



COMHAIRLE | CLARE
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

TUARASCÁIL MHÍOSÚIL ÓN PHRÍOMHFHEIDHMEANNACH

MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Iúil / July
2023



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FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

CORPORATE SERVICES

Council Annual General Meeting



The Council AGM was held on Friday, 30th June, 2023, in the Council Chamber and on MS Teams. Cllr Joe Cooney was elected Cathaoirleach and Cllr Gabriel Keating was elected Leas Cathaoirleach for the forthcoming year.

Communications

The Communications Office communicates and promotes Council activities and services and raises public awareness of issues of local and national interest. Media releases during June included:

- Civic Reception held to recognise outstanding societal impact of Bernárd Lynch
- Big Screen at the Fairgreen for the Munster Senior Hurling Championship Final – Clare vs Limerick
- Call for public votes as ‘Enhancing Ennistymon’ shortlisted for major Architectural Award
- Join the Summer Stars Green Team at Your Library and win an Author visit for your School.

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 June, the Communications Office:

- Posted 43 times on Facebook, with total followers now 18,274.
- Posted 41 times on Twitter, with total followers now 8,099.
- Instagram followers are now 2,933.

(Statistics accurate as of 26/06/2023)

Register of Electors Modernisation Project

A further awareness campaign on the electoral register

Civic Reception for Bernárd Lynch



Clare County Council hosted a Civic Reception in Áras Contae an Chláir on Friday, 23rd June, for Bernárd Lynch, which recognised his outstanding impact on society and his work fighting for equal rights for the LGBTQIA+ community and people with HIV/AIDS.

Before presenting Bernárd with a Civic Reception Presentation Scroll and a clock, Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr Tony O’Brien, said: “As Cathaoirleach



of Clare County Council, I am honoured to have you here in Clare today, Bernárd. Your work over the last 50 years and how you continue to fight for what you believe in and for equal rights for so many communities on a daily basis is admirable.

“I commend your bravery and courage over the years, your self-pride, and your undying dedication to helping others.”

commenced on Wednesday, 21st June. The campaign highlights the changes to the electoral register and urges the public to engage with the process specifically to either confirm or update their details – including by adding their date of birth, PPSN and Eircode. Greater specificity has been incorporated into the material – focusing on ensuring details are current and correct – “even if you are already registered”.

Again a wide range of platforms are being used in the campaign, including traditional, social and digital to ensure as wide an audience as possible is reached. It is important everything is done to ensure that information is made available to all members of our society.

Business Innovation

The Innovation team, consisting of representatives across all Grades and Directorates, meet bi-monthly to discuss and progress Innovative projects submitted to the team. A number of projects are now completed. These include the availability of Energy Awareness kits for rental via the Library Services and provision Beach QR Code at public beaches to access Beach Bye Laws and maps.

Projects currently being progressed include development of software for inspection of Private rented dwellings for use on tablets. An online applications platform is also being developed to streamline various grants and other application processes.

Freedom of Information & Data Protection



Cheering on the county



Among those supporting their counties ahead of the 2023 Munster Senior Hurling Championship Final on Sunday, 11th June, at the TUS Gaelic Grounds in Limerick were Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr Tony O'Brien, and Mayor of the City and County of Limerick, Cllr Frances Foley.

FINANCE

Procurement

The following Clare County Council tender competitions were published on eTenders in the period from 28th May, 2023, to 26th June, 2023, inclusive:

RFT Id	Tender Name	Response deadline
1830312	Clare County Council National Road Contract 2023	09/06/2023
1855212	Killaloe MD Bridge Remediation Works	15/06/2023
1965300	Erinagh More, Rathmeehan and Mahonburgh Bridges Remediation Works	14/07/2023
1908303	Affordable Housing - Clare County Council is seeking expressions of interest for the provision of turnkey housing developments for delivery of affordable housing in Ennis and Shannon	28/07/2023
1967015	Rechassis and Upgrade Works to an Emergency Tender Fire Appliance	11/08/2023

HUMAN RESOURCES

Learning and Development

Online Training programmes / Webinars / Information Sessions held in June included:

Online Training programmes / Webinars / Information Sessions

3-Day SLG Training
AIE Regulation Training
Competency Based Interviewee Training
Grade 4
Operation & Maintenance of Strimmer & Bush cutter
Ride on Roller Training

Essential Skillz on-line Courses

Health & Safety Induction
Manual Handling Refresher
Slips, Trips & Falls

Health & Safety

3-Day First Aid Training
Fire Warden Training
Manual Handling
Water Services Health & Safety Briefings

Recruitment

The following recruitment competitions were progressed during June:

