



COMHAIRLE | CLARE  
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

# TUARASCÁIL MHÍOSÚIL ÓN PHRÍOMHFHEIDHMEANNACH

## MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Bealtaine / May  
2023



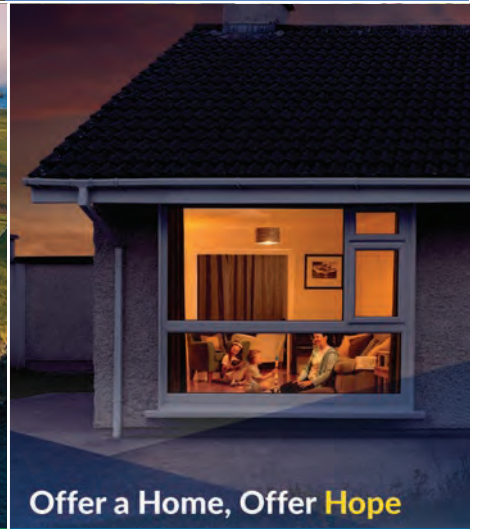
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# FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

## CORPORATE SERVICES

### Civic Events



On Tuesday, 18th April, Dutch Ambassador to Ireland, Adriaan Palm, visited Clare County Council at Áras Contae an Chláir. The Ambassador met with the Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr Tony O'Brien, and senior Council staff to discuss areas of common interest such as sustainability, biodiversity, trade and economic development. The Ambassador also visited Bunratty Castle & Folk Park and met with Ennis Chamber representatives.

### Freedom of Information & Data Protection

Previous years and 2023 to date – statistics to 24th April, 2023

|  | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
|--|------|------|------|------|
| Freedom of Information Requests                                | 152  | 176  | 119  | 40   |
| Freedom of Information Internal Review Applications            | 6    | 13   | 8    | 1    |
| Appeals to Information Commissioner                            | 1    | 4    | 2    | 4    |
| Data Access Requests – Subject Access Request                  | 5    | 6    | 10   | 6    |
| Data Requests – Erasure Request                                | 0    | 1    | 1    | 0    |
| Data Access Requests – Third Party Access Requests e.g. Gardaí | 20   | 27   | 27   | 13   |

### 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 April included:

- Clare County Council aims to surpass target for delivery of social housing over next two years
- Success for Clare County Council and Cnoc na Gaoithe at LAMA Awards 2023
- Elected Members of Killaloe MD agree new plan for future development of East Clare
- Grants of up to €50,000 available to develop community and sports facilities.

### 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 April, the Communications Office:

- Posted 38 times on Facebook, with total followers now 17,958.
- Posted 46 times on Twitter, with total followers now 8,032.
- Instagram followers are now 2,806.

(Statistics accurate as of 24/04/2023)

### Print and Graphic Design

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

## FINANCE

### Procurement

The following Clare County Council tender competitions were published on eTenders in the period from 21st March, 2023, to 21st April, 2023, incl.

| Tender Name   | Publication Date | Response deadline (Irish time) | Procedure                 |
|---|------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 22-1024 Clonlara TVR Scheme   | 20/04/2023       | 15/05/2023 13:00               | Open Procedure (NON OJEU) |
| Multi-Party Framework Agreement for Planned and Unplanned Electrical Maintenance Works/ Services                              | 04/04/2023       | 05/05/2023 16:00               | Open Procedure (NON OJEU) |
| Multi-Party Framework Agreement for Planned and Unplanned Plumbing Maintenance Works/ Services                                | 04/04/2023       | 05/05/2023 16:00               | Open Procedure (NON OJEU) |
| Expressions of Interest in the provision of Housing Schemes and/or Land for Social/Affordable Housing to Clare County Council | 01/04/2023       | 30/06/2023 17:00               | Prior Info Notice         |
| Removal of ACM from sites in County Clare   | 26/03/2023       | 16/05/2023 16:00               | Prior Info Notice         |

### Acknowledgement and Thanks

The Chief Executive received the following message of acknowledgement and thanks on 3rd April, 2023, from Ms Kay Kennington, Regional Chief Emergency Management Officer, HSE West, Regional Emergency Management Unit:

*Dear Pat,*

*I hope you are keeping well.*

*As you are aware we had a recent complex weather event on the 9th of March 2023, which changed very quickly from the predicted Yellow alert to an Orange warning and resulted in very snowy conditions across the Mid-West Region particularly West Clare.*

*We had a number of time critical home visits required that day but due to the very challenging road conditions staff were not in a position to drive themselves. We requested assistance from staff in Clare Fire and Rescue Service, their assistance ensured the visits were made completed and all the patients received their required*

*medications. Due to our very good interagency working relationship, the process of requesting assistance was very efficient, Adrian, Tom Burke and Barry Coleman were very accommodating and helpful.*

*Maria, Niamh and I, on behalf of HSE services in the Mid-West would like to acknowledge the support from your staff and extend our sincere thanks to all involved. It is very reassuring to know that we have such support available to us and it is very much appreciated.*

*Regards and thanks*

*Ms Kay Kennington*

*Príomhoifigeach um Bhainistiú Éigeandála Réigiúnach  
Regional Chief Emergency Management Officer*

*HSE West, Regional Emergency Management Unit,  
Merlin Park Hospital, Galway*

## HUMAN RESOURCES

| Work Area                       | Update  |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>Recruitment</b>              | <p>The following recruitment competitions were progressed during April:<br/>Eligibility Exercises &amp; Desktop Shortlisting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technician Grade II (Civil/Building &amp; Architectural) – Eligibility</li> <li>• Heritage Officer – Eligibility</li> <li>• Beach Lifeguard – Induction Day</li> </ul> <p>Interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Architectural Conservation Officer</li> <li>• Branch Librarian (Shortlisting Interviews)</li> <li>• Duty Manager, Active Ennis</li> <li>• Executive Architect</li> <li>• Executive Engineer</li> <li>• Retained Firefighters (Shannon/Kilrush/Ennis/Kilkee)</li> </ul> <p>The following competitions were advertised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clerical Officer Panel, 2023</li> <li>• Community Climate Action Officer</li> <li>• Learning and Development</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Learning and Development</b> | <p>Online Training programmes / Webinars / Information Sessions held in April include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autism Awareness</li> <li>• Climate Action &amp; Roads Webinar Series</li> <li>• Competency Based Interviewer Training</li> <li>• Courtroom Skills</li> <li>• Dealing With Difficult Customers</li> <li>• Forklift Refresher Training</li> <li>• Grade 7 &amp; Administrative Officer &amp; Analogous 2-Day Workshop</li> <li>• Introduction to Children First</li> <li>• Project Supervisor Design Process</li> </ul> <p>Essential Skillz Online Courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cyber Security</li> <li>• Ergowize</li> <li>• GDPR</li> <li>• Health &amp; Safety Induction</li> <li>• Slips, Trips &amp; Falls</li> <li>• Working in a Covid Era</li> </ul> <p>Health &amp; Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Battery Powered Weed Remover Training</li> <li>• Manual Handling</li> <li>• Prevention Management of Aggression &amp; Violence Training</li> <li>• Safe Pass</li> </ul> |
| <b>Employee Wellbeing</b>       | <p>The Gardening Section kindly delivered a Gardening Workshop to interested staff as a wellness initiative. Topics covered are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our new approach to planting perennial pollinator friendly species</li> <li>• Soil types</li> <li>• When to plant different species</li> <li>• Location suitability of each</li> <li>• Light /shade impact on plants</li> <li>• Dry wet conditions</li> <li>• Compost / soil enrichers</li> <li>• Basic introduction to gardening, planting (including vegetables/herbs)</li> </ul> <p>A Bank at Work on-site Mortgage Talk by Bank of Ireland took place at Council HQ. General guidance on getting mortgage ready, regulations, the help to buy scheme and key criteria for mortgage applications was provided to staff.</p> <p>Information was distributed to staff regarding a Type 2 Diabetes Education event which took place in Ennis. The event was organised by HSE Mid-West.</p>  |
| <b>Unions</b>                   | The Human Resources Department engages with Unions on various matters.  |

Success for Clare County Council and Cnoc na Gaoithe at LAMA Awards 2023



The Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr Tony O'Brien, along with Clare County Council Elected Members and staff, attended the LAMA All Ireland Community & Council Awards 2023 in the Hotel Minella, Co. Tipperary, on Saturday (15th April, 2023), where Clare County Council was named winner of the 'National Impact Award' and Cnoc na Gaoithe Cultural Centre picked up an award in the 'Best Town and Village Regeneration' category. The Awards were hosted by Maura Derrane.

Clare County Council has been named winner of the 'National Impact Award' at the LAMA (Local Authority Members Association) All Ireland Community & Council Awards 2023, while the Cnoc na Gaoithe Cultural Centre in Tulla picked up an award in the 'Best Town and Village Regeneration' category.

The winners of the 2023 Awards, which are sponsored by IPB Insurance, were announced at the Hotel Minella, Co. Tipperary, on Saturday, 15th April, 2023.

The National Impact Award recognises work which has had "a positive effect upon the nation as a whole, enhancing the environment, cultural or social activities, transport links or the economic stability or growth of the local and national communities who use it".

The Awards organisers noted that "in keeping with its purpose and vision, Clare County Council leads the county's development by being responsive and agile. Rural, Economic, Physical and Social Development are the four pillars aligned with this county council, which differs from other local authorities."

In the 'Best Town and Village Regeneration' category at the Awards, Cnoc na Gaoithe Cultural Centre beat off competition from projects in Leitrim and Sligo to take the top honour.

Cllr Tony O'Brien, Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, welcomed the LAMA Awards success adding that it was a reflection of the collaborative approach being taken within Clare communities: "Looking at the various projects that contributed to these awards successes, it is clear that Clare County Council and its partners and stakeholders are working together to achieve positive outcomes for Clare communities. I would like to acknowledge and congratulate everyone involved."

Pat Dowling, Chief Executive of Clare County Council, added his congratulations, stating: "These awards are further recognition at a national level of the work being done by Clare County Council and its partners. As a Council we will continue to strive to deliver quality services for people living in, working in and visiting County Clare. Sustainable communities will remain at the centre of everything we do."

The LAMA All Ireland Community & Council Awards highlight the work done within local communities, reward unsung heroes and recognise the remarkable contribution they've made to our lives, and acknowledge achievements by county councils, partnerships and projects across Ireland.

Now in their 17th year, the 2023 Awards saw a record number of nominations across the 31 councils which was whittled down to 100 shortlisted projects in 25 categories.

# RURAL DEVELOPMENT

## Site visit to Vandeleur Stables and Walled Garden



The Cathaoirleach and Elected Members on a site visit to the newly refurbished Vandeleur Stables at the Walled Garden.



Pictured with the Cathaoirleach Cllr Tony O'Brien (centre) are Operations Manager Colette Costelloe (AO) and the staff team (left to right): Karoly Torok, Geraldine Downes, Sheila Hehir, Pat Dalton, Annetta Schmidtke and Phil Crowley.

## Visit Clare high frequency advert campaign on Ireland's Classic Hits

Visit Clare has commenced a high frequency advert campaign on Ireland's Classic Hits during April and into the summer months.

13 adverts per day will run on the regional frequency which covers Clare, Limerick, Galway and Cork to target the Easter break audiences. The adverts promote the full county, while highlighting Ireland's Hidden Heartlands, Ennis, the Wild Atlantic Way, Shannon Airport, Shannon Estuary Way, Bunratty Castle and Folk Park, Cliffs of Moher Experience, the Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark, activities, attractions, dining and children. A further campaign from 11th May to 3rd June running exactly as the above.



## Be a Tourist in Your Own County Clare, Sunday, 23rd April

Members of the public were encouraged to become a tourist for the day in County Clare through a new tourism promotion initiative offering free and half price admission to popular local visitor attractions and sites on Sunday, 23rd April.

The Tourism Department of Clare County Council, working in partnership with the Clare Tourism Advisory Forum and local tourism attractions, says "Be a Tourist in Your Own County Clare" is aimed at promoting the quality tourism product available in Clare to the domestic market ahead of the peak tourism season.

Clare is home to some of Ireland's best known visitor attractions including Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience, Bunratty Castle and Folk Park, Aillwee Burren Experience, Killaloe River Cruises, Doolin Cave, Craggaunowen, Burren Smokehouse and Taste the Atlantic - the Salmon Experience and OPW Ennis Friary, all of which featured in the promotion.

Other participating attractions include Wilde Irish Chocolates, The Flying Alpaca, Doolin Ferry, Caherconnell Fort and Sheepdog Demonstrations, Vandeleur Walled Gardens, Loop Head Lighthouse, Moher Hill Open Farm, Lahinch Leisure Centre and the Michael Cusack Centre.

Full detail on "Be a Tourist in Your Own County Clare" and vouchers were available on [www.visitclare.ie/wow](http://www.visitclare.ie/wow) as well as significant promotion in local newspapers and media.

**Be a Tourist for One Day!**

"Be a Tourist in your own County Clare" takes place on **Sunday, April 23, 2023**. The aim to encourage you to explore your own County. There are brilliant 'One Day Only' Offers that might be of interest to you and your family.

| Discount | Experiences  | One Day Only Offers            |
|----------|--|--------------------------------|
| 50% OFF  | Aillwee Burren Experience  | 50% off all Admissions         |
| 50% OFF  | Bunratty Castle and Folk Park  | 50% off all Admissions         |
| 50% OFF  | Caherconnell Fort and Sheepdog Demonstrations                          | 50% off all Admissions         |
| 50% OFF  | Cliffs of Moher Experience (early morning/late afternoon)              | 50% off all Admissions         |
| 50% OFF  | Craggaunowen - The Living Past Experience                              | 50% off all Admissions         |
| 40% OFF  | Doolin Cave  | 40% off Adult Admissions       |
| 40% OFF  | Doolin Ferry - Visit the Aran Islands or take a Cliffs of Moher Cruise | 40% off Sailings               |
| 50% OFF  | Killaloe River Cruises   | 50% off all Sailings           |
| 50% OFF  | Lahinch Leisure Centre   | 50% off all Admissions         |
| 50% OFF  | Loop Head Lighthouse   | 50% off all Admissions         |
| 50% OFF  | Michael Cusack Centre  | 50% off Tours                  |
| 50% OFF  | Moher Hill Open Farm   | 50% off all Admissions         |
| FREE     | OPW Ennis Friary   | Free Admission                 |
| 50% OFF  | Taste the Atlantic - the Salmon Experience                             | 50% off all Admissions         |
| €5.00    | Meet the Fluffy Flying Alpaca  | €5.00 per Person               |
| Free     | Vandeleur Walled Garden  | Free Admission. 10% off plants |
| 50% OFF  | Wilde Irish Chocolates - Build your Own Chocolate Bar Experience       | 50% Off this Experience        |

See [www.VisitClare.ie/wow](http://www.VisitClare.ie/wow) For offer details and conditions

## Irish Hotel Federation – Mid-West Tourism Ball

The mid-west branch of the Irish Hotels Federation (IHF) hosted this Gala Dinner at the Limerick Strand Hotel on Monday, 17th April, with the key aim of raising funds for local tourism initiatives that drive visitors to the region.

The tourism fundraising ball had not taken place since 2019 due to Covid-19 so it was an extra special evening for all attendees. Dignitaries attending included Minister Kieran O'Donnell, Richard O'Donoghue TD, Senator Maria Byrne, Mayor Of Limerick Francis Foley and Mayor Of Clare Tony O'Brien. Visit Clare tent cards were placed on each of the tables to promote the new [www.VisitClare.ie](http://www.VisitClare.ie) website.



## Loop Head Lighthouse Visitor Attraction re-opens in April



The team at Loop Head Lighthouse Visitor Attraction are back for the 2023 season from Easter with the attraction open every weekend in advance of peak season full time opening.

Separately, the response to the significant further information from An Bord Pleanála for the next stage development works to Loop Head Lighthouse Visitor Centre was submitted on time for the 28th April deadline, with an anticipated re-advertising period expected once this submission has been received.

## CLÁR funding programme 2023



An Roinn Forbartha  
Tuaithe agus Pobail  
Department of Rural and  
Community Development



Tionscadal Éireann  
Project Ireland  
2040

Ár dTodhchaf  
Tuaithe  
Our Rural  
Future



CLÁR provides funding for small scale infrastructural projects in rural areas that have suffered significant levels of population decline.

The measures being funded under the 2023 CLÁR programme are:

- **Measure 1:** (Operated by Clare County Council): Developing Community Facilities & Amenities
- **Measure 2:** Mobility, Cancer Care and Community First Responders Transport
- **Measure 3:** Our Islands.



Measure 1: Clare County Council will be operating Measure 1 of the CLÁR scheme with funding for the enhancement of existing, and/or the development of new, accessible Community Recreation Facilities. Up to 15 applications in total can be submitted from the relevant Local Authorities in respect of Measure 1. Priority for 2023 will be given in respect of small scale renovation works to community buildings (e.g. floors, windows, doors, heating upgrades, kitchen upgrades) and in particular community centres that did not receive funding under the Community Centres Investment Fund. The maximum level of funding for any individual project is €50,000 and grant-funding is at a rate of 90% of total project costs.

**Types of projects that may be supported under Measure 1 include:**

- Community Gyms/Community Cinemas
- Sensory Gardens/Community Gardens/Allotments
- Outdoor Bowling Areas/Outdoor Toilet Facilities/Car Parking
- Improving access at sports grounds e.g. development/upgrade of spectator stands at local sports grounds with a particular focus on improving access for people of all abilities and ages.

**Funding will not be available under CLÁR 2023 for:**

- School/Community Safety Measures
- Footpaths
- Pedestrian Crossings
- Road markings
- Bus Shelters
- Works to current school buildings which are not open to the public after school hours.

Note: All necessary consents must be in place at the time of making an application, e.g. landowner consent, planning permission, match funding etc. and proof of same must be submitted with any expression of interest. Details regarding the arrangements in place to insure and manage the facility must be submitted with any expression of interest.

Any facilities funded must be available to the public without a requirement to be a member of a club, enrolled in a school etc. In particular, facilities on school grounds must be open to the public outside of school hours e.g. during the evenings, weekends and school holidays.

Measure 2: Mobility, Cancer Care and Community First Responders Transport provides funding for transport and is being administered directly by the Department.

Measure 3: Our Islands provides funding for Island Communities for Island Community Transport and Outdoor Community Recreation Amenities. This Measure is being administered directly by the Department.

The deadline for submission of applications under Measures 1 to Clare County Council for shortlisting and onward submission to the Department is Wednesday, 3rd May, 2023.

**Application form, guidelines and map of eligible areas of Clare will be available on [www.clarecoco.ie/services/community/grants/clar/](http://www.clarecoco.ie/services/community/grants/clar/)**



## Rural and Community Development Officers Information Clinics

Following on from the success of our information clinics for the Clare Local Area Grant Scheme and Community Support Fund earlier this year, our Rural and Community Development Officers (RCDOs) were back on the road again this month.

The RCDOs facilitated information clinics in the four Municipal Districts which were held throughout the week at a range of locations in the county:

**East Clare Clinics:** Killaloe, Tulla

**Shannon Clinics:** Cratloe, Shannon

**West Clare Clinics:** Lissycasey, Kilkee

**Nort Clare Clinics:** Lisdoonvarna, Corofin

**Ennis Clinic**



Rural and Community Development Officer Seamus Murrhiy meeting organisations in Killaloe.

Elected members were also on hand to assist. The clinics were aimed at informing community groups of the upcoming funding schemes that are currently available and providing advance notification and guidance on other Department schemes that will be advertised in the coming months. Information and assistance was provided for: CLÁR Funding Scheme, Community Centre Investment Fund 2023, Community Services Programme 2023, Town and Village Renewal scheme 2023, and the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme.



Cathaoirleach, Cllr Tony O'Brien, and Seamus Murrhiy engaging with community groups.

The clinics were again an opportunity for community groups to engage with our RCDOs and elected representatives and to seek advice on how best to progress their funding applications. It also gave community groups the opportunity to discuss other issues affecting them in their communities, to draw on the knowledge and expertise of the RCDOs and to create a network for future ventures and opportunities. These clinics are a great opportunity for community groups to seek assistance from the RCDOs in the development of funding applications under the various Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) grant schemes as part of the national competitive process for such initiatives.

