relevant parties. This framework document will assist in ensuring a stable operational environment is maintained as the water sector completes the transition to a national water services authority.

There are ongoing discussions between the parties to finalise the details of the new service level agreement.

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 24th November, 2022, up to and including 15th December, 2022. The figures do not, however, reflect the time invested by the teams which is required to resolve each complaint/issue.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

- 17 Customer Complaints were dealt with and closed out
- 0 Emergency Work Orders were received during the timeframe
- 153 Reactive Maintenance Work Orders were dealt with and closed out
- 0 Customer Asset Flooding Work Orders were received during the period
- 70 Service Requests (SRs) were raised for Field Requests and Follow On Work Orders for Reactive Maintenance work
- 21 Outage Notices were placed on the IW portal during the period. 20 for unplanned works for burst water mains and equipment failure and there was 1 Communication notification issued for step testing.
- 28th Nov. 14th Glean Na Small, Shannon - Burst Water main
- 1st Dec. Shannon Industrial Estate - Burst Water main
- 3rd Dec. Ballymurtagh - Burst Water main
- 6th Dec. Barry's Shop, Ardnacrusha & Clonlara areas - Burst Water main
- 8th Dec. Lios Darog, Shannon - Burst Water main
- 9th Dec. Lissane & Kilsealy Areas, Broadford - Burst Water main
- 15th Dec. Scarriff, Tuamgraney & surrounding Areas - Burst Water main
- 16th Dec. Aidan Park, Finian Park & Kilian Park Shannon - Burst Water main
- 15th/16th Major repair in Sixmilebridge no outage to customers - Burst Water main
- Ongoing Meter Installations/Replacements for Non-Domestic Programme.

Water Operations

The following is a summary of the outages dealt with in October and November 2022.

In the **Mid-Clare Area**, outages occurred at the following locations:

- 3rd Dec. Francis Street - Burst Water main
- 13th Dec. Frances Street - Burst Water main
- 14th Dec. Friars Close, Elevation Business Park - Burst Water main
- Ongoing Meter Installations/Replacements for Non-Domestic Programme
- Leak Repair works completed in Drumcliff Reservoir – IW/AQS.

Major Outages for **West Clare Area** for period below:

- 28th Nov. Cross, Carrigholt & Kilbaha Areas - Burst Water main
- 30th Nov. Mountrivers, Doonbeg & Surrounding Areas - Burst Water main
- 30th Nov. Kiladysert, Coolmeen & surrounding areas - Burst Water main
- 9th Dec. Back gardens, Fahy's Rd. & O'Dea's Rd, Kilrush - Burst Water main
- 11th Dec. Cooraclare P.O. - Burst Water main
- 14th Dec. Mullagh Village and surrounding areas - Burst Water main
- Old Doolough WTP Network Flushing
- New Doolough WTP Network Flushing and Reservoir Cleaning
- Ongoing Meter Installations/Replacements for Non-Domestic Programme.

Major Outages for **North Clare Area** for period below:

- 7th Dec. Hospital Cross and surrounding Areas Ennistymon - Burst Water main
- 8th Dec. Bellharbour and surrounding Areas - Burst Water main
- Old Doolough WTP Network Flushing
- Ongoing Meter Installations/Replacements for Non-Domestic Programme.

Major Outages for **East Clare and Shannon Area** for period below:

Water Conservation

- Leak Detection Works – Mid Clare – Gort Rd., Tobartaiscean and Hermitage DMAs in Ennis
- Leak Detection Works – North Clare – Liscannor
- Leak Detection Shannon/East Clare – Ballymurtagh, Quin, Ballycasey, Killaloe, Shannon Ind. Est., Ballyhannon, Meelick, Ardnacrusha, Sixmilebridge and Scarriff
- Fix Operation – Various locations – Killaloe, Scarriff- and Ennis
- Larsens – Find crew – Mountshannon DMA
- SES - Find Crew – Castlequarter/Ballinfonta DMA & Sixmilebridge DMA.

Water and Wastewater Operations

Repairs and extensive cleaning have successfully been carried out to the old reservoir at the water treatment plant at Drumcliffe, Ennis.

Extensive emergency repair works to the wastewater treatment system in Cois Na Sionna estate O'Briensbridge were completed in December. Two new pumps were replaced including a full upgrade of the existing defective electrical panel.



Irish Water Capital programme

Kilrush Wastewater Treatment Plant

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. Construction works are ongoing at the site of the new WWTP. Drainage, ducting and footpath works continued. At Frances Street Pump Station site, the storm tank cofferdam was removed. At the existing pump station, the Prolift Beam and winch were installed. A Steel H frame Support Beam was installed to support the ground floor slab.

Completion of the overall 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.

Construction of the new pumping facility continued at Quay Road. All pipework and chambers were installed. It is anticipated that wastewater from Clarecastle can be accepted by Clareabbey WWTP in February thus ending the discharge to the River Fergus at the Quay in Clarecastle.