All the clinics were well attended with a wide variety of organisations participating in the workshops.



Rural and Community Development Officer Niamh Wiley with organisations from North Clare.

## WEST CLARE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT - KILRUSH LEA



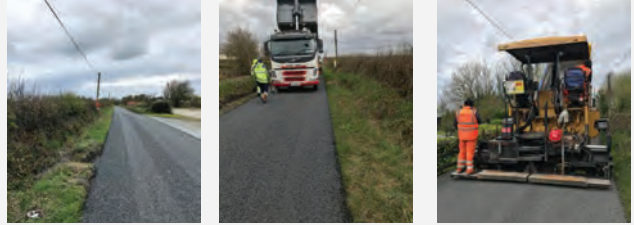
The West Clare MD office has recently taken on a more active role in the management of the sports complex in Kilrush. A number of grant funded projects are being developed currently. This includes an upgrade to the dressing rooms facilities and the installation of a multi-use games area (MUGA). Repairs have been completed to the lighting around the running track and further repairs are due to be completed shortly on the fencing and netting around the all-weather pitch.

# WEST CLARE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT - KILRUSH LEA

In recent times all crews have been concentrating on getting the roads listed on the 2023 Schedule of Municipal District Works (Roadworks Programme) prepared for remediation and resurfacing. A lot of time has been spent on drainage works, surface preparation works and hedge cutting/boundary preparation.

Road strengthening and resurfacing works have commenced in all 4 sGSS areas within the last month.

Road strengthening and resurfacing works at Cloonmore / Acres (near Cree).



Drainage prior to road strengthening & resurfacing works in Cloonakilla,



Drainage on the R-484 near Kilmihil.



Road strengthening and resurfacing works at Carrowlagan (near Mullagh).



Drainage at Rinagonaught, near Doonbeg.



Crews carried out some other works in the last month also. Snagging of EuroVelo signage.

Install some bicycle stands and a bicycle repair station at Moyasta.



Refurbishment of new Toilet Facilities at Fanore Beach.



Road strengthening and resurfacing works on the Knockmore Road (near Kilmihil).

Resurfacing Works at Moher Road, Liscannor.



# UKRAINIAN SERVICES DEVELOPMENT

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## National situation

A total of 50,400 temporary protection orders have been granted nationally as of 14th April, 2023. There is a seven-day rolling average of 67 down from 116 on the previous report – it is generally recognised that the Orthodox celebrations of Easter may have had an impact on these daily numbers.

There are 63,100 people accommodated and 15,300 children have been enrolled in school. The trends are consistent with the proportion of females arriving standing at 62% and the numbers of employments increasing proportionally to 19,762.

## County Clare

The national figures show that County Clare is now hosting 4,464 Ukrainian beneficiaries – there is a slight month-on-month rise and a diversification of accommodation on-stream. Clare now has 34 multi-occupancy settings which is up from the long standing 28/29: these settings accommodate approximately 4,115 Ukrainian beneficiaries with the remaining people being accommodated through private arrangements, Irish Red Cross (IRC) pledged accommodation and the Local Government ‘Offer A Home’ scheme. The county continues to rank sixth nationally.

The increase in accommodation offerings does not reflect a significant increase in total numbers (up approximately 100 in the last month) but is indicative of the availability of recently refurbished accommodation only now coming on-stream along with the ending/renewal of contracts at other locations. This diversification was flagged at the County Forum on Thursday 20th April, 2023 – it is a trend to monitor as it may change the ask for service providers and the community. An example of this is the access to English language courses or a break in that support for those who may move to new accommodation elsewhere.

As contracts come to an end (particularly having regard to the summer season – tourism and available student accommodation), there may also be a movement of people between counties – while efforts are ongoing to identify local accommodation solutions for contracts ending (in order to provide stability for families and services locally) the decisions around accommodation provision remain with the Department of Children and Integration (DCEDIY).

The diversification is important to understand from a service provision and community perspective and there was some

discussion in this regard with other agencies also recognising the emerging change. The team in Ukrainian Services Development has raised this matter through our national channels.

In addition to the Community Response Forum meeting on 20th April (via MS Teams), two local meetings were also held in Kilkee (18th) and Shannon (25th) – both were well attended with both service providers and members of the community adding to the discussion.

We also met with the Immigrant Council of Ireland to discuss the wider topics of international protection, equality, and awareness in the context of our new migrant communities (19th April) while a presentation was given to Clare County Council’s Audit Committee on 17th April.

## Technical Working Group

A Technical Working Group for Refurbishment has been established within the directorate. The group, comprising nominees from Planning, Housing, Property and Fire, met on 18th April to review a number of properties presented to the Council for refurbishment through the Department of Children and Integration (DCEDIY).

The primary purpose of the group is to carry out pre-screening and assessment of projects to inform a baseline position for the organisation across key areas. The group will also provide guidance as required from the various sections.

## Offer a Home

Clare County Council has received 109 offers of unoccupied homes under the ‘Offer a Home’ scheme since its launch in December 2022. All the 109 homeowners have been contacted and 104 homes have been assessed so far with the remaining home assessments scheduled.

Of the homes that have been assessed, five are not yet available and 24 have been withdrawn from the scheme as they were either unsuitable or the homeowner had a change in circumstances. We have successfully matched 58 of the homes and have accommodated 203 people that were living in hotel or multi-unit accommodation in the locality.

The number of homes offered under this scheme has decreased and of the 17 viable homes currently remaining 45% are in rural areas of West Clare Municipal District, 5% are

located in rural areas of Ennis Municipal District and 24% are located in rural areas of Killaloe Municipal District. We have received in excess of 300 expressions of interest from Ukrainian families currently living in hotel or multi-occupancy accommodation seeking to move into one of the offered homes.

It is worth noting that we continue to receive queries from homeowners about the scheme and there is still an interest and awareness amongst the community. Homeowners can register their unoccupied homes on the designated website: [www.offerahome.ie](http://www.offerahome.ie) or by contacting Clare County Council at [offerahome@clarecoco.ie](mailto:offerahome@clarecoco.ie).

### Box File Share

The Ukrainian Services Development Team are managing a Box File Share platform to enable the members of the Community Response Forum share information in relation to the services and projects they are providing to support displaced people from Ukraine living in the county.

All Forum members can share and access up-to-date information on services, projects, events, workshops, etc that are taking place in the community.

### Community Recognition Funding 2023


The Council awaits a decision from the Department of Rural and Community Development in respect of the submission made for the Community Recognition Fund 2023.



**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](http://Gov.ie/OfferAHome) to offer a property or for more information.

[Gov.ie/OfferAHome](http://Gov.ie/OfferAHome)

 COMHAIRLE COINTAE AN CHLÁIR  
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL

 Stáin na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

## TRANSPORTATION

### Roadworks Programme and Operations

The Schedule of Municipal District Works (Annual Roadworks Programme) was approved at all of the Municipal Districts in March. The annual roadworks programme has now commenced in all four Municipal Districts.

### Strategic Transportation

#### Bus Connects

The Transportation Department within Clare County Council has liaised with Limerick City & County Council, Bus Éireann, the National Transport Authority (NTA) and their consultants Jarrett Walker & Associates (JWA) and Systra in the development of the draft routes under Bus Connects. The public consultation period on the draft plan closed on 7th April, 2023.

#### Active Travel

Funding for the Active Travel programme for 2023 was announced by the Minister for Transport in early February 2023. €4.5 million has been allocated to Clare County Council to progress Active Travel schemes throughout the county.

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

- A non-statutory public consultation has concluded for the Tulla Road Cycle Scheme in Ennis. The Design Team are now reviewing the feedback received with a view to making any feasible alterations to the scheme proposals before proceeding with the Statutory Process phase.
- Construction works have been completed at St Flannan's National School in Inagh under the 'Safe Routes To School' programme.
- Construction works are continuing in Ennis, Tulla, Spanish Point, Milntown Malbay, Clarisford (Killaloe) and Ballycasey Close (Shannon).
- Transportation consultants are continuing to advance the Option Selection phase including preparation of feasibility reports to assess permeability across bridges throughout the county.
- Preliminary design is being advanced for Clonmoney National School in consultation with An Taisce under the 'Safe Routes To School' programme.
- Following consultation with the wider schools community for the Holy Family school, Gaelscoil, workshops are ongoing with An Taisce to develop proposals under the 'Safe Routes To School' programme.
- Consultation with the wider schools community has commenced for Ennis National school and St Mochulla's National School in Tulla.
- Concept development being advanced for cycling schemes

at Limerick Road (including St Flannan's Drive) and Lahinch Road in Ennis and Bothar Sioda in Shannon.

- Brief being finalised for the appointment of a Consultant to prepare a Local Transport Plan for Ennis town.

### Public lighting

There are 14,967 public lights managed by Clare County Council. At present 63% of public lights in Clare are LEDs.

Following the successful conclusion of the procurement process for the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency (PLEEP) Regional Project, surveying works have commenced in Cork, Kerry and Waterford. Design and retrofit works will follow the survey which is scheduled to start this summer 2023 in County Clare.

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: Enerveo (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/>

### Winter Maintenance

The winter maintenance team implement the Winter Maintenance plan from the 1st October to 30th April. Pre-treatment of designated routes is carried out as required based on the prevailing forecasts.

The routes prioritised in the winter maintenance plan are all national routes, strategic regional routes and strategic local roads.

## Road Design Office

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:

| Project                     | Progress Update   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>TII HD 15 Sites</b>      | <p>For the N85:<br/>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.</p> <p>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 Clareen roundabout to the speed limit and are currently developing conceptual designs for this area. A further topographical survey from Clareen roundabout to Cloughleigh National School has been carried out and conceptual designs are under development.</p>   |
| <b>TII HD 17 Sites</b>      | <p>For the N68:<br/>A topographical survey of the Monvana Rd. junction N68/L2510 is complete and conceptual designs are progressing.<br/>Interim measure proposed and being developed for N68/L2138.</p> <p>For the N67:<br/>The preferred option for N67/L50222 has been agreed. Comments and observations have been received by TII Road Safety Engineers on the draft Feasibility Report and the report is now being finalised taking these into account.</p> <p>Conceptual designs progressing for N67/L1022 and N67/1016.</p> <p>Gateway 1 approval has been received from the TII for the proposed road safety scheme at Ministers Place, Kilkee. A draft Design Report is with the TII Road Safety Engineers for their review prior to formal submission. A Quality Audit Report has now been requested by TII and a draft report has been prepared and sent to TII Road Safety Engineers for comment.</p> <p>The preferred option for the junction between Mount Charles Terrace and the N67 has been agreed with TII Road Safety Engineers. Comments and observations have been received by TII Road Safety Engineers on the draft Feasibility Report and the report is now being finalised taking these into account.</p> |
| <b>Special Speed Limits</b> | <p>Clare County Council is proposing to introduce Special Speed Limits at Caherea N.S. on the N68 as well as New Quay and Rineen National Schools on the N67. These will be periodic speed limits to cover school drop off/collection times. Tobin Consultant Engineers, on behalf of TII, have been instructed to carry out pre-installation speed surveys as part of this process.</p>  |

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

### Other Projects 2023:

| Project  | Progress Update  |
|--|--|
| <b>Low Cost Safety Schemes 2023</b>            | <p>The funding application for Low Cost Safety schemes for 2023 was submitted to the Department of Transport in November 2022. Funding of €530,000 has been granted for 2023 for the following projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Junction of the R473 and L-82503-0 in Tiermaclane</li> <li>• Ardnacrusha</li> <li>• O'Connors Cross</li> <li>• Sixmilebridge Shannon Road</li> <li>• Carmody St / Parnell St</li> <li>• Summer Hill</li> <li>• Ballkeel South Kilfenora Junction R476 &amp; L-5084-0</li> <li>• Ballkeel North Kilfenora Junction R476 &amp; L-5092-0</li> <li>• R462 North of Tulla</li> <li>• R352 Junction Sightlines - Cloonamirran L4036</li> <li>• Tennis Club - Benson Box Factory, Killaloe L3084</li> <li>• Inch Bridge</li> <li>• Kilnaboy Corofin Junction R476 &amp; L-5250-30</li> <li>• Cloughleigh Road</li> <li>• Cooraclare</li> <li>• Connolly</li> <li>• R352 Junction Sightlines - Cranagher L4060</li> </ul> <p>Design has been completed for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ballkeel South Kilfenora Junction R476 &amp; L-5084-0</li> <li>• Ballkeel North Kilfenora Junction R476 &amp; L-5092-0</li> <li>• Junction of the R473 and L-82503-0 in Tiermaclane</li> <li>• Kilnaboy Corofin Junction R476 &amp; L-5250-30</li> <li>• Shannon Road, Sixmilebridge (Section 38 advertised)</li> </ul> <p>Design has commenced for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summer Hill, Ennis</li> <li>• Ardnacrusha</li> <li>• R462 North of Tulla</li> </ul> |
| <b>EuroVelo 1</b>                              | The project is substantially completed. All the signage has now been installed with snagging ongoing.  |
| <b>Liaison with NTA regarding bus stops</b>    | Bus stops are being considered at Manus Cross Clarecastle on the R458, Ballyea Cross on the N85 & Kilnaboy on the R476 regional road. Bus stops are being upgraded at Doolin Rainbow Hostel, Fanore, Liscannor, Hotel Doolin, Doolin Hostel. The NTA have submitted a design detail for the bus stop proposal at Kilnaboy with a road safety audit being undertaken.   |
| <b>Liaison with NTA regarding bus shelters</b> | The NTA has approved 15 bus shelters for the 2023 programme. The tender process has been completed with construction works to commence in early 2023. Construction is complete on the 3 bus shelters in Westbury and the bus shelter at Shannon Springs in Shannon. The 2 bus shelters in Aidan Park, Shannon, the 2 at the Ennis Road Care facility and the bus shelter opposite Radisson Blu, have been completed. Works on the bus shelters at Skycourt Shannon and Inagh have been completed. Works on the bus shelter at Ardnacrusha have commenced.  |

| Project                              | Progress Update   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Road Schedule &amp; Queries</b>   | 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.  |
| <b>Cycle and traffic counts</b>      | Ongoing monitoring at various locations.  |
| <b>Planning Reports</b>              | Planning reports are being provided for the Planning Department on a continuous basis.  |
| <b>Clare County Cycle Network</b>    | Surveying and mapping of the existing cycle infrastructure for the entire county commenced in 2022 and will continue as an ongoing project for 2023 feeding into the Clare County Cycle Network under Cycle Connects. This will include the Ennis Urban Cycle Network and the Shannon Urban Cycle Network. The draft cycling strategy is being developed in conjunction with the NTA and their consultants AECOM. |
| <b>Latoon Cycling Infrastructure</b> | Procurement process has commenced however it has been paused pending the outcome of a Planning Application lodged by Irish Water, the outcome of which may have a direct impact on the project.   |
| <b>Climate Adaptation</b>            | The funding application for 2023 Climate Adaptation Grants has been announced.  |

### ‘Malbay Track and Trail’

The Road Design Office are continuing to assist the West Clare Municipal District in the development of an informational mapboard for the new ‘Malbay Track and Trail’ walk in Miltown Malbay.

A map of the route along with historical information and images will be provided on this board.

### Kilrush Cycle Routes

The Road Design Office are also assisting the West Clare MD in the design of an informational mapboard for 3 new looped cycle routes around Kilrush. First draft of the mapboard is now complete.

### Bridge Rehabilitation Programme

The 2023 Bridge Rehabilitation Programme was submitted to the Department of Transport in November 2022. €612,000 in grant funding has been made available for the Bridge Rehabilitation grant for 2023.

The following is a brief overview of works that have commenced under the bridge programme:

- Appropriate Assessment Screening: Tenders returned and Consultant appointed.
- Clonboy Bridge: Works complete with snagging ongoing.
- Magherabaun Bridge: Contractor on-site.
- Cahircon Bridge: Works complete with snagging ongoing.
- Ballycloghessy Bridge: Tenders returned and Consultant appointed.

- Cloghera Bridge: Repair Works out to tender.
- Crean Bridge: Repair Works out to tender.
- Drimeen Bridge: Repair Works out to tender.
- Gortnaglough Bridge: Repair Works out to tender.
- Gortnagonella Bridge: Repair Works out to tender.
- Inchiquin Bridge: Repair Works out to tender.

### Health and Safety

The Health and Safety Team have commenced their schedule of Annual Safety Statement and Risk Assessment Reviews with updates to the Occupational Health and Safety Management System approved by Management Team and communicated to staff in March 2023.

The top level H&S objectives approved by the Safety Management Committee in March 2023 have commenced implementation with face to face briefings delivered on Health & Safety across a range of Departments.

The Health and Safety Team have commenced their schedule of Safety Inspections in order to inspect, monitor and advise on the implementation of the Clare County Council Occupational Health and Safety Management System.

Serious Incident Simulated exercises are being scheduled and delivered across April and May to the Senior Team in each Department.



### General Design Office Ballyallia Lake Amenity Park



A hi-definition aerial photographic Lidar survey has been completed of Ballyallia Lake Amenity Park to aid in the design of the Enhancement Scheme and identify even the smallest features.

### Ennistimon Library Public Toilet Refurbishment

Design work is progressing on the refurbishment of the public toilets located at basement level of the Ennistimon Library. The project will provide male & female Part M compliant WC's with baby changing facilities.



### Drumgeely Neighbourhood Centre

Construction drawing and tender documents preparation is ongoing.

### Public Carpark, Sixmilebridge

Preparation of Part VIII for revised public carpark layout at Sixmilebridge.

### Vandeleur Walled Gardens, Kilrush

Preliminary design investigations ongoing for the Upper Carpark, draft design proposals ongoing for approval and cost estimates.

### Town and Village Renewal Schemes

- Corofin Town and Village Renewal Scheme – topographical survey finalised and on file. Preliminary design investigations ongoing.
- Clonlara Town & Village Renewal Scheme – Tender package published on e-tenders 20th April, 2023.
- Barefield Town & Village Renewal Scheme – Phase 2, Village Centre Focal Point – Preliminary design proposals and budget cost estimate finalised.

### Cliffs of Moher – Walkways Upgrade Works

Stone facing to existing agricultural buildings and section of walkway prepared for finished surface.



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## CAPITAL DELIVERY / PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

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The following is an update of progress made in relation to the major capital projects being managed by the PMO during the month of April.

**Doolin Pier Visitor Services Building** – We are now moving forward with our design team to develop a workable plan for the scheme with a view to submission to An Bord Pleanála for planning approval at the earliest possible juncture. This follows a period where it was necessary to pause the design process to allow time and space for surveying, monitoring and consideration of some of the more significant environmental requirements and land-use options impacting the proposed development.

**Ennis Public Realm Regeneration (Project B)** – We received the positive news in April 2023 of Departmental approval of Gate 2 of the Final Business Case, further to recent submission by Clare County Council. This underlines the continuing support for the project and ensures that there is increased funding provision in place to reflect cost increases encountered within the construction sector, and during design development. The Project Team continue to engage with the URDF Section of the Department regarding the Final Submission for which consideration and approval are required for contractor appointment. In parallel, the Design team has been retained by Úisce Eireann to progress the rehabilitation of sections of the Foul sewer in the Town Centre. These works,

which will be completed as part of the main scheme, represent an additional investment by Úisce Eireann, and will future proof and improve the services within the town centre.

**Ennistymon Inner Relief Road and Bridge Crossing (Blake's Corner)** – The Judicial Review proceedings are still before the High Court for hearing and decision following which we will be better informed as to our next step in the delivery of this critical and much awaited infrastructure.

**Killaloe Bridge and By-Pass** – As we head into May, works on the ground continue at pace on all three sections of the scheme namely the Shannon Bridge Crossing, Killaloe Bypass & R494 Upgrade.

Piling works for the Eastern (Tipperary) side of the river crossing have been completed and the RC (reinforced concrete) works are progressing for the Eastern bridge abutment. Preparation of temporary works to facilitate the installation of the pile capping to the Eastern bridge pier has been completed. Pile capping and reinforcement installation works will follow in the coming weeks.