Liscannor Wastewater Treatment Plant

The scheme now consists of a new wastewater treatment plant at Corcomroe, a pumping station adjacent to John P Holland Park, rising main, gravity sewer and connection to the existing outfall. Treatment of wastewater is continuing. The 28-day process proving stage commenced in mid-November and

continued into December. The wearing course was laid on the roads at the WWTP. Operation phase noise and odour surveys were completed.

Full completion of the scheme is due in early 2023.



Ballyvaughan Wastewater Treatment Plant

A new wastewater treatment plant, pumping station including pipework extensions are proposed in Ballyvaughan. Design of the treatment plant and pump station is ongoing. Preparation of planning application documents is continuing.

Kilkee Wastewater Treatment Plant

A new wastewater treatment plant, pumping station and rising main are planned for Kilkee. It is planned to continue the use of the existing sea outfall at Intrinsic Bay. Design of the treatment plant and pump station is ongoing. Preparation of the planning application documents is continuing. Following on from the planning process and planning approval, construction is anticipated to commence by Q3 of 2024 with completion in late 2025.

Ennistymon and Lahinch Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

Work on selection of an exact site, pipeline route, detailed design, land acquisition, marine modelling and a planning application will commence in early 2023.

Newmarket on Fergus Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

It is proposed to construct additional treatment facilities at the treatment plant and a new 400mm diameter 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. The planning application was received by Clare County Council on 5th December, 2022. Subject to all statutory consents and a tender process, it is anticipated that a Contractor will be appointed during 2023. Construction is anticipated to commence in early 2024.

Kilfenora Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

Construction is continuing at the WWTP site. Interconnecting pipework and ducting are mostly completed. Chemical dosing

slab completed. Kerbing works continued with some footpaths installed also. Mechanical and electrical works are ongoing. The control panel was installed. The overall scheme is due for completion in 2023.

Miltown Malbay Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

Irish Water held a workshop on 14th December to explore options for the upgrade of the wastewater treatment system in Miltown Malbay. The project is now at the investment planning stage.

Remedial Action Lists Water Treatment Plant Upgrades

Ward and Burke Construction Ltd have been appointed by Irish Water to undertake the Clare Remedial Action List (RAL) Upgrade contract. The project includes for the upgrade of three plants currently on the Environmental Protection Agencies remedial action list.

1. New Doolough Water Treatment Plant – This plant is the regional treated water source for West Clare covering the large geographical area in the county and the third largest plant by volume produced. The project has modernised the treatment technology at the plant which will allow it to achieve the desired quality of output during events which cause high turbidity at the source. All of the main upgrade works are now complete and the testing of the plant has been completed successfully. Resolution of snagging issues and production of the safety file is underway.
2. Corofin Water Treatment Plant – this plant provides water to the town of Corofin. The project will modernise the treatment processes on site which will enable production of water to the desired standard during high turbidity events in the source lake. Works to upgrade the water treatment process are complete. The contractor has removed the temporary treatment package plant and commenced phase 2 works on site, to construct the sludge handling process, with the sludge balancing tank and backwash collection tanks now in place. New high lift treated water pumps have been installed.
3. Ballymacraven Water Treatment Plant – this plant provides water to the North Clare Region, including Ennistymon, Lahinch, Lisdoonvarna, Doolin and Ballyvaughan. Phase 1 of this will modernise the water treatment processes at the plant with Phase 2 delivering the sludge handling line under a separate contract. Phase 1 Work has commenced with the construction of a new third water clarifier underway, with base poured and in place and wall pours commencing. A new ESB customer room is also under construction.

Rockmount Water Treatment Plant/Reservoir

These works involve the decommissioning of the existing water treatment tanks and installation of a new concrete storage reservoir and associated siteworks. The Rockmount area is supplied with treated water from the old Doolough Water Treatment plant and the existing Rockmount plant no longer operates. Additional storage capacity is required to provide network stability and quality of service. Construction of the reservoir is now complete, and the testing of the new reservoir has been successfully completed. Demolition and removal of the old tank is underway, with site finishing works to follow.

Clareabbey Wastewater Treatment Plant Inlet & 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 stormwater tank will allow capture of flow during rainfall events for later treatment through the plant. All civil works are now substantially complete with mechanical and electrical fit out continuing. The new ESB substation has been completed and power changeover carried out. The project is expected to be complete in Q1 2023.

Clonroadmore & Clareabbey Wastewater Treatment Plants

A project has commenced to examine the two wastewater treatment plants serving Ennis to ensure adequate capacity is available to cater for the future growth and development. The output of this stage of the project is a feasibility study report which will inform the decision on the most appropriate option to develop capacity in the plants. The consultant is now preparing options reports for each plant.

Ennis Drainage Area Plan

This project involves the gathering of all available data on the wastewater network in Ennis and surveying and monitoring of flows in the network. This information will be used to build a hydraulic model of the network. The hydraulic model can be used to model future growth in the town and accurately identify where upsizing of pipework/pumping infrastructure might be required. It will also be used to identify where groundwater is infiltrating into the network adding unnecessary additional loading. It will allow Irish Water to have confidence in obtaining the best value for money on network improvement. The consultant is reviewing the available data and preparing a surveying contract for Ennis wastewater network.