On the Western (Clare) side of the river the land based piling works are now nearing completion in advance of the commencement of river instream works. To that regard marine plant is being mobilised for the bridge pier piling operations and construction which will progress over the summer months. The excavation and replacement of unsuitable material from the site compound towards the Clare side of the river crossing at Clarisford is substantially complete and the stream culverts and mammal pass installation have been completed for this section. This work will facilitate access to the bridge location for larger plant including the ongoing piling activities, marine plant mobilisation and bridge construction.

Works to the new Kilmastulla River bridge crossing are progressing with precast concrete bridge beams to be installed in the coming days. The farm underpass structure adjacent the Kilmastulla river has been installed up to the existing road verge. Long term traffic management arrangements are still in place to facilitate the construction of the R494 with site clearance, enabling and landowner accommodation works progressing. Works to the foul sewer line are nearing completion with final tie-in to be completed at the Roolagh junction area over the next week. All major temporary traffic management arrangements will be included on the MapAlerter system which can be accessed at <https://www.mapalerter.com>

Utility service 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. The construction of the Killaloe Bypass section is progressing with some storm culvert installation and bulk earthworks operations progressing. There is a large volume of material to be excavated from this section of the project which will be mass hauled to areas requiring build-up of fill to road

formation layer on the Killaloe Bypass section and on areas on the R494.

Other works include remaining site clearance, archaeological monitoring, ecological monitoring & property pre-condition surveys. With the increase in visitor traffic to the area expected in the coming months the Main Contractor Sisk's and the project team are conducting regular Traffic Management co-ordination meetings with representatives from both Local Authorities, the Gardai and Emergency & Rescue Services from Clare and Tipperary.

**Kilkee Flood Relief Scheme** – On Thursday, 13th April, members of the public and businesses were invited to attend the third Public Consultation Day (PCD) where the Preferred Fluvial (flooding from rivers and streams) Flood Relief Option for Kilkee was presented. In attendance were members of the JBA\_JB Barry design team, CCC and OPW. The event was held in the Kilkee Community Hall and was well attended by the public. Comments received during the day are being collated by JBA for inclusion in the PCD Feedback Report. The consultant will soon commence the screening for Appropriate Assessment and NIS (Natura Impact Statement). The planning level design of the Preferred Scheme will also commence in the coming weeks.

All information presented at the PCD, including the questionnaire is available on the Project Website [www.kilkeefrs.ie](http://www.kilkeefrs.ie)

**Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF)** – RPS Consulting Engineers are currently completing the detailed design stage of the road element of the scheme. The detailed design will assist with the land-take requirements, preparation of the scheme drawings and specifications for a competitive Tender process for the works which is expected to be completed in Q2 2023.

Progress meetings were held with RPS in April to review progress associated with the detailed design of the road element of the scheme and landowner accommodation works which will better inform our engagement with landowners regarding the acquisition of the necessary lands required.

We also continue to liaise closely with the LIHAF section of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage regarding the proposed delivery of the overall scheme.

Moreover, cross directorate meetings are continuing with our colleagues in Housing & Planning regarding the optimum design and composition of the housing element of the scheme.

**Lough Donnell Culvert Repair works** – A constructive meeting between Clare County Council and Inland Fisheries was held last month. Both parties have agreed on how best to proceed with the scheme works. Procurement documents for the appointment of a Contractor are being finalised and Clare County Council plan on publishing the tender in the coming month.

**N19 Shannon Airport Access Road** – The Phase 3 (Design and Environmental Evaluation) stage is currently ongoing. The Preferred Option published previously included a combination of active travel measures for walking and cycling, improvements to public transport, along with new and improved road infrastructure between Drumgeely roundabout and Knockbeagh Point roundabout on approach to Shannon International Airport. Since the conclusion of the Public Display of the Preferred Option, the design team have been progressing the design and environmental evaluation of the Preferred Option. The design of the Preferred Option has been developed following detailed consideration of landowner engagement, stakeholder feedback, environmental surveys, transport surveys and ground investigations. Phase 3 is expected to be completed in Q3 2023 with Phase 4 (Statutory Consent) progressing thereafter. This will involve a Development Consent Application & EIAR to An Bord Pleanála.

On 31st March last, a project briefing to the Shannon MD Councillors was completed and Members were advised of the recent scheme Design Update. Drawings are available for viewing at [www.shannonaccess.ie](http://www.shannonaccess.ie) As always further information and associated literature on the project can be accessed via the scheme website.

**Quin Flood Relief Scheme** – The Temporary Traffic Management is now installed onsite. The scheme consultant Malachy Walsh & Partners will issue the final construction drawings in the coming days. It is then anticipated that the initial compound set-up and construction of temporary haul roads will commence in May in advance of the main works.

**Remediation of sites containing ACM** – Detailed design for the works contract involving the excavation, screening and processing of the ACM material is almost complete, with a view to issuing to the market in coming months. A workshop involving the appointed expert design team and local MD will be held this month with a view to informing traffic planning arrangements and to ensure that measures are incorporated in tender documents to minimise potential disruption during the export of bulk soil material from the sites. Prior Information Notices have been published on eTenders in recent weeks to facilitate earlier engagement with appropriate operators with a view to streamlining the procurement process. In parallel, Clare County Council will be conducting environmental screening assessments as part of due diligence for which completion will be required prior to finalisation of contracting strategy and issue of tender documents. 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** – Clare County Council and the OPW have now reviewed the revised Hydrology Report and Hydraulics Report. Comments on both will issue to RPS in the coming week. Our Scheme Consultants, RPS have issued updated embankment options drawings. These

were reviewed jointly by CCC and OPW during a Technical Meeting held with RPS on 19th April.

The RPS Environmental & Ecology team have arranged for a site meeting with NPWS (National Parks & Wildlife Service) in early May. CCC, OPW and Shannon Airport Authority will also be in attendance. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the constraints associated with the adjacent SAC (Special Area of Conservation) and SPA (Special Protection Area).

Nesting bird surveys have now commenced at various locations within the scheme area. Further information on the scheme is available on [www.shannontownandenvironsfrs.com](http://www.shannontownandenvironsfrs.com)

**Springfield, Clonlara FRS** – Works recommenced on site on 27th March, 2023, and solid progress is being made on the remaining items. The pumpstation pipework and associated works is under construction. Work on the toe drains, fencing, landscaping, access roads and the land raising area will commence over the next two weeks. Responsibility for the site has now been returned to the OPW having been in the care of Clare County Council since poor weather forced the suspension of the works. All works are expected to be completed by the end of July 2023.

**West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 1: Kilrush to Kilkee)** – The Topographical Surveyor has mobilised to site and commenced surveying. Landowner meetings are ongoing, and Clare County Council is, as always, available to meet landowners to discuss their concerns throughout this process. Ecological mammal surveys are ongoing. Winter bird surveys are complete. Work continues on the ‘Option Selection Report’ in line with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) Requirements. Consultation with the NPWS is ongoing and a constructive consultation meeting was held with them last month.

**West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 2: Ennis to Ennistymon)** – Feedback from Public Consultation 2 is being assessed and information is being assembled. Consultation with the Planning and Economic Development Section of Clare County Council is underway. Desktop ecology studies are ongoing.

**West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 3 & 4: Ennistymon to Miltown Malbay and Miltown Malbay to Moyasta)** – Following tender assessment, the appointment of the successful Technical Advisors is underway. Following the standstill period and subject to Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) Approval, Clare County Council will enter contract with the successful tenderer.

**Other Greenway Proposals** – Feasibility studies for proposals at Shannon, Bunratty and Sixmilebridge continue. Clare County Council are working with TII and Waterways Ireland on developing the proposal between Limerick/UL and Scarriff.

# FIRE & BUILDING CONTROL SECTION

## Long Service Awards for Fire Service Personnel

Long Service Awards were presented to Fire Service Personnel by the Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr Tony O'Brien. The awards have been presented to four of the seven stations with the remaining three stations yet to be presented.

These Awards were for those that achieved either 5, 10, 20 or 30 Years Service up to 28th February, 2023.

A number of Clare County Fire and Rescue Service personnel were nominated as follows:

### 5 Year Award

Firefighter Mark Hayes, Ennis Fire Brigade  
Firefighter Greg Dormer, Ennis Fire Brigade  
Firefighter Mark O'Brien, Ennis Fire Brigade  
Former Firefighter Steven Hayes, Ennis Fire Brigade  
Firefighter Darragh Kelly, Scarriff Fire Brigade  
Firefighter Shay O'Neill, Scarriff Fire Brigade  
Station Officer Graham Tuohy, Killaloe Fire Brigade  
Sub Station Officer Adrian Ryan, Killaloe Fire Brigade.

### 10 Year Award

Firefighter Joseph O'Connor, Ennistymon Fire Brigade  
Firefighter Paddy Punch, Scarriff Fire Brigade.

### 20 Year Award

Driver Mechanic Pat Cushen, Scarriff Fire Brigade  
Firefighter Padraig Myles, Scarriff Fire Brigade.

### 30 Year Award

Station Officer Gussy Hayes, Ennistymon Fire Brigade.

## Recent Training Courses

The following brigade training courses were held during April:

- National Instructor Course held by National Directorate for Fire & Emergency Management in Ennis Fire Station Training Centre
- Chainsaw Operator Refresher Training Course
- QQI accredited Pump Operator Training Course



# CLARE CIVIL DEFENCE

| Fire & Building Control Section<br>Main Activities | March 2023 | April 2023<br>(Up to 21.04.23) | Year to Date |
|--|------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Number of Emergency Calls Attended                 | 60         | 52                             | 297          |
| Number of Fire Safety Certificates Received        | 14         | 4                              | 29           |
| Number of Fire Safety Certificates Granted         | 5          | 3                              | 19           |
| Number of Fire Safety Certificates Invalidated     | 2          | 0                              | 2            |
| Number of Disability Access Certificates Received  | 3          | 3                              | 12           |
| Number of Disability Access Certificates Granted   | 5          | 1                              | 11           |
| Number of Commencement Notices Received            | 44         | 22                             | 125          |
| Number of Dangerous Structures/Places Complaints   | 1          | 0                              | 1            |

(Note: In the April Monthly Report, the March figures related to 1st to 20th March due to timing of report)

## Clare Civil Defence

### Operational Duties

Civil Defence provided medical cover for the following events:

- Run Clare Run 10km run in Ennis
- Run the Banner in Kilkishen
- Run / Cycle / Run in Barefield.
- Munster Football Championship Clare vs Cork held in Cusack Park, Ennis.
- Munster Hurling Championship Clare vs Tipperary held in Cusack Park, Ennis.
- Clare Motor Club Auto Cross held in Doonbeg.

Civil Defence also provided the following operational duties:

- Members participated in two separate searches for missing persons in Galway. Clare Civil Defence were tasked by Galway Civil Defence to conduct both drone and boat searches.

### Members' Training & Professional Development

- Members of the Civil Defence Boat Team conducted a night time training exercise on the River Fergus.
- Cardiac First Responder Training held at the Civil Defence Headquarters, Ennis.
- Medical Response Team participated in a large scale medical training exercise in Cusack Park for the upcoming Munster Football & Hurling Championships.
- Foot Drill competition held during weekly training night over Easter with prizes given for 1st and 2nd place.



Medical Response Team Training in Cusack Park.



Winners of Foot Drill Competition Volunteer David Neylon and Leader Michael Healy.

## ENVIRONMENT

### An Taisce Green Schools

Clare County Council supports and encourages active participation in the An Taisce operated Green Schools programme. Green School site assessment visits concluded in April with a total of 14 assessment visits carried out by our Environmental Awareness Officer (EAO).

During April our EAO also visited St. Caimins Community School (Shannon) and St Patricks Comprehensive School (Shannon) with a view to both secondary schools progressing their Green School applications for school year '23/'24. In addition, our EAO delivered 5 talks to students at St. Caimins Community School (Shannon) as part of their Green Week. Talks focused on personal responsibility and Leave no Trace.

### National Spring Clean

As National Spring Clean draws to a close 155 groups/individuals registered for this initiative to date. Participants have been advised that they can avail of free passes to our Waste Transfer Facilities. Since January 2023, 60 free passes have been issued to community groups for community clean ups. Groups have also been supported with litter pickers, bags and gloves.

### National Tree Week 2023

To celebrate National Tree Week our Gardening Team distributed 1,000 saplings between 19 community voluntary groups across Co. Clare. The saplings were supplied by both the Tree Council of Ireland and Coillte. This year groups received a mix of Maple, Rowan, Birch ,Oak, Alder, Beech, Scots Pine. Groups could apply online on Clare County Councils engagement platform at: National Tree Week 2023 | Clare County Council Community Engagement (clarecoco.ie)

### Sustainable Gardening Course

A Sustainable Gardening Course was run by horticulturist and environmentalist Aoife Munn at the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board premises in Miltown Malbay. This one-day course covered a lot of sustainable gardening and planting topics including greener gardening techniques and minimising use of chemicals in the garden and wider community. This course was oversubscribed and fully attended by 35 participants many who were members of tidy town groups. The workshop, led by our EAO, was also supported and sponsored, by our Healthy Clare and Heritage Office teams as well as the Limerick & Clare Education & Training Board.



### Cigarette Butt Littering

Through the Greener Clare programme we are a dedicated partner of Healthy Clare’s “Not Around Us” campaign in supporting tobacco free spaces, thus helping to curtail the number of these products entering our environment as litter. As part of this campaign, we appeal to those who do smoke to dispose of cigarette butts responsibly.

In April our EAO was at Eire Og GAA club promoting their commitment to the “Not Around Us” campaign. Other partners in this campaign include Quit Mid-West, Clare Sports Partnership and Clare Youth Services.



### Sustainable Tourism Green Team

A Sustainable Tourism Green Team is being developed to oversee the journey of the county of Clare becoming a Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) certified sustainable tourism destination. Our Environmental Awareness Officer attended a meeting during April to ascertain what is involved and how the work under the Greener Green programme and wider Environment Section can support the process of certification.

### Communication campaigns

The Environment Section used print and social media (@GreenerClare and @ClareCoCo) campaigns in April to promote positive message on: sustainable gardening, cigarette butt litter-



ing, National Spring Clean, Invasive Alien Species, National Tree Week, Dog Owner Responsibility, management of green waste.

### Access to Information on the Environment (AIE)

To date in 2023 the Environment Section has received 8 AIE Requests. A final decision was made on 3 AIE Requests. In addition, there was one appeal notification from Office of the Commissioner for Environmental Information which was responded to. An additional appeal notification was received from Office of the Commissioner for Environmental Information relating to a 2022 AIE Request.

### Water Enforcement and Laboratory Scientific Services

The table below summarises the work of the teams to date in 2023:

| Water Enforcement Scientific Team                            | April 2023 | Jan/April 2023 |
|--|------------|----------------|
| Planning applications (Domestic)                             | 33         | 115            |
| Planning applications (Large Developments)                   | 3          | 6              |
| Planning applications (Forestry)                             | 4          | 25             |
| Planning applications (Agriculture)                          | 0          | 2              |
| Inspection of Section 4 licenced premises                    | 10         | 14             |
| Domestic Wastewater Treatment Plant Inspections (NIP Plan)   | 30         | 30             |
| Pollution complaints received                                | 11         | 42             |
| Warning & advisory letters issued                            | 2          | 2              |
| Enforcement actions (S12 issued or number of 'active' cases) | 0          | 0              |
| Private Commercial Drinking Water Supplies                   | 6          | 20             |
| Private/Public Group Water Scheme supplies                   | 4          | 84             |
| Rivers   | 12         | 79             |

### Lakes Monitoring Tender

The lakes sampling tender has been awarded to TMS Environmental for the period April 2023-December 2024. The contractor will be sampling 19 lakes in County Clare as is required by the Water Framework Directive.

### Gardening

The Gardening Team provided two Gardening Wellness workshops recently with the latest held in Áras Contae an Chláir on the 13th April. So far, we have provided the workshop to over 40 participants.



The workshops have been well received and include a hands-on planting session and participants can take home their own potted plant.

With the arrival of April, the worst of the winter weather can be expected to have passed, however the Gardening Team were required to remain diligent with a number of ground frosts experienced during the month. This coupled with day time increases in temperatures and bright sunshine posed additional risks to young and fragile flowers at the nursery on Gort Road.



Such fluctuations in temperatures required staff to ensure that the temperature within the poly-tunnels remained constant, together with humidity and air flow levels, to ensure strength plant growth and limited risk of damage to new growth by frost and strong sun.

Final preparation of flower beds at various public locations have been completed and summer planting will commence shortly.

For Summer 2023, the Gardening Team has placed an increased focus on Ennis Town, working in collaboration with Ennis Municipal District and other stakeholders to prepare for judging for the Communities in Bloom competition in June.

### Waste Management

#### Recycling Centres

The tender submission date for Waste Management Services closed on the 14th April, 2023. Several compliant submissions were received. These tenders are currently being assessed between the Office of Government Procurement and the Environment Section of Clare County Council. This phase will take a few weeks before the contract will be awarded.

#### Scariff Recycling Centre

The opening hours at Scariff Recycling Centre have changed from 24th April. The site will now close on Mondays and instead open on Wednesdays. The hours for Saturdays will change slightly from 12 noon – 6pm to 10am – 4pm. This followed a

review of the usage patterns at the site along with customer feedback. The information was provided to the Killaloe MD in advance of changes being implemented. It is expected that these changes will make the Civic Amenity Site more accessible when needed.

## Waste Enforcement

### Waste Facility Permit (WFP) / Certificate of Registration (COR) Applications

The Waste Enforcement team continued to assess WFPs and COR applications in April, for both new applications and reviews of existing permits. Clare County Council is liaising with the Regional Waste Planning Office to organise training for permit-holders on the application process, using the templates devised by the Waste Enforcement Regional Authority.

### Staff Training

Staff of the Waste Enforcement team attended a Courtroom Skills Training Course inhouse on 21st April.

### Fines and Directions issued under the Waste Management Act 1996, As Amended and Litter Pollution Act 1997, As Amended

A total of 3 Litter Fines and 1 Notice under Section 14 of the Waste Management Act 1996, have issued in April. One litter fine, for Unauthorised Advertising Signage was paid in April. The Waste Enforcement Team continue to pursue open fines and investigate new complaints for evidence.

### Environmental Monitoring (Illegal Dumping/Litter)

The Waste Enforcement Team continued to respond to waste and litter related complaints in April. A total of 119 complaints relating to litter and waste were received in April, 73 of which are now closed. The remainder are under investigation and appropriate enforcement action will be taken.

### Anti-Dumping Initiative Funding

The 2023 Anti-Dumping Initiative Funding application was approved by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications via Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authority in April.

This year's application focused on projects targeted at preventing illegal dumping throughout each Municipal District. A total of €135,000 has been approved for 2023.

## Lifeguards

Lifeguards attended for inductions on 23rd April in Áras Contae an Chláir and were briefed on Child Protection, Health and Safety, Manual Handling, Dealing with Serious Incidents, Child Protection, and an overview of the level of service to be provided during the upcoming Summer Season.

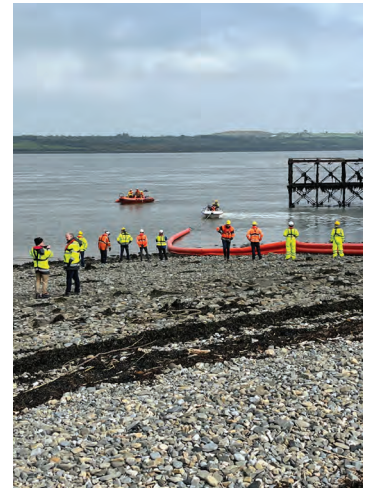
## Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Audit

The Environment Section were audited by the EPA on 26th April.

The aim of the audit was to check for compliance across a wide range of service provision and regulatory enforcement. The audit covered our compliant management system, inspection programme, Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspection (RMCEI) Plan for 2023 and a review of our RMCEI return for 2022. All requested information was provided to the EPA.

## Shannon Estuary Anti-Pollution Team (SEA-PT) Annual Exercise

Clare County Council's Environment Section attended a SEA-PT training exercise on the 18th April across the Estuary in Glin, Co. Limerick, along with other members of the SEA-PT membership. This exercise provides the Council with access to expertise in the field of incident response management. The exercise provided an opportunity for the Environment Section staff to avail of hands-on training of modern equipment to deal with a potential oil spill incident.