Ballycannon and Elton Court Sewerage Pumping Station Upgrade

A project to upgrade the pumping facilities at Elton Court and to provide the required replacement infrastructure to allow the decommissioning of the existing Ballycannon wastewater

treatment facility is underway. It is intended to construct a new storm water holding tank and new wastewater pumping chamber on the existing pumping station site at Elton Court to improve the capability for pumping wastewater to the Limerick main drainage network. A new rising main and pumping facilities in Ballycannon will then be constructed. When completed this will allow for the decommissioning of the Ballycannon plant and its safe demolition and return to greenfield area. EPS have commenced site investigation and preparation works at Elton Court. It is expected that the upgrade will be fully completed by Q1 2024.

Asset Transfer

Following an assessment of the water and wastewater networks in County Clare, 384 sites have been identified for potential transfer to Irish Water to date. Following on site surveys, 67 of these assets have been determined to be duplicate, non-operational assets or assets which Irish Water will not accept. Of the remaining 317 assets, 218 have now been fully transferred or recommended for transfer to Irish Water.

The 99 assets remaining to be transferred are divided into the following four categories:

- **Report prepared/Pending/Internal Query (4 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.
- **National Special Projects Office (NSPO) (66 assets)** – This is a department within Irish Water dealing with special projects which includes facilitating the Asset Transfers from Local Authorities. The majority of assets in this category are folios under third party ownership but where long standing use and some evidence of previous land dealing is present. Irish Water are now advocating that property in long term operational possession but not in the Council name be obtained by the adverse possession process. Circular L1 2022 has confirmed department support for this approach. All assets which have not yet transferred will be examined to see if they can be progressed using this method.
- **Property Registration Authority Ireland (0 assets)** – At present there are no assets submitted to the PRAI to be subdivided.

- **Outstanding assets to be reported on (29 assets)** – These are 3rd Party/Unregistered assets. To transfer these, detailed searches through historical Councils records are required in order to submit to Irish Water for their consideration on the best approach to proceed with. Many of the remaining assets have been examined and various routes being explored to close these out.

To resolve the assets which are not in council ownership, the department has recommended that adverse possession process be utilised. Clare County Council is progressing five sites as a pilot project and attempts to engage with registered owners is underway.

Rural Water Programme

Under the 2019-2021 Multi Annual Rural Water Programme, the replacement of 4.2km of the Ballycar GWS mains network is progressing with 3km of network completed to date. Works are due to be completed in February 2023. The replacement of 600m of Clohanes GWS subject to extreme leakage is currently out for tender and it is hoped that this can progress to construction in early 2023. A mini tender for the extension of public mains at Bartleystown, Clonlara as a community connection has also been completed and it is hoped, subject to final Department approval, to progress works in early 2023. The abstraction pump for the Derryvough GWS was replaced in early December through funding under the Multi Annual Rural Water Programme following Departmental approval.

Although now at the midpoint of December we still await invitation from the Department for the 2022-2025 Multi Annual Rural Water Programme. A number of schemes shall be submitted under the bids process, but the delay associated with the bid requests from the Department is a source of frustration to the relevant schemes.

77 no. applications have been received to date in 2022 under the 'Grant for Improvement Works to a Private Water Supply'. This number is slightly reduced on the number of applications in 2021 totalling 107 applications.

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

Festive lighting

In planning 'Christmas in Ennis', the Ennis Municipal District team set out to achieve a balance between creating a festive atmosphere in the town to lift people's spirits during a 'cost of living' crisis and the ongoing energy crisis. At the November EMD meeting, it was agreed by Members to reduce the period the festive lights are switched on. In previous years the lights were on 24/7, this year an LED low energy system has been installed and set up to operate from 3pm to 2am until 6th January.



Christmas Markets

This very successful four-day event in Abbey Street carpark, has contributed to Ennis establishing itself as a 'destination' to visit during the Christmas period in addition to an increase in local footfall. The 'Christmas Village', which ran from 1st-4th December, with up to 30 quality craft traders, festive styled amusements and food stalls, was facilitated by the EMD team, Casual Trading, An Garda Síochána and Clare Civil Defence.



Ennis Public Bus Service – route planning

Throughout 2022, the NTA service planning team in collaboration with local authority stakeholders has developed a town bus service plan for Ennis. This plan maintains access to the centre of Ennis by sustainable modes and considers local trip demand patterns, integration with the wider inter-urban bus and rail network and integration with other sustainable modes. On 7th December, with the assistance of the TFI Local Link, EMD and Ennis 2040 teams, a route test exercise was carried out on the preferred bus route alignments. While final routes may change slightly for operational or coverage considerations, the route test exercise confirmed the feasibility of the current plan. The NTA briefed EMD Councillors and Clare Oireachtas members on 14th December.

Promoting Biodiversity

A battery operated 'WeedHex' machine has been acquired to enable weed removal on uneven surfaces such as cobblestones, along walls and kerb stones and in narrow areas, without the use of chemicals. This will assist with the effort to reduce the reliance on plant protection products for this function.