We also took part in a desktop exercise to check the integrity of our Oil and Hazardous and Noxious Substances Spill Contingency Plan. The exercise aims to provide an understanding of the detail and resources required to deal with an incident if it were to occur in our jurisdiction.

## Local Authorities Members Association (LAMA) Awards

A recently completed Environment Section project was shortlisted for an award at the LAMA Awards Ceremony held in Clonmel on 15th April. Our shortlisted Award was for "Best Environmental/Ecological Project/Initiative for the Inagh Central Waste Management Facility Integrated Constructed Wetlands". This project formed part of the closure restoration and aftercare management plan for the Inagh landfill. It involved the creation of an integrated constructed wetland. The benefits of which to the local community are an increase of amphibian life, birdlife and bees on site and using compost generated on site via the green waste accepted and the Civic Amenity Site. This mitigates against the effects of climate change and reduction in electrical energy usage.





# CLIMATE

## Staffing

The building of a core Climate Action Team within Clare County Council is continuing. The make-up of the team is set out in the DECA (Delivering Effective Climate Action) document from the County and City Management Association (CCMA). The Climate Action Officer role is filled; the role of the Climate Action Officer will be towards the development of an ambitious Climate Action Plan for the county and also towards the mainstreaming of Climate Action and an awareness within all sections of Clare County Council.

**Community Climate Action Officer:** The role of Community Climate Action Officer is currently advertised and will be recruited over the coming weeks. The role is fully funded for the next three years. The roles and responsibilities of the officer will be to engage with communities across the county in relation to Climate Change awareness, education and also to progress Community Climate projects. On appointment the officer will commence the rollout of the forthcoming Community Climate Action Programme.

## Energy

Energy management around the local authority is monitored on a continuous basis. Clare County Council has achieved the ISO50001 Energy Management Standard and is recertified for the next three years following an audit in November 2022. In the midst of high energy prices, it remains a priority

of the Council to improve on energy efficiency on a continual basis.

The Climate Section is currently finalising tender documents in relation to the carrying out of energy audits in four locations: Aras Contae an Chláir, Buttermarket Campus, Cliffs of Moher and Ennis Leisure Centre. This work will be targeted at creating a Register of Opportunities for the four sites towards further reductions in consumption and also reductions in emissions. Clare County Council has a target of achieving 51% carbon emission reduction by 2030 from a 2018 baseline and a 50% energy efficiency target from a 2009 baseline.

Energy costs are 33% higher than last year, however, participation in the Office of Government Procurement frameworks on energy, particularly electricity, have significantly mitigated energy inflation for the local authority for the time being.

**Reduce your Use Campaign:** Clare County Council continues to partake in the reduce your use campaign in association with the SEAI. This initiative is focusing on the Winter 22/23 with a view to enabling reduced consumption across the Council. The initiative is aimed at addressing energy security on a national level due to conflicts ongoing globally. Áras Contae an Chláir, in particular, has achieved a 20% reduction in energy use through good facilities management, introduction of new computer controls and staff engagement.

**REDUCE YOUR USE**  
COMHAIRLE CONTAE AN CHLÁIR  
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Clare County Council**

Clare County Council's climate change strategy is primarily focused on adaptation to climate change and aims to identify the council's vulnerabilities and the major risks facing the county. It will develop a pathway on how to adapt and plan to strengthen the physical infrastructure, biodiversity and also develop resilience in communities to deal with the effects of climate change. These are major challenges facing every local authority, but Clare is determined to lead by example and that starts with its own environmental footprint.

The Reduce Your Use campaign helps the council to refocus on the small actions done consistently, that will lead to worthwhile energy and carbon emissions savings over time. The initiative has reinvigorated the council's own efforts around thermal fuel use in its buildings. Through the collaboration and engagement of the council's enthusiastic staff members the county continues to advance towards its decarbonisation ambitions.

**5-10% energy savings**  
(large corporate buildings in 2022)

**38 buildings ranging**  
from heritage to modern

**seai** SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AUTHORITY of Ireland

Riadas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

**OPW**

**Optimising Power @ Work**

**Heating and lighting**

- Turned off heating and utilities outside building operating hours
- Set internal space heating temperature to 19 degrees in most buildings
- Shut down heat in office buildings at least 1-2 hours before buildings close.
- Increased insulation on heating pipes and valves in plant rooms.
- Boiler cleaning / efficiency tests have been increased.
- Optimised water heating in most buildings in order to save Energy.
- Reduced unnecessary use of lighting.
- Turned off display lighting/window/feature display lighting between 5 and 7 pm every day.

**Control and scheduling**

- Assessed and optimised the core and extended hours of operation.
- Ensured that operational control is appropriate to hours of work and services delivered. Staff hours are flexible and remote working is facilitated.
- Reduced electricity use at peak times.
- Building Management System schedules reviewed to identify savings.
- Computer optimisation programme enters all PCs / Laptops connected to the system, into sleep if they are idle for more than 10 minutes.

**Facilities assessments**

- Comprehensive audit and operational controls strategies for Significant Energy Users.
- Energy efficiency assessment or audit of most buildings.
- Out-of-hours walk-through carried out in a number of buildings.
- Operations and Maintenance Audit carried out in most buildings.
- Significant Energy Users account holders have identified opportunities to be implemented in Q1 2023.

Clare County Council Building in Ennis with no lights on

Energy Awareness Day, held quarterly

Clare County Council 'Reduce Your Use' mini case study.

## Climate Action Plan

### Finalising of Evidence Base for Climate Action Plan

Work is complete in relation to the establishing of baseline information with regard to the local authority and the county. Mitigation assessments are complete at Tier 1 level for the county of Clare.

A Tier 3 emissions report for the Kilkee/Loop Head Decarbonisation Zone is complete. Mitigation assessments approximate the level and sectoral areas within which emissions are released to the atmosphere.

The Climate Change Risk Assessment for the county is complete. A Climate Change Risk Assessment is a qualitative examination of the particular climate related hazards facing County Clare

presently and projected forward.

**Preparation of Summary Report:** Work is ongoing towards the completion of a Summary report on the evidence base. This report, similar in nature to an issues paper, will be used to engage with the relevant stakeholders and public prior to the drafting of the Climate Action Plan. Members will be consulted on the Summary report prior to publication. The Climate Section will be seeking submissions from all stakeholders, including the PPN on the opportunities arising for the county over the next six years in relation to Climate Action.

**Communications:** A briefing on the Climate Action Plan was given to members of the Rural SPC on 18th April. This provided an opportunity to outline the statutory need for a Climate Action Plan and provide an overview of the timeline involved.

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## WATER

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## Annual Service Plan

The Water Services Section of Clare County Council continues to deliver the water services function as per the current Service Level Agreement and the 2023 Annual Service Plan with Úisce Éireann.

### Future Delivery of Water Services.

The WRC published a framework document on 24th June, 2022, 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.

This framework document has now informed the new master agreement which will replace the existing Service Level Agreement. This new agreement is expected to be signed in the coming months by each local authority Chief Executive. The agreement will allow for Úisce Éireann to be directly responsible for day to day management of water services. It is proposed that the local authority sector will exit that service at the end of 2026.

## 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 20th March 2023 up to and including 20th April 2023. The figures do not, however, reflect the time invested by the teams which is required to resolve each complaint/issue.

- 31 Customer Complaints were dealt with and closed out

- 0 Emergency Work Order were received during the time-frame
- 318 Reactive Maintenance Work Orders were dealt with and closed out
- 2 Customer Asset Flooding Work Orders were received during the period
- 112 Service Requests (SRs) were raised for Field Requests and Follow On Work Orders for Reactive Maintenance work
- 34 Outage Notices were placed on the IW portal during the period. 30 unplanned works for burst water mains, leak repairs, meter cleaning, inlet valve replacement, flushing mains and pump issues. Two communication notifications were issued for watermains flushing and loss of water pressure. We had two planned outages, one for essential reservoir maintenance works and the second for a new water connection.

### Water Operations

The following is a summary of the outages dealt with in period from 27th March – 21st April.

Major Outages for East Clare Area for period below:

- 06-04-23 Killaloe – Faulty Valve
- 20-04-23 Larkin's Cross, Ardnacrusha – Mains Burst
- Ongoing Leak Detection Works

Major Outages for Ennis Area for period below:

- 06-04-23 Quin – Mains Burst
- 14-04-23 Beechpark, Ennis – Mains Burst
- 21-04-23 Kilrush Rd, Ennis – Mains Burst
- Ongoing Leak Detection Works

Major Outages for West Clare Area for period below:

- 27-03-23 Mullagh Village – Mains Burst

- 29-03-23 Cree – Cooraclare – Mains Burst
- 01-04-23 Coore – Mains Burst
- 04-04-23 Caherfeenick / Doonbeg – GWS New Mains Connection
- 04-04-23 Doonbeg – Mains Burst
- 05-04-23 Old Doolough – Flushing
- 05-04-23 Doonbeg – Mains Burst
- 05-04-23 Kilmihil – Mains Burst
- 06-04-23 Doonbeg – Mains Burst
- 08-04-23 Kilkee – Mains Burst
- 17-04-23 Doonmore, Doonbeg – Mains Burst
- 18-04-23 Doonmore, Doonbeg – Mains Burst
- 18-04-23 Kilmurray McMahon – Mains Burst
- 19-04-23 to 21-04-23 Loophead Peninsula – Works to Moveen Reservoir
- 17-04-24 Doonbeg – Burst Mains
- 18-04-24 East End, Kilkee – Burst Mains
- Ongoing Meter Installations
- Ongoing Leak Detection Works

Major Outages for North Clare Area for period below:

- 03-04-23 Mains Burst
- 14-04-23 Moy - Mains Burst
- 16-04-23 Lahinch – Mains Burst
- 16-04-24 Lisdoonvarna – Mains Burst
- Ongoing Meter Installations
- Ongoing Leak Detection Works

Major Outage Shannon

- 28-03-23 Shannon – Mains Burst
- 05-04-23 Shannon – Mains Burst
- 12-04-23 Tullyvarraga, Shannon – Mains Burst

Water Conservation

- Leak Detection Works – Mid Clare – Ballybeg, Toberteascain in Ennis DMA
- Leak Detection Works – North Clare – Kilfenora, New Quay/ Bellharbour
- Leak Detection Shannon/East Clare – Killaloe, Athlunkard, Mountshannon, Shannon (various) and Shannon Ind. Est.
- Fix Operation – Various locations – Bellharbour, Kilmihil, Kilmurray McMahon.

### Wastewater Operations

A 7m diameter precast concrete roof cover has been installed over the sludge holding tank in Crusheen wastewater treatment plant. As part of the works an odour abatement filtration system will be installed which will eliminate any potential odour from the tank during operation. These works were carried out following several odour complaints from the local residents during 2022.



The EPA’s “Office of Environmental Enforcement” carried out an inspection at Quin wastewater treatment plant in April with a view to removing it from their “Priority Actions List” (PAL). Treatment Plants are added to the EPAs list due to poor performance and non-compliance. Quin Wastewater treatment is performing satisfactorily since the upgrade works and therefore is likely to be removed from the PAL.

The EPA’s “Office of Environmental Enforcement” also carried out an inspection at Clareabbey Wastewater treatment plant in April. Remedial actions are required by Uisce Éireann on foot of the EPA’s report including process optimisation to increase treatment capacity and efficiency.

## Úisce Eireann 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. Mechanical and electrical works continued. Security fencing, gates and hedging were installed at the WWTP. The control panel was installed at the pump station. The entrance wall at Cappagh Road was constructed.



Completion of the overall scheme is due in mid-2023.

### 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 has been completed at Quay Road. The 28-day testing period continued into late April. Preparation was undertaken for the handover of the project to Uisce Éireann. The routine discharge of raw sewage to the River Fergus at the Quay in Clarecastle has ceased.

### 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.

### 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.

### Ennistymon and Lahinch Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

Work on selection of an exact site, pipeline route, detailed design, land acquisition and a planning application will commence in the coming months. Uisce Éireann has given approval for the appointment of Consultants to produce a marine model for the coast of Clare and the contract is to commence in the coming weeks.

### 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, and a request for further information was received by Uisce Éireann the 7th February, 2023. Preparation of the further information submission is ongoing. Preparation of the tender documents is ongoing. Construction is anticipated to commence in 2024.

### Kilfenora Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

Mechanical and electrical works continued at the WWTP and at the percolation area. Clean water testing was undertaken. Planting details are being finalised. Security fencing was installed at the WWTP. Some topsoiling has taken place. Fencing and an ESB pole were installed at the percolation area. The overall scheme is due for completion in mid-2023.



### Miltown Malbay Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

The upgrade project is now at the investment planning stage. This scheme is now in the Early Contractor Involvement programme. Uisce Éireann held a workshop on 14th March to discuss options. Workshop minus 1 was held in early April to discuss options for a proposed outfall and potential WWTP

sites. Uisce Éireann has given approval for the appointment of Consultants to produce a marine model for the coast of Clare and the contract is to commence in the coming weeks.

### Doonbeg Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

This scheme is in the Early Contractor Involvement programme. Uisce Éireann has given approval for the appointment of Consultants to produce a marine model for the coast of Clare and the contract is to commence in the coming weeks.

### Remedial Action Lists Water Treatment Plant Upgrades

Ward and Burke Construction Ltd have been appointed by Uisce Eireann 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. 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. The main upgrade works are now complete and operational, 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 plant are now completed with the plant returned to Council operation.

**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 to follow. Phase 1 Work has commenced with the construction of a new third water clarifier underway, with base poured and in place and wall pours complete. This phase 1 upgrade is programmed to be complete by Q4 2023.

### 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. Construction and testing of the new reservoir has been successfully completed. Demolition and removal of the

old tank is now finished with minor issues to be resolved in the coming weeks.

### 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. All civil and mechanical and electrical works are complete with commissioning completed. The process proving period has been completed and the new works are now handed over to council operations staff.

### 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 and assessing the assimilative capacity available in the River Fergus.

### 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 Úisce Eireann to have confidence in obtaining the best value for money on network improvement. The consultant has completed an unverified preliminary model build and will now proceed to check and verify this using survey and flow data to be gathered by a contractor once appointed.

### 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. The construction of a new storm water holding tank and new wastewater pumping chamber on the existing pumping station site at Elton Court is underway, with civil works expected to be completed mid-April and mechanical and electrical works to follow. This will improve the capacity for pumping wastewater to the Limerick main drainage network. A new rising main from the existing Ballycannon plant to the Elton Court site and new pumping facilities at the Ballycannon treatment plant will then be constructed. When completed this will allow for the decommissioning and demolition of the Ballycannon WWTP. Planning permission for the works at the Ballycannon site has been submitted. Civil works are nearing completion at the Elton Court site with mechanical and electrical fit out to follow.

### Kilmihil Wastewater Treatment plant upgrade

A project under the National Certificate of Authorisation (NCAP) Programme, to modernise the existing wastewater treatment plant for Kilmihil, is at design stage. The project will include a new inlet works, primary and secondary treatment with nutrient removal and storm water holding facility. It will provide sludge dewatering and storage capacity. The stage 4 design workshop will be held in May.

### Asset Transfer

Following an assessment of the water and wastewater networks in County Clare, 384 sites have been identified for potential transfer to Úisce Eireann to date. Following on site surveys, 69 of these assets have been determined to be duplicate, non-operational assets or assets which Úisce Eireann will not accept. Of the remaining 315 assets, 221 have now been fully transferred to Úisce Eireann.

The 94 assets remaining to be transferred are divided into the following four categories:

- Report prepared / Pending/ Internal Query (5 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) (69 assets) – This is a department within Úisce Eireann 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. Úisce Eireann 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 (20 assets) – These are 3rd Party/Unregistered assets. To transfer these, detailed searches through historical Council's records are required in order to submit to Úisce Eireann 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 ten sites as a pilot project and attempts to engage with registered owners is underway.

## Rural Water Programme

The replacement of 600m of existing mains on the Clohanes GWS is nearing completion and is set to be brought into operation in the coming days. These works are funded at 100% with a view to progressing the Taking in Charge of the scheme in its entirety.

Emergency funding has been granted to the Ranaghan GWS to address supply and quality issues heading into the summer period, as this office awaits instruction from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) for progression of Taking in Charge works.

The DHLGH have yet to request bids for the 2022-2025 Multi Annual Rural Water Programme although we now are now in Q2 of what was designed to be the second year of the programme. The delay in the progression of the programme is a source of frustration for a number of GWS's and also this office.

Under the 'Grant for the Improvement of a Private Water Supply to a House' 28no applications have been received to date in 2023.

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.

## SHANNON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

### Shannon MD bids farewell to Liam Conneally

Cathaoirleach of Shannon MD Cllr Michael Begley presented a gift to Liam Conneally on his departure to Galway County Council. Cllr Begley was joined by his fellow Councillors and staff of the MD in thanking Liam for his immense contribution to Shannon Municipal District over the years. His hard work and dedication to Shannon Municipal District was acknowledged and his many achievements were lauded. Liam Conneally thanked the Councillors for their commitment and energy throughout his tenure as Director of Services and for the friendships made during his time in Shannon MD.



monument with Shannon MD constructing the base.



### Shannon MD assists with Annual Spring Clean-up

Shannon Municipal District assisted with the Good Friday Annual Community Spring Clean-up in the Meelick area. The MD outdoor crews removed a large amount of rubbish that was collected by community volunteers.



### Unveiling Illaunmanagh Cemetery Monument

Illaunamagh Graveyard Monument was unveiled by the Bishop on Easter Sunday, 9th April. The Monument was donated to the cemetery by Shannon Parish, funds raised through donations and the sculpture was designed by Michael McTigue. The sculpture is 8ft in height and faces the setting sun.

Clare County Council Rural Development Team facilitated the

### Tackling Anti-social Behaviour at Bru na Sionna

Shannon MD staff attended a meeting organised by Gardai with local Bru na Sionna residents on Tuesday, 4th April, at the Garda station. The Management Company responsible for the apartment complex, was also present on the night. Unfortunately, there have been a number of incidents of

## SHANNON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

late which have given rise to concerns by local residents. The Gardai are proactively dealing with these particular incidents. Other various collaborative interventions are also being implemented; one being the removal of stones from the grounds of the Library building which were being

used inappropriately by youths. Working in partnership and bringing a co-ordinated approach to tackling this issue is important and sends a strong message of solidarity to both the community and those involved in such behaviour.

### Collaborative approach to Tackling Litter

Shannon MD is working closely with the Environmental Awareness Officer and Community Warden and the local schools to inspire school children to care for their local environment. Karen Foley, Environmental Awareness Officer, has recently met with the Green Schools Committees and has arranged for litter picks to be carried out in the local Town Park by the school children. This active role in creating awareness and getting out and about and picking up the litter continues to have a significant impact on attitudes and on creating awareness around the issue. The MD and Council staff will continue to work with the local schools in this regard.



### Summary of other works

- Outdoor Recreational Infrastructural Project in Newmarket on Fergus – works currently underway. End of May completion date.
- Bunratty T&VR. The appointment procedure for successful tenderer is due to commence.



- Drumgeely TVR is going to Tender in the next few weeks.
- Clonlara TVR is tendered at the moment with a closing date of 15th May.
- Parteen T&VR: Discussions ongoing with relevant landowners.
- Greenway Shannon to Bunratty & Sixmilebridge: 1st phase to Bunratty – discussions with landowners commenced and in the process of appointing a topographical company to conduct a survey of the Bunratty overpass.
- Grass-cutting currently underway which encompasses over 300 hectares. First Cut and Lift operation of our five Biodiversity sites to take place week ending 28/4/2023.

- New paving to Ballycasey Park Shannon, this is part of the Ballycasey Park Active Travel Project



- New pedestrian crossing and associated works at Ros An Oir, Ballycasey, Shannon, this is part of the Ballycasey Park Active Travel Project



# SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Social Directorate is facing a number of challenges in the coming months and right through 2023.

- Our Housing Delivery plan targets for 2023 continue to 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 on course to meet our target of 149 units for the year.
- The winter eviction ban ended on 31st March, 2023. We have in excess of 60 clients with Notice To Quits in existing private rental agreements. Our Homeless Action Team, HAP Placefinder, Acquisitions Team are actively engaging with these clients to assist them in accessing other housing solutions and to avoid the need for entering into homeless services. We are investigating options around purchasing a small number of these properties, while AHB purchases are supporting further clients. We continue to provide advise to clients who do not qualify for social housing support but may be able to avail of the Cost Rental tenant in Situ

program through the Housing Agency.

- 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.
- We have completed our submission on draft regulations on the Enhanced Defective Concrete Block Grant Scheme. We await final guidance from Dept re same and in interim are training staff and preparing IT systems for an online portal for clients to submit applications.
- We have completed a detailed submission seeking the go ahead to utilise the Approved Housing Fund and we have just received confirmation that the Department will now accept scheme proposals for Ennis and Shannon. We will be seeking to develop proposals in the very near future.

We are confident that the team in the Directorate, supported by the Elected Members, will continue to deal with all challenges and meet targets for the coming year.

## HOUSING

For 2023 the housing public counter remains 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 065 684 6291 or by email: hat@clarecoco.ie

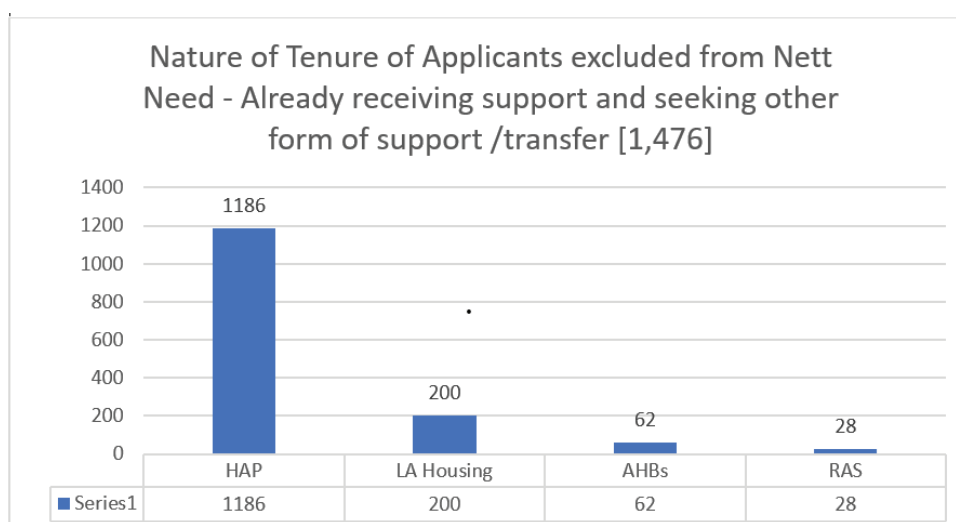
### Social housing demand

The total households on the council waiting list is currently 2,831 with 1,476 of these currently receiving support in form

of existing Council housing, HAP, RAS or AHBs. The 2,831 households are comprised of 3,917 adults and 2,142 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 30/04/2023

|                                  |      |
|----------------------------------|------|
| Total Households on Waiting List | 2831 |
| Transfer Applicants (see below)  | 1476 |
| Nett Need                        | 1355 |





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

| Count of HOUSING AUTHORITY APPLIED TO BEDS APPROVED |              |            |              |             |
|---|--------------|------------|--------------|-------------|
| FIRST AREA OF CHOICE                                | 1 and 2 beds | 3 beds     | 4 and 5 beds | Grand Total |
| ENNIS   | 919          | 196        | 81           | 1196        |
| SHANNON   | 178          | 25         | 13           | 216         |
| CLARECASTLE   | 127          | 27         | 10           | 164         |
| INAGH/ENNISTYMON/LAHINCH                            | 129          | 24         | 5            | 158         |
| KILRUSH   | 102          | 31         | 7            | 140         |
| FEAKLE/SCARIFF/WHITEGATE                            | 105          | 21         | 4            | 130         |
| MEELICK/PARTEEN/WESTBURY                            | 74           | 36         | 11           | 121         |
| MILTOWN MALBAY/MULLAGH/QUILTY                       | 68           | 14         | 3            | 85          |
| KILKEE/CROSS/CARRIGAHOLT                            | 67           | 11         | 1            | 79          |
| NEWMARKET-ON-FERGUS                                 | 55           | 15         | 6            | 76          |
| COROFIN/RUAN  | 54           | 18         | 2            | 74          |
| KILLALOE  | 57           | 13         | 2            | 72          |
| LISDOONVARNA/BALLYVAUGHAN                           | 47           | 10         | 3            | 60          |
| SIXMILEBRIDGE                                       | 37           | 8          | 7            | 52          |
| COORACLARE/DOONBEG                                  | 35           | 7          | 3            | 45          |
| TULLA/KILKISHEN/BROADFORD                           | 34           | 8          | 3            | 45          |
| CLONLARA  | 19           | 8          | 2            | 29          |
| KILDYSART/BALLYNACALLY                              | 21           | 4          | 3            | 28          |
| QUIN  | 17           | 6          | 1            | 24          |
| KILMIHIL  | 11           | 5          | 2            | 18          |
| KILMALEY  | 9            | 2          |              | 11          |
| KILFENORA   | 7            | 1          |              | 8           |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                                  | <b>2172</b>  | <b>490</b> | <b>169</b>   | <b>2831</b> |

### Newly qualified applicants

New income limits became effective on 1st January, 2023. While there was an increase in qualifications during March, our numbers have stabilised again for April.



## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### New Income Limits from 1st January, 2023

| 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

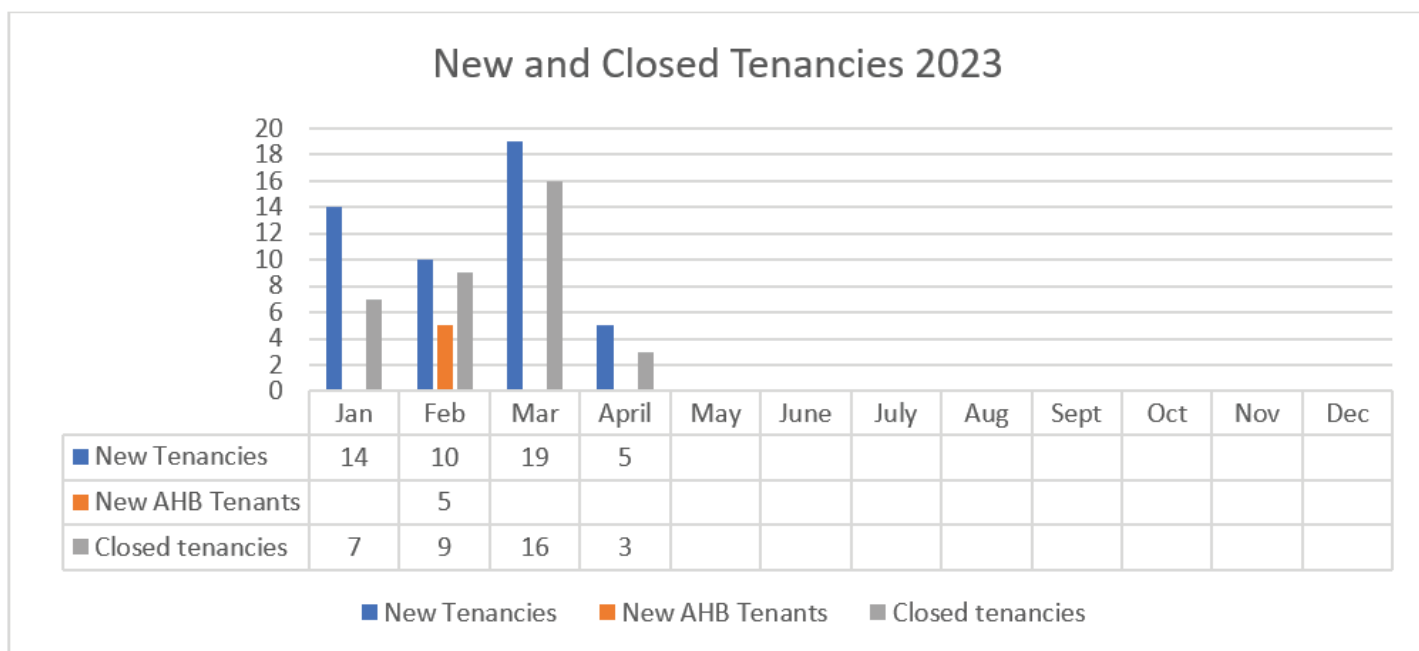
The social housing development (CALF Acquisition) located at Hogans Phase, Limerick Road, Ennis, which will be delivered by Clúid Housing, was recently advertised on the Choice Based Letting (CBL) website. This is phase 2 of this development and 411 expressions of interest were received. There are 15 units in this development, 12 three-bedroomed houses and 3 two-bedroomed bungalows. Clare County Council have 100% nomination rights in relation to the allocation of these units. The assessment process is now completed, and the nominated households have been forwarded to Clúid Housing. When Clúid complete their process these figures will show in May data for offers and tenancies.



All properties to date in 2023 were advertised on the CBL website and following the close of the advertising cycle a formal reassessment of the household's eligibility and need is carried out. We also check that the person circumstances has not changed, which may result in the household being deemed ineligible for social housing support. A breakdown of the basis of need to whom the properties allocated to is set out here:

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Homeless  | 30% |
| Medical Needs                                       | 30% |
| Financial   | 21% |
| Overcrowding, compassionate and involuntary sharing | 19% |



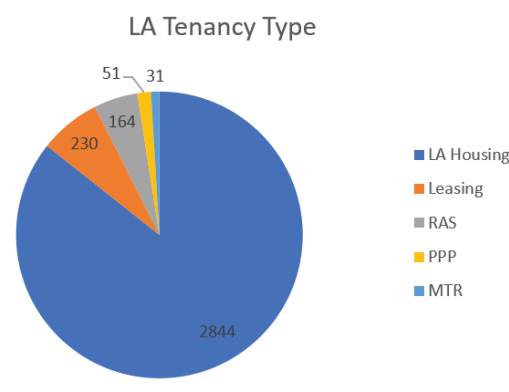


### Tenant Purchase Incremental Scheme

There remains significant interest in the LA Tenant Purchase Incremental Scheme with three new applications this year to date. We currently have 10 open cases at various stages of the legal process which are expected to complete in 2023. Sale of two properties has completed in 2023 to date.

### Housing tenancies

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



| 30th April 2023    |           |              |             |
|--------------------|-----------|--------------|-------------|
| MD                 | Allocated | Occupied     | Total       |
| Ennis MD           | 11        | 1287         | 1298        |
| Killaloe MD        | 2         | 362          | 364         |
| Shannon MD         | 4         | 722          | 726         |
| West Clare MD      | 3         | 949          | 952         |
| <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>20</b> | <b>3320*</b> | <b>3340</b> |

In addition we have 1,186 active HAP tenancies.

Approved housing bodies (AHBs) are providing approximately 800 tenancies to social housing applicants.

Clare County Council have full nomination rights in respect of the majority of AHB properties and these properties are advertised via our Choice Based Letting System. Nominations are prepared in accordance with a new national process agreed by LAs and the AHB sector and commenced in July 2022.

\*3,340 households comprises 5,713 adults and 3,115 children. Total people 8,826, or 2.6 per household average.

## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### Vacancies

| Vacant Stock            | Ennis MD  | West Clare MD | Shannon MD | Killaloe MD | Total     |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------------|------------|-------------|-----------|
| Traveller Accommodation | 2         | 8             | 2          | 0           | 12        |
| Derelict Properties     | 0         | 0             | 0          | 0           | 0         |
| Projects                | 4         | 10            | 1          | 0           | 15        |
| Casual Vacancies        | 19        | 14            | 6          | 5           | 44        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>            | <b>25</b> | <b>32</b>     | <b>9</b>   | <b>5</b>    | <b>71</b> |

### Estate management

The Estate Management Team continue to undertake regular routine and response calls to tenants, dealing with antisocial behaviour (ASB) complaints as well as inspecting local authority tenancies and providing the necessary supports to tenants.

The Estate Management team were successful in securing a repossession in court earlier this month in a case where there was continued and blatant breach of a tenancy agreement and we will continue to seek repossessions through the courts in such situations.

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

|                                       | 16th March to 19th April | Total year to date |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| ASB Complaints recd                   | 65                       | 180                |
| Housing Inspections                   | 65                       | 274                |
| Referrals to TSS                      | 1                        | 4                  |
| Tenancy Notifications/Warnings issued | 8                        | 37                 |
| Abandonment Notices issued            | 0                        | 5                  |
| Keys collected from Casual Vacancies  | 3                        | 29                 |
| Repossession Orders                   | 1                        | 1                  |

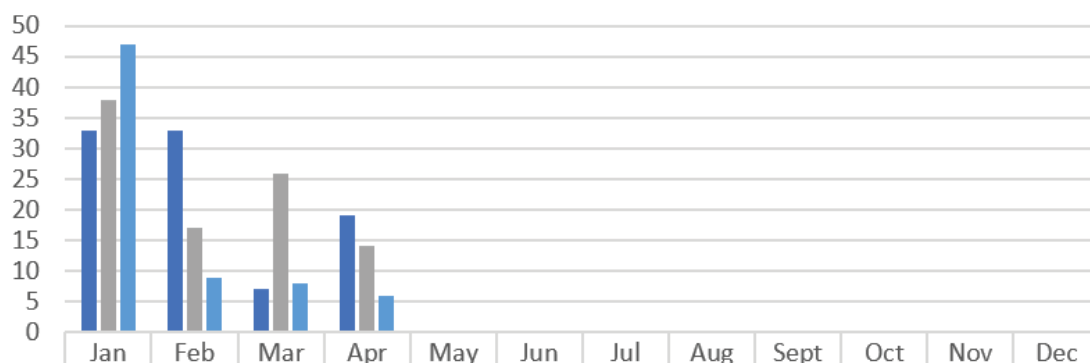
The Tenancy Enforcement team carry out continued patrols of local authority housing estates and Traveller sites and have a very visible presence to manage and mitigate against complaints of antisocial behaviour with over 3,100 observations of tenancies as part of these patrols in the year to date. The 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

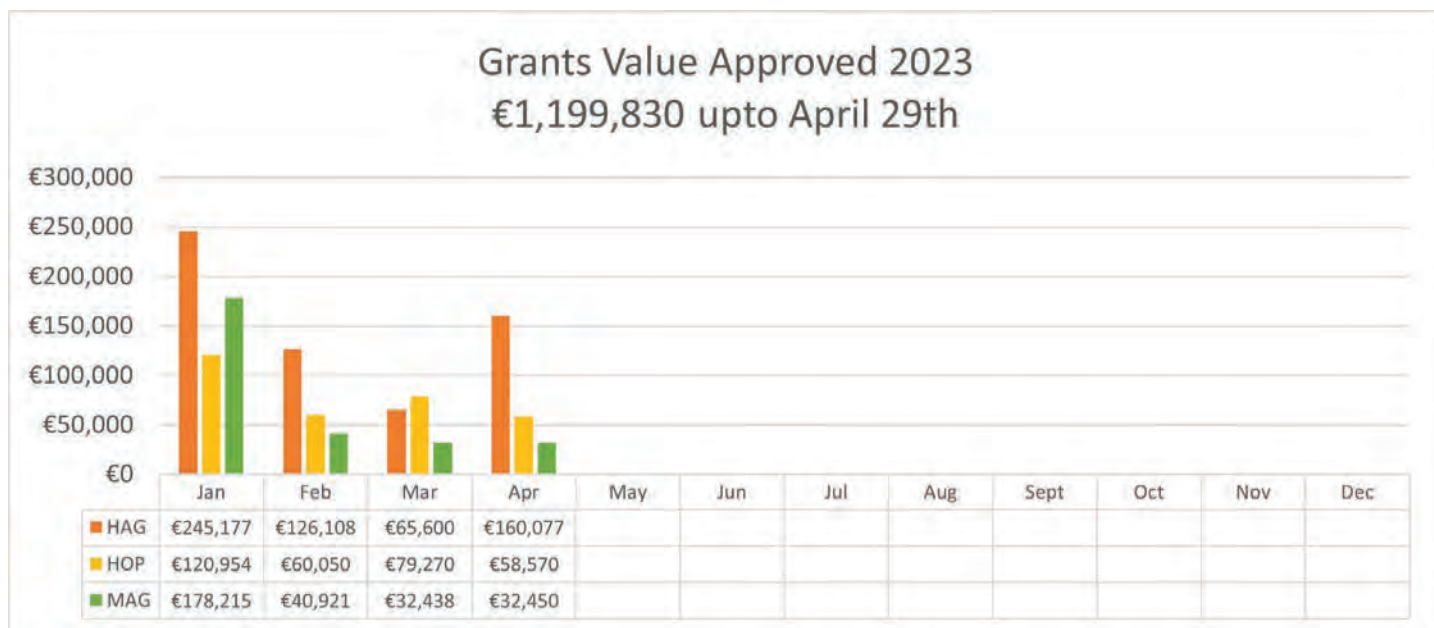
464 inspections carried out up to April 2023. These inspections were carried out on HAP, RTB, RAS and leased properties, as well as in response to complaints that were received. The team continue to follow up where properties do not meet the minimum rented standards.

### Housing grants

## Grants Approved 2023 257 upto April 29th



|                         |    |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|-------------------------|----|----|----|----|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Disability Grants [HAG] | 33 | 33 | 7  | 19 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Older People Aids [HOP] | 38 | 17 | 26 | 14 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mobility Aids [MAG]     | 47 | 9  | 8  | 6  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |



### 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](http://www.localauthorityhomeloan.ie)

Loans data for 2023 up to 20/04/2023: There are currently 33 Local Authority Home Loans Approved in Principle. This includes 1 new approval on 31 March, 2023.

61 Applications Received to 31/12/2022 and 13 Applications in 2023

33 Local Authority Home Loans Approved

5 Local Authority Home Loans Drawn Down in 2022 and 1 Drawn Down in 2023

12 Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans Drawn Down in 2022

### Traveller accommodation

The Department introduced a nationwide Pilot Caravan Loan Scheme in 2022 under Section 25 of the Traveller Accommodation Act 1998. The scheme is to support the provision of Traveller-specific accommodation through local authorities to provide preferential loans to Travellers to purchase their own caravan/mobile home on halting sites for use as their primary residence. Two Caravan Loans were granted in April 2023. The scheme is currently closed but is being reviewed by the Department and we are hopeful that the scheme will be reintroduced as others have expressed their interest in availing of the scheme.

### Homeless Services (Homeless Action Team; HAT)

The demand for Homeless Services, Advice/Support and the provision of Emergency Accommodation within this region is continuous. The 31st of March, 2023, saw the cessation of the moratorium on eviction/Winter Eviction Ban (Residential Tenancies (Deferment of Termination dates of certain tenancies) Act 2022). This in turn has had a ricochet effect on the Homeless Action Team with a noted increase in the number of presentations, queries and matters arising around Notice To Quits. This has had an impact on both Family and Single Units, while also on Family/Single Units that exceed the Social Housing Income Limits. Following this, increased demands have been placed on the Homeless Action Team surrounding assessments and the demand/need for assessments to be carried out, with the appropriate actions or referrals put in place following this.

**Presentations to Clare Homeless Action Team (HAT)**

During the period of the 24/03/2023 to the 13/04/2023, 30 new clients presented to HAT, with a further 119 repeat engagements. The needs and requirements of these presentations varied and included:

- The need of immediate Emergency Accommodation
  - Notice to Quits from Accommodations
  - Discharge from Medical Settings
  - House fire with regards to a family unit
  - Discharge from Women Refuge services
  - Members of the Travelling community seeking Emergency Accommodation
  - Release from Prison.

A number of these presentations availed of advice and prevention works and supports from the Social Care Team in HAT. As a result, they avoided entering a homeless situation due to early intervention by the team. Advice regarding legislation on NTQ's, support from the HAP Place-finder, allocations in advance of homelessness situations, and other supports offered by the team ensured many of these clients avoided the requirement of being placed within emergency accommodation. This demonstrates the positive effect the prevention work employed by the HAT Team, which is an equally imperative part of this team's work.

Other individuals and families were supported in accessing Emergency Accommodation either within our services or through private establishments. However, as Emergency Services and Accommodation remains at capacity with continuous demand for additional capacity, a number of individuals remain overstaying with friends or family until a vacancy presents within Emergency Accommodation.

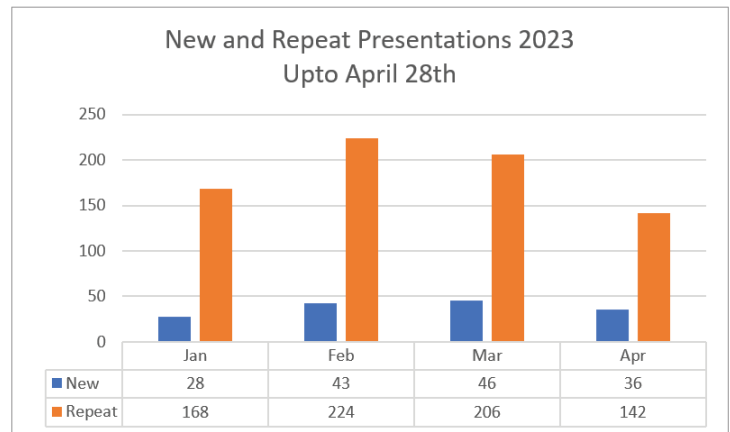
The Council continues to pursue additional emergency accommodation options. However, this is proving challenging due to competing demands for accommodation in the County. It must be noted this month, that one private provided which HAT had used on a regular basis has advised of its limited availability going forward over the coming months.

Clare Homeless Action team continues to engage with all necessary stakeholders, service providers and local supports in order to adopt a collaborative approach to the tackling of homelessness.

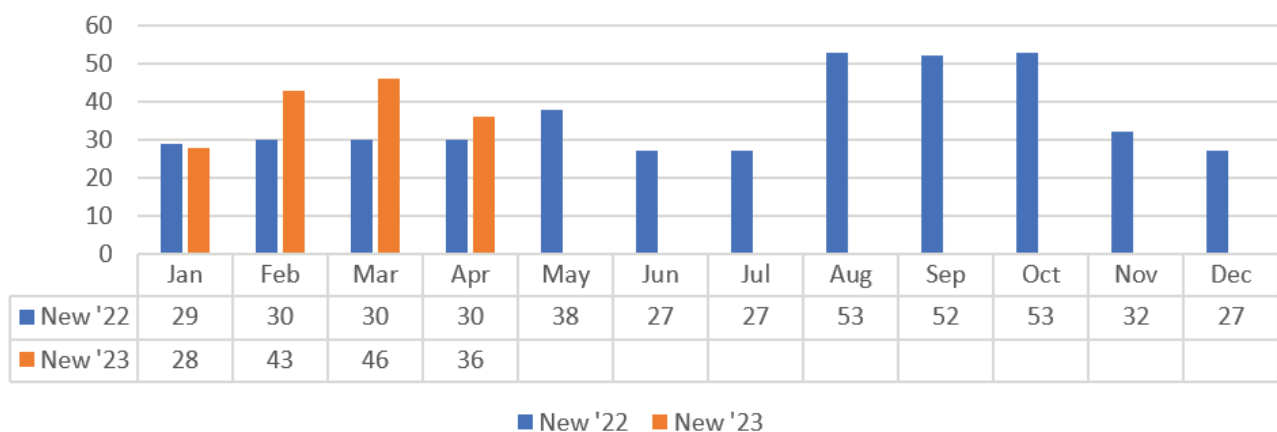
**Exits from Homeless Services**

Clare Homeless Action Team continues to focus on exits from homeless services and during the period 24/03/23 to 13/04/2023 the following exited from homelessness:

- 1 x returned to family.
- 1 x Housing First Tenancy
- 1 x LA Tenancy.



**New Presentations 2022 vs 2023**



**Emergency Accommodation Status as of 13th April, 2023:**

|                                 | Families  | Adults    | Dependents | Providers |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| Laurel Lodge                    | 0         | 13        | 0          | 1         |
| Laurel Lodge Weather Initiative | 0         | 6         | 0          |           |
| Cusack Lodge                    | 5         | 7         | 11         | 1         |
| Westbrook                       | 0         | 16        | 0          | 1         |
| Westbrook Weather Initiative    | 0         | 1         | 0          | 0         |
| Ashford Court                   | 11        | 19        | 20         | 1         |
| EA Families                     | 2         | 2         | 4          | 2         |
| EA Individuals                  | 0         | 4         | 0          | 4         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                    | <b>18</b> | <b>68</b> | <b>35</b>  | <b>10</b> |

**Support to tenants at risk of homelessness**

The Housing Department is helping tenants who are at risk of homelessness due to the lifting of the eviction ban. All options for tenants presenting with a Notice to Quit and considered to be at risk of homelessness are being considered. If the tenant has means to purchase their existing accommodation, the local authority home loan scheme can be explored. Other measures include seeking to secure alternative accommodation through the HAP placefinder or allocating a local authority dwelling, if appropriate. The purchase of their current home under the tenant-in-situ scheme can also be considered, if all other options are not available, to prevent the household entering emergency accommodation. The support and advice of Threshold is invaluable to tenants in these circumstances.

A new Cost Rental Tenant in Situ scheme (CRTiS) is also in place to support tenants who are at risk of homelessness and do not qualify for social housing supports. This Scheme is managed by the Housing Agency and the Housing Department is responsible for initial assessments and referrals. Where all alternative options have been exhausted, the Housing Agency will purchase the property and rent it to the tenants at their current rents. The Council will use a combination of existing supports and new measures to provide assistance and prevent homelessness.

**Approved Housing Bodies**

Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) operating in the county have proved invaluable in providing new-build housing under the Capital Assistance Scheme for elderly, homeless and people with disabilities. They are also a key player in delivering turnkey units under the Capital Advance Leasing Facility, (CALF), for families and single households. This year they are expected to deliver 67 no. approved units as outlined below, as well as a number of other projects that have yet to be approved by the Department. The purchase and refurbishment of existing second-hand properties for specific identified disability needs among our approved applicants is also part of their remit. They provide positive engagement with their tenants and various supports to encourage upkeep of their homes and estates.

The Housing Department provides supports to Approved Housing Bodies throughout throughout the various stages of a capital project from initially providing support for the project, seeking Department funding, arranging Agreements, making payments to the AHBs and drawdown from the Dept. putting Deeds of Mortgage in place and reporting all new loans to the Central Credit Register. Subsequently, we nominate tenants for allocation and arrange lease payments monthly. AHB forum meetings are also held on a quarterly basis to discuss progress on housing provision and any ongoing issues. The Council recognises the important role played by Approved Housing Bodies in meeting housing need, providing good quality homes and positive communities for our tenants.

**Affordable Housing Schemes for County Clare**

Clare County Council completed an Expression of Interest survey on all media formats to ascertain levels of interest and eligibility in the county to access potential affordable housing schemes in Ennis and Shannon. Under the eligibility criteria for Affordable Housing Clare did not qualify at a county level to deliver Affordable Housing as the HNDA (Housing Needs and Demand Assessment) conducted as part of the Development Plan process does not meet the affordability constraint threshold as set by the DHLGH.

In consideration of recent flexibility introduced by the DHLGH in relation to urban centres in excess of 10,000 population, CCC prepared a submission and applied to the Department in early March for both Ennis & Shannon, for access to the (AHF) Affordable Housing Fund, subject to CCC satisfying the established criteria as set out by the Department. We have just been advised by the DHLGH that they agree with and support our submission and that they look forward to receiving a detailed AHF application and Business Case for consideration in due course. We can now proceed with preparing applications and business cases for potential affordable schemes in both towns. It is important to note that a separate application and business case needs to be submitted and prepared for each scheme

**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. The draft regulations were presented to the Elected Members at a workshop on 24th February. The Elected Members requested further time to consider these draft regulations and prepare submissions on same. Following this further input the Councils submission on behalf of the Elected Members was returned to the Department of Housing on 14th March. Clare County Council now await the finalised regulations, confirmation of a commencement date for the scheme, and circular in relation to same. While awaiting further information we are preparing to administer the scheme in the context of staffing and IT capacity.

### New County Library construction project

Construction work continues to make progress on the new Clare County Library and Art Gallery building. The external composite cladding panel installation, level 03 primary structure steel frame and all other reinforced concrete works are now complete. Blockwork and insulation works will be completed shortly. The staircore steel frame and curtain wall and glazing frames installation is underway.

The state-of-the-art new build will provide a key resource for research, study, recreation and art in a centralised location of Ennis town adjacent to the well-established glór theatre.



### Update on capital programme

Works are ongoing on our ambitious capital programme, with schemes in Scarriff, Clarecastle and Sixmilebridge under construction currently. Design work is continuing to progress on a number of other social housing projects, which are at various stages of development.



Construction work underway on the Scarriff housing development.



Construction work in progress on the Clarecastle project.



3D image of the Sixmilebridge project, which is currently under construction.



## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

| SHIP Capital                                      | No. approved | Current stage  | Start Date         | Completion Date    |
|---|--------------|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| Scarriff  | 18           | Under construction.  | Q1 2023            | Q3 2024            |
| Doonbeg Lands                                     | 8            | Stage 2 approved by DHLGH.<br>Design recommenced.  | Q4 2024            | Q4 2025            |
| Clarecastle                                       | 2            | Under Construction.  | Q1 2023            | Q4 2023            |
| Drumcliff Rd. Ennis                               | 26           | Stage 2 approved by DHLGH.<br>Part VIII Withdrawn. Determination issued to ABP and awaiting outcome.                   | Q3 2023            | Q4 2024            |
| Sixmilebridge                                     | 15           | Stage 4 approval. Contractor appointed.  | Q1 2023            | Q2 2024            |
| Ennistymon  | 30           | Stage 2 approved. Stage 3 application currently being prepared.  | Q2 2023            | Q4 2024            |
| Gort Rd. Ennis                                    | 20           | Stage 2 approved. Public consultation held in January 2023. Planning application being prepared for submission to ABP. | Q3 2023            | Q4 2024            |
| Moore Street, Kilrush                             | 21           | Stage 1 approval. Design Team appointed.   | Q1 2023            | Q2 2025            |
| Doonbeg Road, Kilkee                              | 25           | Stage 1 approval. Design Team has been appointed.  | Q4 2023            | Q2 2025            |
| St. Senan's Terrace, Kilrush                      | 5            | Single Stage approval.   | Q2 2023            | Q4 2023            |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                                   | <b>165</b>   |  |                    |                    |
| Bruachlan, Westbury (Cooperative Housing Ireland) | 22           | CALF - Property transfer complete, reapply for planning permission in due course when site assessment completed        | Q2 2022            | Q2 2025            |
| Limerick Road, Ennis (Cluid Housing Assoc)        | 15           | CALF Acquisition - Under construction  | Q3 2022            | Q2 2023            |
| Limerick Road, Ennis (Inis Housing)               | 18           | CALF Turnkey - construction in progress  | Q1 2022            | Q3 2023            |
| Market Street, Ennis (Peter McVerry Trust)        | 14           | CAS Turnkey - construction to commence.  | Q1 2023            | Q1 2024            |
| Cluain na Laoi, Kilkishen                         | 16           | CALF Turnkey - construction commenced.<br>6 units to be delivered in Q1 2024<br>10 units to be delivered in Q2 2024    | Q1 2023<br>Q1 2023 | Q1 2024<br>Q2 2024 |
| Church Road, Tulla                                | 2            | CALF Turnkey (Part V) - under construction   | Q1 2022            | Q2 2023            |
| Ballyminogue, Scarriff                            | 4            | CALF Turnkey - under construction  | Q1 2023            | Q2 2023            |
| Dooneen Park, Kilrush                             | 2            | CAS Construction - under construction.   | Q4 2022            | Q2 2023            |
| Kincora Park, Ennis                               | 1            | CAS Construction - completed   | Q4 2022            | Q1 2023            |
| Ahsfield Close                                    | 6            | CAS Construction - Dept approved   | Q2 2023            | Q2 2024            |
| Roslevan  | 25           | CALF Turnkey - construction in progress  | Q2 2022            | Q2 2023            |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                                   | <b>125</b>   |  |                    |                    |
| <b>Total</b>                                      | <b>290</b>   |  |                    |                    |

# CULTURAL SERVICES - LIBRARY, ARTS, MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

## Clare County Library




10 home deliveries of library books and resources were made this month.

Online resources usage as follows: e-audiobooks still the most in demand.

|                       |                      |                             |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1652<br>E-Books       | 3156<br>E-Audiobooks | 808<br>E-Magazines          |
| 655<br>Online courses | 2314<br>Press Reader | 69 Transparent<br>Languages |

## Marketing and social media

A contact information card for new library members is being piloted in Ennis library. A new information page detailing all sensory resources and services has been finalised for the library website.

|   | New Followers | Total Followers | Posts Reach/ Impressions | Post Likes | Engagement |
|---|---------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------|------------|
|  | 51            | 6935            | 18218                    | 797        | 2800       |
|  | 2             | 2103            | 11400                    | 92         | 330        |
|  | 47            | 1866            | 6728                     | 797        | 1500       |

|                                    |      |
|------------------------------------|------|
| Total number of live events        | 304  |
| Total attendances at live events   | 4319 |
| Total number of outreach events    | 11   |
| Total audiences at outreach events | 437  |

## Right to Read

All branches of Clare libraries are delivering storytime sessions to families, Junior Classes in Primary Schools and Early Learning Centres in the county as part of the national “Spring Into Storytime” programme under the Right to Read Strategy. These events continue to build strong links between libraries and Early Learning Centres, Primary Schools and parents of young children focusing on the importance of introducing books and the joy of sharing stories from the earliest age.

Shannon, Sixmilebridge and Newmarket on Fergus Libraries have recently benefitted from a Community Foundation of Ireland grant to replenish bookstock for adult learners and teenagers with migrant families in mind. Shannon and Sixmilebridge will host a series of events on a “welcome” theme for teenagers and primary school children who have moved to this area of Clare from Ukraine over the past year with the first music and art events taking place on Friday, 21st April.



The “World of Welcome” Project 2023 will include songwriting and music tech for teens events facilitated by the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board who will also host two podcasting workshops for Secondary School students at Shannon Library. Other events include puppetry workshops for schools in the region by visual artist and puppeteer, Sarah Fuller. Creative writing and poetry workshops tailored to primary and secondary school students will be delivered by authors Debbie Thomas and Tracey Fahy and artist Tatyana Feeny. Their sessions will focus on the theme of welcome, friendship, and what children and young adults hold dearest. The objective of all events is to help children know themselves better, grow in confidence and make lasting friendships in their communities in County Clare



## Healthy Ireland

Five Healthy Ireland at Your Library events took place in April. Yoga teacher Colette Nagle delivered three active storytimes with yoga in Kilrush, Kildysart and Kilkee Libraries during the Easter break from school. Colette Nagle also delivered a similar workshop for children at Ennistymon Library.

Yoga teacher Trish Cleary delivered a Chair Yoga class to adults in Tulla Library. This popular class is accompanied with music and takes participants on a trip down memory lane with Doris Day and Andy Williams.

## Creative Ireland

Cruinniú na nÓg will take place on 10th June, 2023, and planning is well under way. A total of 26 events will take place around the county. Twelve schools are currently participating in creative activities which will culminate in exhibitions or performances on the day. Highlights include a music and rap workshop with King Thomond Direct Provision, animation workshops in Shannon library and a performance facilitated by Ukrainians in Lisdoonvarna.

## Decade of Centenaries

The Decade of Centenaries 2023 Project Awards were granted to East Clare Memorial Group, Mid Clare Brigade Commemoration Group, West Clare War of Independence Group, Dúchas na Sionna, Lissycasey Historical Group, Joe Ó Muircheartaigh, Brian Spring, Inis Cathaigh Kilrush Comhaltas and Marie Connole. Three historical lectures are in planning – Colm Liddy will give a talk on Nan Hogan in Shannon Library and Joe Power will discuss the Civil War in Clare in Kilrush Library and DeValera Library in Ennis.

## Clare Archives

The Barrett collection continues to be catalogued and processed, photographs from the collection are to be used in an upcoming documentary on RTÉ in May. Material from the Kilrush Urban District Council's collection has been identified for conservation as a priority for this year. A further accrual of material from the Derrynaveagh National School Collection has been donated dating between 1867-1873. An accrual of material from the John Holohan Collection has been donated. John Holohan, 1870-1941, was a Feakle auctioneer and building contractor.

Each month the archives' service continues to deal with queries from the public wishing to view the material from the Archives' collections. Queries relating to Board of Health Records and Our Lady's Hospital Records have been dealt with this month through research by the Archivist. Records Management queries relating to the LGMA Retention Schedule by various sections in terms of appraisal of records for retention or destruction have been carried out. The scanning project is continuing. Material relating to Clare County Council's Rates and Valuations have been completed. A selection of material from Kilrush Urban District Council which was in existence from 1899-2001, is next on the digitisation programme for the coming month.

Data is being inputted into the Digital Repository of Ireland's system to allow a new digital collection to be added to the repository each month. The Clare Grand Jury Collection has been ingested at Digital Repository of Ireland Search Results (dri.ie). The Board of Guardian Records' metadata is the current project as the next collection to be available through the DRI.

## CLARE ARTS OFFICE

### Arts in the Community

Hospital radio continued twice a week in St Joseph's Hospital, Ennis, and arts activities in Raheen Hospital. Clare Youth Theatre continued to meet in glór and Kilkee where a second group has been established. Two new murals on electrical boxes were created in Ennis at Lifford and Carmody Street.

### Support to Artists and Arts Organisations

The Arts Officer conducted two Arts in Clare slots on Clare FM in April. The Arts Office also assisted with Darkwater production filming in Killaloe/Scariff and Mountshannon and Hidden Assets filming in Shannon and Parteen. The Arts Office monthly newsletter was issued. Nine meetings took place on regional and national projects as well as a quarterly meeting of Music Generation Clare. Ennis Mela was shortlisted at the LAMA awards for Best Festival.

### Arts Events

Culturlann Sweeney, Kilkee hosted two film screenings, an Easter Art Camp, a number of youth theatre workshops and 2 concerts with 246 people attending. Three exhibitions took place in Ennis, Scariff and Kilkee and the Arts Officer opened an exhibition in Ennistymon Courthouse Gallery. The first of the Riches of Clare concert series took place as part of the Kilfenora Trad Festival.

### Social Media Stats

The Arts Office Facebook groups had a combined membership of 4,551 an increase of 3.3% on March 2023. Facebook pages reached 3,982 people in April and Twitter profiles reached 3,958.

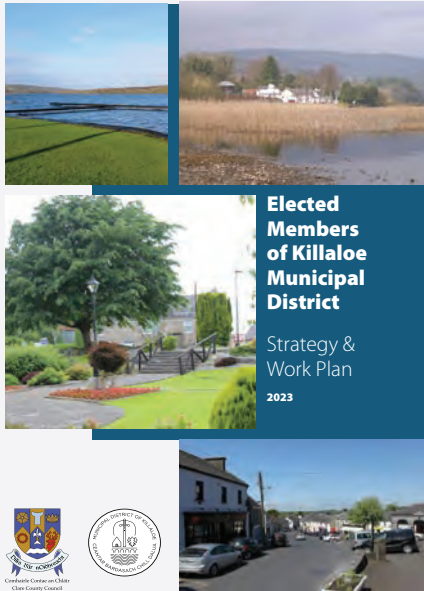
### Clare Museum

The Museum will hold workshops for primary schools at the museum in late April. Two classes have been booked in, but a greater response is expected after the Easter Holidays. In the month ahead, the curator will also organize a programme of public talks by historians and archaeologists for the rest of the year. A student from UL completed his placement at the museum and listed and researched some 200 postcards from the Georgina Frost collection. This will speed up the cataloguing of this collection for the curator.

With the advent of the new procurement system, the curator has identified that most contracts in the museum will have to be retendered in the coming weeks and months, as most have been in place for more than four years. Clare Museum posted 15 times to social media, mainly highlighting interesting objects in the museum but also highlighting upcoming museum activities. A total of 150 photographs of items were posted to the museum website during the month. A new blog entry on the Kathleen Griffin autograph book was also posted and promoted on social media. The museum issued a press release promoting the museum's collection policy and seeking objects for museum collection. The curator was subsequently interviewed in Clare FM. As a result, several discussions have taken place with members of the public who are considering donating items to the collection, though no items have been formally transferred yet.

## KILLALOE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

### Elected Members of Killaloe Municipal District – Strategy & Work Plan



The Elected Members of Killaloe Municipal District – Strategy & Work Plan.

The ‘Elected Members of Killaloe Municipal District – Strategy & Work Plan’ is a new strategy and work programme, launched in April, for the future planning, growth and development of East Clare with a specific focus on regenerating towns and villages and supporting the growth of tourism in the area and strengthening local democracy.

The strategy was adopted by the Elected Members at the recent meeting of Killaloe MD and sets out to further align local Killaloe MD level priorities and strategic objectives with new national and county policies. The welcoming of new communities to the MD is a key focus in the strategy, as is the consideration of the need for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

This new plan has responded to updated national policies and guidelines such as Best Practice Recommendations for Local Authorities on the Operation of Municipal Districts – November 2022, the Climate Action Plan 2023, and the new Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029.

Fifteen priority projects for Killaloe MD are set out in the new plan and include:

- Develop Town and Village Renewal Schemes and Plans
- Implement the Killaloe-Ballina Town

- Enhancement and Mobility Strategy (2022)
- Delivery of sustainable housing, climate action projects and Greenway and Blueway projects in East Clare
- Sustainable development of Inis Cealtra as a tourism product
- Enhanced linkages and opportunities with Further education and skills
- Undertake a plan for Two Mile Gate/Ballycuggeran Amenity
- Enhance sustainable mobility and connectivity to East Clare from the Mid-West region.

Strengthening local democracy and the enhancement of services delivered to the people at Municipal District level is a key consideration. The strategy and work plan reinforces the critical role that the Killaloe Municipal District office in Scarriff, our outdoor workers and all Local Authority staff play in the planning and delivery of services at the local level for the betterment of East Clare and the county.



Elected Members and Staff of Killaloe MD at the launch of the Elected Members of Killaloe Municipal District – Strategy & Work Plan.

### Rural Regeneration Development Fund - Scarriff Regeneration Plan

Progress continues on this Category 2 project. The overall project also includes proposed public realm improvements to Market Square and construction of a public car park on the adjacent green field site. In that regard, surveying work eg undertaking levels, survey existing service layouts of the existing square are near conclusion and enabled plans for the future design of the Market Square be further developed and considered.

Discussions on proposed plans between the Municipal District and the community, represented by Scarriff Town Team and Scarriff Community Council, continued during April

with a view to arriving at a design of Market Square and town centre. Any plans will be required to show how the enhancement of the Market Square would be transformative, create a sense of place, and a safe, secure, attractive and enjoyable public realm, with Access for All, assisting with Government Policy on climate change and sustainable town centre regeneration priorities.

### Killaloe-Ballina Town Enhancement and Mobility Strategy

Carrig's Lane – In April, procurement on improvements to Carrig's Lane commenced as did a detailed design for

this important laneway linking Main Street with other commercial areas on Abbey Street. A number of adjoining properties owners were consulted during April to ensure the opportunities for upgrading the laneway benefit all.

Killaloe Courthouse – Responsibility for the preparation of a feasibility study, in line with the objective for the site, transferred to the Municipal District in late April, following the receipt of Town and Village Renewal Funds. It is anticipated the Feasibility Study will be commenced over the summer with completion by year end.



Extract from Killaloe – Ballina Town Enhancement and Mobility Strategy showing potential for Killaloe Courthouse enhancements.

In conjunction with colleagues in Tipperary County Council, Killaloe MD drafted Order of Magnitude Costs in April for the individual projects in the Killaloe-Ballina Town Enhancement Plan to enable a planned economic and financial appraisal for a future RRDF Application.

### Ballycuggeran - Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme

Following the receipt of funding offer in December for improvement to footpaths and accessibility, the focus of the MD office has been on consultation with stakeholders and accessibility advocates to devise the best approach to provide access to the waters for persons with disabilities. In that regard, following meetings with a number of groups a preferred design approach for the provision of a hoist and access pontoon has been agreed. A procurement process commenced in late April for the preferred design and it is anticipated the hoist will be provided and installed over the summer.

### Ballycuggeran – Mountain Biking National Endo Race Series



Enduro-Race Series Ballycuggeran, East Clare April 2023.

Killaloe MD assisted with Limerick Mountain Biking Club in the successful hosting of a mountain biking race in Ballycuggeran Woods, Killaloe, on Sunday, 2nd April, as part of a national series called the Grassroots Enduro Series. Over 220 bikers took part in fine weather, including

the overall competition winner, Oisín O’Callaghan, who is a professional downhill mountain biker and winner of the Junior Downhill World Championship in 2020. The event showcased the amenities of East Clare and Lough Derg and demonstrated the potential for development of a Mountain Biking trail in East Clare. In response to the identification of off-road, trail and mountain biking cycling in East Clare as a priority in the Elected Members’ Strategic plan, Killaloe MD attended a Cycling Ireland seminar in April to explore the possibilities that off-road cycling can contribute to the recreational and tourism product in East Clare. Killaloe MD continues to explore this possibility with all key stakeholders.

**Reduce Your Use**

Killaloe MD Office in Scarriff is continuing its participation in the Reduce Your Use energy efficiency campaign which is designed to target reductions in energy use. Successful measures implemented by the Killaloe MD Team in Q1 of 2023 include, reducing/maintaining set office and library temperatures, external lighting switch off overnight, and upgrade of the MD office lighting to LED. This has resulted in c.20% greater reduction of energy with a detailed appraisal to follow at the end of the monitoring period.

During the course of the month Killaloe MD staff were involved in the following projects/meetings/correspondence:

Adopted 2023 Schedule of Municipal District Works underway on roads in preparation for Surface Dressing, and restoration improvement strengthening roadworks, e.g. at Carrowena and Ayle Cross - Magherabaun.



Ongoing liaison with PMO and their main contractor Sisk, regarding Killaloe Bypass construction progress, temporary traffic management arrangements - their impact on the permanent traffic lights, and haulage route impacts.

Consultation undertaken with representatives of Bodyke NS regarding proposed improvements works to the footpath in the vicinity of the school.

Carparking spaces re-marked at Killaloe MD Offices and Scarriff Library.



Ballycuggeran slipway repair and maintenance works completed to improve slipway traction.



Emergency repair roadworks completed at night at Killaloe Bridge and approach roads.



**NTA Active Travel**

Clarisford – 90% complete – Substantial completion on southern section between Clarisford and Bypass crossing.



Tulla – 50% complete - Works on pedestrian crossings and footpath upgrades re-commenced, with expected completion mid-May 2023.



**Safety Improvement Work projects**

Draft designs nearing completion in advance of landowner engagement at Cloonamirran and Cranagher. Review meeting completed to consider measures at L3084 Killaloe, including stakeholder engagement with the local creche.

Draft design completed for R462 Tulla safety improvement works.

Gateway signs and red antiskid resurfacing completed on the Kilkishen 2022 safety improvement works project.



# PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### TOWN CENTRE FIRST

#### Sixmilebridge Town Centre First Masterplan

Clare County Council is supporting the development of a Town Plan for Sixmilebridge to enhance public infrastructure and community facilities, re-activate vacant property and create employment opportunities. Following various public consultation events, some draft proposals have been prepared. A second round of public consultation is now underway to gain feedback on these proposals. A community drop-in event will be held on Saturday, 6th May, from 10am-2pm in the Town Square, adjacent the river. The community and stakeholders are also invited to visit [yoursay.clarecoco.ie/Sixmilebridge-tcf](https://yoursay.clarecoco.ie/Sixmilebridge-tcf) or the Kilfinaghty Public Library to review the proposal and provide feedback. The consultation commenced on Friday, 28th April, and will be open to 5pm Sunday, 14th May.

The Design Team Allies and Morrison will also present the emerging strategy and proposals to feed into the Draft Masterplan to the Elected Members of Shannon MD and the Town Team on Friday 4th May 2023.

The Town Team was formalised on 14th March and, following on from that, the Town Team Officers were formally elected at the last Town Team meeting held in Sixmilebridge on Tuesday, 18th April.



#### Shannon Town Centre Masterplan

The Town Centre First team, in collaboration with the Shannon Municipal District, is engaged in ongoing discussions with the URDF department and key stakeholders as part of the implementation of the Shannon Town Centre Masterplan.

Clare County Council has secured over €200k in funding under Interreg Europe. This funding aims to build on enterprise development in Shannon, particularly for SMEs, and to

support potential enhancement of aerospace clusters for the future advancement of an Innovation Campus for Shannon. The Interreg Europe Project, called 'Moving towards Aerospace', seeks to 'help public actors create an ecosystem that supports SMEs from industrial sector segments facing possible obsolescence to achieve a new role in the expanding aerospace sector'. This is a four-year programme with eight European partners sharing experiences and learning best practice from each other. Clare County Council is working in partnership with Shannon Airport Group and other stakeholders to advance this project.



#### Lisdoonvarna Vision

The Town Centre First Team continues to work with the design team appointed for the Reimagine Hometown Architect Initiative in the development of the 'Lisdoonvarna 2050 — A Vision of Wellbeing' project. This project involves designing a vision for Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare, that is rooted in its heritage of wellbeing. The project team sees this heritage as a key asset in the town's transition towards a sustainable and equitable future.

Building on this project, the recent Heritage Plan and a commitment from Fáilte Ireland to develop a Tourism Plan for Lisdoonvarna, the Town Centre First team is co-ordinating a cross-directorate working group including Economic Development and Planning, Rural Development and Tourism, to scope an integrated masterplan for Lisdoonvarna.



**Clare Maritime Education Zone (Clare MEZ) - Kilrush Maritime Training Centre**



**Part VIII Planning Application**

Discussions are continuing with the property owner of Creek Lodge together with ongoing discussions with Shannon Commercial Properties who own Kilrush Boatyard regarding the final property requirements. Options for improved access to the site which will ensure the health and safety and access needs of the operation are met. Property negotiations are on-going, and the elected members will be fully briefed on the property solutions identified.

**Advisory Board of Clare MEZ DAC**

The Project Delivery Team are currently identifying industry partners who will form the Advisory Board of Clare MEZ DAC. This company has been established as a key requirement of the Enterprise Ireland funding which was allocated to this project previously.

**Meeting with the National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI)/ Munster Technological University (MTU)**

The Project Delivery Team together with the Chief Executive met this week with the Head of Faculty from MTU and the Head of Commercial Operations with the NMCI to explore the potential for a state led partnership together with membership to the Board of Clare MEZ DAC. The meeting provided an excellent opportunity to appraise the team in particular of changes to the certification which have taken place in the maritime training space. Previously, Clare County Council with providers of simulated training however at that time the simulation accreditation was not approved. Regulatory approval is now imminent which allows Kilrush Maritime Training Centre to explore the potential of offering a world class training facility which centres on both the traditional training infrastructure but also provides cutting edge disruptive technologies to an international audience. This would provide a one-of-a-kind centre of excellence in West Clare to the highest of industry standards.

An invite was extended to the French Consulate General – Loic Guyon to attend a meeting in Áras Contae an Chláir with a view to re-establishing the twinning of Kilrush with the Breton town of Plouzané. The French Consulate has accepted the invitation and will meet with members of the twinning committee in Clare County Council, the Chief Executive together with representatives from the Kilrush MTC Delivery Team for a presentation on the project proposal. This will be followed by a visit to the town of Kilrush and specifically to our property solution at Kilrush Marina. This will provide a unique opportunity to establish potential linkages between the Institute of Marine Studies and the Maritime Training Centre together with potential sources of funding which may be available through the Twinning instrument with respect to the Kilrush MTC.

**Funding**

The Project Delivery Team met with Enterprise Ireland in March to both introduce the team to the regional staff and also to provide an up-date on the project. The Regional Director sought an updated implementation plan for the REDF Panel by end of summer 2023, to include the funding plan for the project. The Delivery Team are exploring all other avenues of potential funding sources as a matter of urgency. Members of the team attended the Climate Action Economic Opportunities Conference in Tullamore on Wednesday, 26th April, to explore potential funding sources. The EU Just Transition Fund (JTF) is a fund created under the 2021-2027 programming round. It operates under Regulation (EU) (2021/1056) within the framework of the EU Cohesion policy. The Fund’s single specific objective is to support the regions and communities in Europe that are most negatively affected by the transition to climate neutrality, ensuring that no one is left behind. The Just Transition Fund (JTF) was demonstrated as a suitable funding stream for the project. While Kilrush is not located within the identified territory (i.e. the wider midlands) projects outside the territory can be accepted as long as it can demonstrate economic diversification for employment amongst other criteria. The emerging funding call which is expected to open in Q2 of 2023 will require a draw down and spend by 2026 which is an extremely quick turnaround. Kilrush MTC is poised to access this funding and can achieve tight timeframes in terms of draw-down. The Eastern Midlands Region (EMRA) was appointed the Managing Authority of this new EU fund in December 2021 by



*Single Specific Objective of JTF as set out in Regulation (EU) (2021/1056):*

*To mitigate the adverse effects of the climate transition by supporting the most affected territories and workers concerned and to promote a balanced socio-economic transition.*



the Minister for Environment Climate and Communications. As the Managing Authority, EMRA will have overall responsibility for the implementation, management, monitoring, and evaluation of the programme.

EMRA and the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications are working closely with programme partners

to prepare the implementation phase of the programme and start delivering on its objectives. A formal launch of the programme is planned for 2023.

The project team will liaise with the point of contact from this conference to ensure Kilrush MTC is prepared for the funding call once it opens.

## FORWARD PLANNING

### Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029

Following a Special Council meeting on 9th March, 2023, when the elected members of Clare County Council agreed by resolution to make the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029, the Plan came into effect on 20th April. The Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 is now the principal planning document for the functional area of the local authority area over the six-year statutory period of the plan 2023-2029. The key role of the Development Plan is to set out the vision, policy, strategy and delivery mechanism for different forms of future development in order to deliver quality planning and development across the county. The Plan sets out the planning policy framework including the land-use zoning for all settlements within the county (with the exception of Shannon which will be subject of a new Local Area Plan to commence soon).

The Plan consists of 10 volumes which include:

**Volume 1** - Written Statement

**Volume 2** - Maps

**Volume 3a** - Ennis Municipal District Written Statement and Settlement Maps

**Volume 3b** - Shannon Municipal District Written Statement and Maps

**Volume 3c** - Killaloe Municipal District Written Statements and Settlement Maps

**Volume 3d** - West Clare Municipal District Written Statements and Settlement Maps

**Volume 4** - Record of Protected Structures

**Volume 5** - Clare Renewable Energy Strategy

**Volume 6** - Clare Wind Energy Strategy

**Volume 7** - Clare Retail Strategy

**Volume 8** - Clare Housing Strategy

**Volume 9** - Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary (SIFP)

**Volume 10** - Natura Impact Report (Appropriate Assessment)

**Volume 10a** - Environmental Report (Strategic Environmental Assessment)

**Volume 10b** - SEA Non-Technical Summary

**Volume 10c** - SEA Statement

**Volume 10c** - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

On 18th April the Minister of State in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage issued a draft Direction to Clare County Council, upon the recommendation of the Office of the



Planning Regulator. The Draft Direction was made having regard to the opinion of the Minister that Clare County Council, in making the development plan, has failed to implement recommendations made to it, as the planning authority, by the Office under Section 31AM of the Act; the Plan, as made, fails to set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area; the Plan is inconsistent with national and regional policy objectives specified in the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES); and the Plan, as made, is not in compliance with the requirements of the Act.

The Draft Direction sets out the steps which the Planning Authority is required to take with regard to the County Development Plan. These relate to specific zoning objectives for lands identified in Kilrush, Killaloe, Mullagh, Liscannor, Broadford, Cooraclare, Ballynacally and Ennis, as well as the

provision for 'Existing Accesses onto National Secondary Roads' under 'Exceptional Circumstances' of section 11.2.9.3 of the Plan. The Draft Direction includes a Statement of Reasons for requiring these steps to be taken by the Planning Authority. The Draft Direction is available for viewing on the Clare County Council website and at the Council Offices in Ennis, Shannon, Kilrush, Ennistymon and Scariff.

In accordance with the statutory requirement of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, a notice of the Draft Direction issued by the Minister was published in the Clare Champion on 28th April which set out the reasons for the Draft Direction and invited submissions/observations to be made during the two week public consultation period from 28th April to 11th May. The elected members of the planning authority may make a submission directly to the Office of the Planning Regulator at any time up to the conclusion of the two-week public consultation period and must also send any such submissions to the Minister.

Clare County Council is required to prepare a Chief Executive's Report on all submissions received, which must then be circulated to the Elected Members, the Office of the Planning Regulator, and the Minister. The Office of the Planning Regulator will then consider the Chief Executive's report together with any submissions made and will make a further recommendation to the Minister, regarding whether the Direction is to be issued with or without minor amendments, or not issued.

**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.

Clare County Council is responsible for preparing maps that show the zoned lands which fall within the scope of the RZLT and to consider submissions that are received during the consultation process. In this regard, a Draft Map was prepared by the Forward Planning Team and was placed on public display from 1st November, 2022, to 1st January, 2023. A total of 63 submissions were received and all submissions have been published on the Council website. The process of assessing the submissions and making a determination has been completed, and landowners who made submissions requesting their lands to be removed from the scope of the RZLT were notified of the decision by 1st April 2023. Submitters can appeal the determination to An Bord Pleanála. The closing date for appeals is 1st May, 2023.

The next stage is the preparation of a Supplemental Map. The Forward Planning Team is currently in the process of identifying additional zoned land – not included on the Draft Map – which falls within the scope of the RZLT to be included on a supplemental map. The Supplemental Map will then be placed on public display from the 1st May, 2023, to 1st June, 2023.

During this time, the Council will be accepting submissions from landowners and the public. Information on this stage of the process will be available on the Council's website including the Supplemental Map, links to all the necessary information, a short explanatory video, guidance on how to make a submission and points of contact options. While the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage will be launching a national media campaign, the Council will also launch its own media campaign, to include social media posts and adverts in the local radio and newspaper, to further raise local awareness and provide information on the RZLT.

**Ennistymon Enhancement Plan**

The Ennistymon Enhancement Plan received an award at the annual Building and Architect of the Year Awards 2023, a national awards scheme that recognises excellence in architecture and the built environment. The project won the 'Social Impact Award', which recognises projects delivered across the country that improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of communities. The involvement of the local community in the plan-making process was a key component of the Ennistymon Enhancement Plan. The project team engaged with the local community through a robust and intensive two-stage consultation process, involving public consultation events, written and online questionnaires, and targeted consultation with key stakeholder groups. The project team engaged with the youth population through an art competition where participants were asked to design 'a postcard from the future Ennistymon'. Clare County Council partnered with Clare Local Development Company, Ennistymon Town Team and Helena McElmeel Architects in the delivery of the Ennistymon Enhancement Plan.



The Ennistymon Enhancement Plan: Social Impact Award winner at the Building and Architect of the Year Awards 2023.

### The Corofin Enhancement Plan

Clare County Council and National Parks & Wildlife Services (NPWS) have formed a strategic partnership to prepare an Enhancement strategy for the village of Corofin. The Corofin Enhancement Plan looks to define new uses for derelict properties and provide public realm improvements through thoughtful and sensitive interventions. A design team led by Hall McKnight Architects has been appointed to assist in the development of the plan. The project team have issued a draft of the final enhancement plan to the steering group for review. The project team worked on preparing the planning packages for key projects arising from the plan in advance of seeking statutory permissions in early May.



Proposed public realm works as part of the Corofin Enhancement Plan.

### The Manchester Martyrs' Monument

The Manchester Martyrs' Monument in Kilrush was restored by Clare County Council in 2022 with grant aid from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage under the Historic Structures Fund and with the support of Cllr Ian Lynch. A new lighting system was installed and fully commissioned in April, which create a strong presence for the monument at night. The lighting system features smart technology which allows the monument to be illuminated in different colours to mark any events or commemorations. The repair and restoration of the Manchester Martyrs' 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.



The restored Manchester Martyrs' Monument at night.

## HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY

### Local Biodiversity Community Funding from National Parks and Wildlife Service NPWS

National Biodiversity Plan funding has been allocated to Clare County Council from NPWS as follows:

1. **Clare Wetlands Survey.** The aim of the project is to select and survey a selection of wetland sites to Fossitt habitat Level 3 and assess their biodiversity value and any correspondence with EU Annex I habitats.
2. **Ennis Bat Survey.** The project proposes to look at the town of Ennis from the perspective of steppingstones and ecological corridors that are available across the settlement for all bat species with a particular focus on Lesser Horseshoe bats which are the primary Qualifying Interest Feature of a number of SACs surrounding the settlement.
3. **Birds - Barn Owl Survey.** This project will assess uptake and breeding status of all nest boxes installed through this project to date, to determine the number that are occupied and to assess breeding success in these nest boxes. This will provide valuable information on the success of this conservation measure, the contribution of this project and of local communities to Barn Owl conservation in the county and importantly to help

- to inform the implementation of future conservation action.
4. **Invasive Alien Species.** Survey to detail the distribution and extent of invasive alien plant species (IAPS) along selected regional and local primary roads in West Clare.
5. **Invasive Alien Species - Quagga Mussel.** This project will monitor the Quagga mussel (*Dreissena rostriformis bugensis*) invasion in the Shannon: informing spread, ecology, impact and management, NUI Dublin.
6. **Killaloe MD – Annual Invasive Species Treatment Killaloe.** This project aims to control and reduction of existing Invasive Alien Species on public roads. This project is a continuation of the recording and treatment of IAS in the Killaloe Municipal District and annual treatment plan.
7. **Rare and Endangered flowers of the Burren Survey.** This project aims to continue to survey and to determine the current status of the rare, threatened and characteristic plants of the Burren.
8. **Mammals – Irish Whale Dolphin Group** will celebrate 30 years of knowledge of the Shannon Dolphins. The celebrating and anniversary will involve educational and survey and conference activities in Clare, Limerick and Kerry.

9. **The Hare’s Corner** project offers landowners practical and accessible support in enhancing biodiversity on their land through creation of habitats such as ponds, native orchards, and mini woodlands and the provision of ecological advice.

The planning section are awaiting funding for four further project proposals:

- The Cratloe Gateway Biodiversity Project with Shannon Municipal District MD as part of the implementation of the Cratloe Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Shannon Municipal District Tree Survey and Management.
- Shannon Municipal District MD Giant Hogweed control on the Errinagh Canal and Blackwater River.
- Ardnaculla Summer School Biodiversity Programme, Hometree.

### Heritage Grants

The Heritage Council have announced funding to Clare communities under the Heritage Council Community Heritage Grant scheme.

### Clare iCAN

A meeting took place in Ennis with the all the Clare Community Archival Network (iCAN) groups, Clare County Council Heritage Officer and the project co-ordinator Lorna Elms. The purpose of this meeting was to catch up on the group’s activities and to update the new and existing groups on the new opportunities and funding that are available to the network through the National Museum and the Heritage Council. Bernie Doherty, Community Archaeologist gave a presentation on 1. aspects of the existing and proposed Archaeological legislation, 2. when National Monuments Service permissions are required and 3. the Community Monument Funding.

### Clare Garden Festival

The Heritage Officer in collaboration with the Environment Awareness Officer, the Clare Climate Change Team and the Healthy County Coordinator are supporting the inclusion of the Rain Garden in the ‘Urban Farming’ Plan for the Clare Garden Festival that took place on Sunday the 30th of April in Ennis.

### Sustainable and Gardening for Biodiversity Course

Sustainable and Gardening for Biodiversity course was held in Miltown Malbay with 38 participants. This course was oversubscribed with more than 70 people signing up for the course, showing the high level of interest in this activity by individuals, community and Tidy Town groups in the county.

### Barn Owl Nest Box Update

Records and information of breeding Barn Owls in Clare from summer 2022 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. Funding has been made available from NPWS to continue to monitor the success of breeding Barn Owls in the county.

### Heritage Presentation

The Heritage Officer made a presentation to the Limerick Clare Education and Training Board Tour Guiding Course students in Miltown Malbay on the Clare County Council Biodiversity Programme 2023.

## DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT - PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The table below shows the number of planning applications processed during the month of April 2023, together with the year to date figures. The percentage of e-planning applications continues to grow with 40% of the planning applications received in April being submitted by electronic means.

| PLANNING APPLICATIONS   | April 2023 | Year to date 2023 |
|---|------------|-------------------|
| No. of planning applications received   | 94         | 386               |
| No. of Planning Decisions made  | 91         | 297               |
| No. of decisions notified by An Bord Pleanála   | 1          | 5                 |
| No. of pre-planning enquiries received  | 13         | 76                |
| No. of Section 5 applications   | 6          | 28                |
| No. of Section 97 Exemption Cert applications (in respect of Part V of the Planning & Dev Act 2000) | 1          | 14                |
| Submissions received regarding Compliance   | 28         | 111               |

### Local Authority Housing

The Planning and Development and Foreshore (Amendment) Act 2022 (No. 47 of 2022) (PDF(A) Act) was enacted in December 2022. The PDF(A) Act makes a number of amendments to the provisions in sections 4 and 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended and inserts a new Section 179A providing an exemption for local authorities from the ‘Part 8’ local authority “own development” approval process and specifies exempted development status for the provision of specified forms of housing developments on designated State lands.

In summary therefore:

- Local Authority Housing now constitutes ‘exempted development’ under Section 4 of the Planning & Development Act.
- The Part 8 process for housing developments no longer applies for Local Authority ‘own development’.

The following criteria also must be met with respect to this exemption:

- the land is owned by the local authority or another specified State Body;
- the land is zoned for residential development;
- the proposed development does not materially contravene the development plan or local area plan for the area;
- the proposed development is in accordance with the relevant local authority’s housing strategy;
- the land is serviced or will be serviced with the necessary supporting infrastructure or facilities within the timeframe of the development;
- the proposed development is not required to undergo environmental impact assessment (EIA) under the EIA Directive or appropriate assessment (AA) under the Habitats Directive; and
- the development works in question are commenced by no later than 31st December, 2024.

In addition to the above local authorities are required to submit quarterly reports on the use of the exemption and enables the Minister to request information on the number of potential sites available for use under the exemption within the functional area of a local authority.

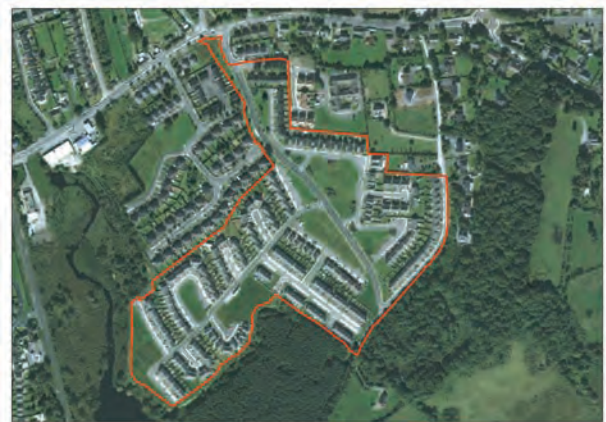
The exemption also includes for all ancillary works associated with the housing developments including new roads or extensions of existing, water and wastewater facilities, laying underground of pipes and sewers, open space areas, amenities, community facilities, car parking, associated flood relief works and ancillary infrastructure.

In terms of public consultation, a site notice and newspaper notice are required to be published at least 8 weeks prior to the commencement of housing development, and must remain in situ for a period of at least 8 weeks. The purpose of the site notice is to inform the public of the nature of the development and advising that works can commence within the period of 8 weeks of the date of the site/newspaper notice, unless there is an application for judicial review.

In terms of liaising with the Elected Members, the Chief Executive of the local authority must inform the Members of the housing development prior to the site notice or newspaper notice being issued. Early engagement with the elected members is recommended as early as possible in order to ensure they are fully informed prior to issuing the site notice or newspaper notice and before the final decision to undertake the development is made. A record showing that the elected members were informed prior to issuing the site notice and newspaper notice should be retained also.

## TAKING IN CHARGE OF HOUSING ESTATES

**Cappahard, Ennis:** At the March Meeting of the Ennis Municipal District the members agreed to take this estate in charge. This development is comprised of 285 units and was the largest unfinished housing estate on the Taking in Charge register. Remedial works of over €600,000 were undertaken by Clare County Council to bring the estate up to taking in charge standards. Surety Bonds of €522,594 were claimed and received and the remainder was funded by Clare County Council.



## PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

The table below provides a summary of Enforcement activity for the month of April and for the year to date 2023.

|                             | April 2023 | 2023 to date |
|-----------------------------|------------|--------------|
| New complaints received     | 14         | 19           |
| New files opened            | 7          | 10           |
| Files closed                | 3          | 8            |
| Warning Letter issued       | 10         | 25           |
| Enforcement Notice issued   | 9          | 12           |
| Legal Proceedings initiated | 0          | 0            |

## LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

## PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

- **The Trading Online Voucher Scheme**, which provides grant support to small businesses to develop an e-commerce website, has continued to see strong interest. In April, two further applications was approved bring the year total to ten. Four grants were drawn down in April.
- **Mentoring:** LEO Clare has continued with a strong requirement for all of our Mentoring Options including mentoring in Starting a Business, Finance, Digital Marketing, Export Development and Brexit. In April 24 mentoring applications have been assigned.
- **Training:** LEO Clare continued their training support offering during April. Continuation of longer scales programmes LEO Clare also ran three further training programmes including Start your own business, Understanding Financial Accounts, and a Search Engine Optimisation Workshop.

### April Evaluation Committee Meeting

The Local Enterprise Office Evaluation and Approvals Committee (EVAC) held their second evaluation meeting of 2023 on 30th March. Four Business Expansion grants totalling €144,720 were approved for funding.

### Student Enterprise Awards

The senior competition of the rescheduled county finals took place on 22nd March with a teenage entrepreneur from St. John Bosco Community College, Kildysart being successful and will now represent Clare in the Senior Category at this year's Student Enterprise Programme National Finals on Friday, 5th May.



Pictured (left to right): Leas Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr Ann Norton; Darragh O'Callaghan, OCM Light Bars; Betty Culligan, Business Teacher, St John Bosco Community College; and Padraic McElwee, Head of Enterprise, Local Enterprise Office Clare).

### Property Transactions and Conveyancing

The table below shows the number of property transactions completed by Property Management Unit in April 2023 (up to 25th April), together with the totals for 2023 to date and the full year 2022.

We continue to assist many solicitors on issues associated with title, boundaries, old leasehold folios, etc. 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 type                         | April 2023 | Year to date 2023 | Full year 2022 |
|--|------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Lease / Sub Lease of Property / Building | 0          | 1                 | 4              |
| Licence to use property / building       | 0          | 2                 | 13             |
| Grazing Agreement for Lands              | 2          | 15                | 22             |
| Deed of Transfer signed                  | 2          | 6                 | 19             |
| Contract for Sale / acquisition signed   | 0          | 0                 | 1              |
| Deed of Right of Way / Wayleave signed   | 0          | 0                 | 6              |
| Deed of Rectification / Variation signed | 0          | 1                 | 10             |
| Allotment Agreements signed              | 0          | 39                | 39             |

### Grazing of Lands 2023

All of the agreements for grazing of lands have now been signed for the year 2023, following the annual tender process completed in January.

### Casual Trading

A total of two casual trading licences were issued in April, for Kilrush Horse Fair.

## DERELICT SITES

To date in 2023, a further 14 properties have been identified as derelict. 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. Since the start of the year, 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. Due to the Vacant Property refurbishment Grant (see details below), there is a noticeable increase in derelict and vacant properties on the market at the current time.

We are also seeing the outcome of sales agreed in 2022, with planning applications for refurbishment increasing and some works commencing on individual properties. We are also advising owners of residential properties of the grant that is available for refurbishing vacant and derelict properties to residential use – see further information below. 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 April and the year 2023 to date, together with comparative figures for the full year 2022.

| Derelict Sites  | April 2023 | Year to date 2023 | Full Year 2022 |
|---|------------|-------------------|----------------|
| No. of new files opened   | 3          | 14                | 69             |
| No. of Section 8(2) Notices issued – Intention to enter site on Derelict Sites Register | 6          | 15                | 33             |
| No. of Section 8(7) Notices issued – Entry of site onto Derelict Sites Register         | 4          | 12                | 22             |
| No. of Section 11 Notices issued – Measures required to render the site non-derelict    | 0          | 0                 | 0              |
| No. of files closed / property removed from Derelict Sites Register                     | 0          | 3                 | 21             |
| No. of Notices served to Compulsorily Purchase (CPO) (see note below)                   | 0          | 3                 | 6              |
| No of Vesting Orders signed   | 3          | 3                 | 4              |

### Compulsory acquisition of Derelict sites (CPO)

**2022** Six CPOs were initiated in 2022, three have been vested in Clare County Council and one is outstanding in the Property Registration Authority. The CPO process on two more properties has been ceased as works have commenced on them following engagement with the owners/reputed owners. We are working with the Housing Department to return the first three properties to living accommodation, following refurbishment or re-development.

**2023** A further three CPOs were initiated in the Quarter 1 of 2023 and publicly advertised. The time for submissions have expired and we are now moving on to the Vesting process where applications for registration of title will be made to the Property Registration Authority. These proposed acquisitions by CPO are at the following locations:

- Bungalow at Dough, Spanish Point
- Terraced three storey commercial building at 20 Parnell Street, Ennis, County Clare
- Two storey terraced dwelling at Church Street, Scariff, Co. Clare.

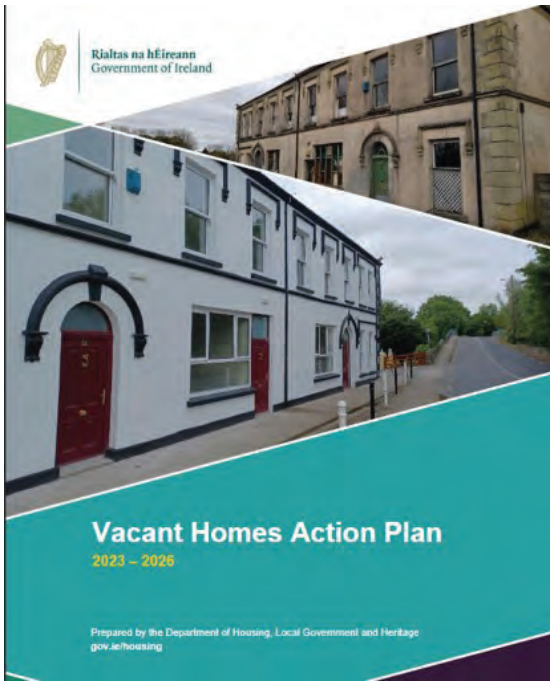
In April 2023, we are commencing work on two further CPOs and details of these will be shortly advertised.

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has recently launched a CPO activation programme for local authorities and have set targets for CPOs for each local authority. In addition, the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (which applies to Ennis and Shannon) will provide funding for CPOs on a rolling basis with the objective being that these properties would then be released to the open market.

## VACANT PROPERTY REFURBISHMENT GRANT- FOR DERELICT AND VACANT PROPERTIES

Clare County Council welcomes the decision by the government to extend the Croí Conaithe Vacant and Derelict Property Refurbishment Grant to those who wish to renovate a vacant or derelict property for either permanent occupancy or long term rent along with increased funding in recognition of the costs involved. This measure will boost the supply of rental properties and options for permanent homes and will deliver on a key plank of Housing for All National Policy and the Vacant Homes Action Plan, the key objective of which is to reduce vacancy and

dereliction in our cities, towns, villages and rural countryside and provide more housing options in the process.



The changes to the existing Vacant Property Refurbishment Scheme were announced 26th April, 2023, and are due to come into effect from 1st May. The key changes are that:

- Vacant properties built prior to 2007 (previously 1993) will now be eligible.
- The grants have been increased:
- Vacant Property – increased from €30,000 to €50,000
- Derelict property requiring structural works – increased from €50,000 to €70,000
- The scheme is now open for rental properties – each property owner will be eligible for one owner occupier grant and one rental grant.

The revised grant amounts are to be applied to all existing approved applications, which have not been drawn down.

Full details of the scheme and eligibility criteria is awaited and will be published when we received it. The contact email address for further information and guidance on the grants scheme is [vacanthomes@clarecoco.ie](mailto:vacanthomes@clarecoco.ie). In addition, a communications programme for the revised scheme will be conducted from May to July to included walk-in clinics and ongoing support will be available for applicants. The objective is to ensure that the approach of the Council is consistent and gives opportunities and information on the grant to owners of vacant and derelict properties. This will include communication to existing applicants, owners of derelict properties that we are currently dealing with and the wider public and elected members.

The following table shows the status of the applications received to date. Based on the applications received and the revised grant levels, there is a potential investment of €3.5 million this year in refurbishment of vacant and derelict properties to be returned to economic use as permanent homes.

| No. of Applications Received           |           | %           |  |
|--|-----------|-------------|--|
| 2022                                   | 33        | 38%         |  |
| 2023                                   | 53        | 62%         |  |
| <b>Total no. of Grant Applications</b> | <b>86</b> | <b>100%</b> |  |
| Decisions Made                         |           |             |  |
| Approved                               | 9         | 10%         |  |
| Approved in Principle                  | 9         | 10%         |  |
| Rejected                               | 4         | 4%          |  |
| Withdrawn                              | 5         | 6%          |  |
| <b>Total</b>                           | <b>27</b> | <b>31%</b>  |  |
| In Progress                            |           |             |  |
| In Progress                            | 10        | 12%         |  |
| Further Information Requested          | 28        | 47%         |  |
| Awaiting Technical Inspection          | 21        | 24%         |  |
| <b>Total</b>                           | <b>59</b> | <b>69%</b>  |  |

## ENNIS MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

### Mayor acknowledges winners of the St Patrick's Day Parade 2023

Following the Ennis Municipal District April meeting, the Mayor of Ennis Municipal District, Cllr Clare Colleran Molloy, and the Deputy Mayor of Ennis MD, Cllr Mary Howard, presented certificates to the winners of the Ennis St Patrick's Day Parade 2023. Each winner received €250 with the overall winner, Ennis National School, securing €500.



Overall Winner - Ennis National School - Ciara Stack with Mayor of Ennis MD, Cllr Clare Colleran Molloy, and Deputy Mayor of Ennis MD, Cllr Mary Howard.





Best Musical Entrant - Ennis Brass Band - Bernard McAllister with Mayor of Ennis MD, Cllr Clare Colleran Molloy, and Deputy Mayor of Ennis MD, Cllr Mary Howard.



Best Visual Spectacle - Clarecastle Show Society - Michael Slattery with Mayor of Ennis MD, Cllr Clare Colleran Molloy, and Deputy Mayor of Ennis MD, Cllr Mary Howard.



Best Interpretation of Theme - Clare Immigrant Support Centre - Orla Ni Eili, Eoin Tynan O'Mahony, Eimear O'Connor, Michelle Healy and Francis Okenebulor with Mayor of Ennis MD, Cllr Clare Colleran Molloy, and Deputy Mayor of Ennis MD, Cllr Mary Howard.



Most Environmentally Aware Entrant - Bus Siúlóide Gaelscoil Mhíchíl Chíosóg - Seonaidh Ni Shiomoin with Mayor of Ennis MD, Cllr Clare Colleran Molloy, and Deputy Mayor of Ennis MD, Cllr Mary Howard.

### Cnoc na Scoile Walkway

Ennis MD carried out resurfacing works on the walkway adjoining the Cnoc na Scoile housing estate. This 175m of walkway provides a key pedestrian access between the Kilrush Road and Ennis National School. The works were carried out during the Easter mid-term break in order to reduce the impact on both students, parents and teachers.



### Market trading areas & disability parking spaces

Line marking and civil works were recently carried out by Ennis MD outdoor crews on market trading areas and disability parking spaces in the lower market area.



### Upgrade to traffic loops

Ennis MD in conjunction with Traffic Solutions recently carried out upgrade works to existing traffic lights in the Ennis area. Loops upgraded include Cornmarket St, Club Bridge, Clare Rd (Captain Mac's cross) and Station Rd. These works will result in improved efficiency and traffic flow at these locations.