Competitions Advertised

- Assistant Arts Officer
- Creative Communities Engagement Officer
- Assistant Staff Officer

Eligibility Exercises & Desktop Shortlisting

- Community Climate Action Officer
- Foreman Countywide Panel
- Lifeguard Instructor Active Ennis Leisure Complex
- Customer Services (Security)

Interviews

Clerical Officer (Final Interviews)	Customer Services (Security)
Executive Quantity Surveyor	Staff Officer (Final Interviews)
Beach Lifeguard Supplementary Panel	Customer Services (Security)
Community Climate Action Officer	Heritage Officer
Lifeguard Instructor Active Ennis (Sporadic)	

Continuing-Education-%26-CPD.aspx?web=1) or printing a copy and scanning completed application to learnanddev@clarecoco.ie

- Applicants will be advised by end of July if their application for funding in this calendar year has been successful.

Staff Workshop on Local Government Digital and ICT Strategy

- Local Government is creating a new Digital and ICT Strategy - Better services for the public, better ways of working for local authorities. This strategy aims to use the power of digital technology to improve how we do things in local authorities and to provide services in ways that that work better for the public.
- The LGMA has looked for input from all staff who deliver our services to ensure that the strategy takes into account their experience and needs.
- These Staff Workshops are being held in a number of local authorities around the country where the LGMA will explain what they are doing and listen to the views and experiences of the people who attend. They will use the results of these workshops to help create the strategy.
- Workshop for Clare County Council was held on 20th June, 2023, in the Council Chamber over two hours.

Employee Wellbeing

In conjunction with a Healthy Ireland initiative free period products are being made available in all female bathrooms at the Áras, MDs and Libraries. Government funding secured by our Healthy Ireland Co-ordinator has provided this opportunity.

Other Projects

Continuing Education Scheme 2023

- The 2023 Scheme is open for applications until 7th July
- All staff applications can be made by completing the application form through the L&D intranet page (<https://ccc-sharepoint.clarecoco.ie/learninganddevelopment/SitePages/>

Unions

The Human Resources Department engages with Unions on various matters.

Climate Change Statistics to date...

50%
of Councillors attended Climate Change Training

68%
of admin & management attended Climate Change Training

Courses Offered

- Championing Leadership
- Building Capacity
- Intro to Flood Risk Management
- Raising Awareness - Climate Action 2022
- Green Procurement - Strand 1
- Green Procurement - Strand 2
- Green Procurement - Strand 3

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) 2023



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

Ár dTodhchaf
Tuaithe
Our Rural
Future



Fáilte Ireland
National Tourism Development Authority



COMHAIRLE CONTAE AN CHLÁIR
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL



	Grant Level	Max No of applications
Measure 1-Small Scale Repair/ upgrade Works	Up to 30k	7
Measure 2- Medium Scale Repair & Upgrade works and development of new trails	Up to 200k	3
Measure 3 – Large Scale Repair & Upgrade works and development of new trails	Up to 500k	1
Measure 4- Project Development – Development Costs for strategic large-scale projects	Up to 50k	2

Minister for Rural and Community Development Heather Humphreys has recently launched a major €16 million fund which will support hundreds of outdoor recreation projects across the country.

The Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) provides funding for the development of new outdoor recreational infrastructure. It also provides support for the necessary repair, maintenance, enhancement, or promotion of existing outdoor recreational infrastructure in rural areas across Ireland.

The scheme supports outdoor recreation activities such as walking, trekking, cycling, kayaking and hiking. It helps to make use of the resources of the countryside that contribute to healthy active lifestyles. It supports the economic and tourism potential of the area for both local communities and tourist visitors alike. The Scheme, which saw its funding increased by €1 million this year, will place a particular focus on developing amenities for adventure tourism in rural Ireland.

The 2023 scheme will provide investment ranging from €30,000 for small scale projects and up to €500,000 for large scale projects under the 4 project measures as set out below.

Community Groups who have a potential project that aligns with the Scheme requirements should in the first instance discuss same with the Rural and Community Development Officer (RCDO) for their respective area. Expressions of interest will be shortlisted and developed into funding applications for onward submission to the Department of Rural and Community Development. The deadline for receipt of Expressions of Interest under Measure 1 is 4pm on Friday 21st July 2023.

All necessary consent must be in place at the time of making a funding application i.e. planning permissions, landowner consents, insurance etc. In designated areas such as SACs, SPAs etc, any necessary AA screening and other ecological assessments must be in place prior to submitting an application for funding.

Further details are available on the Council's website.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Visiting Delegation from the Older People’s Council of Nordland County, Norway

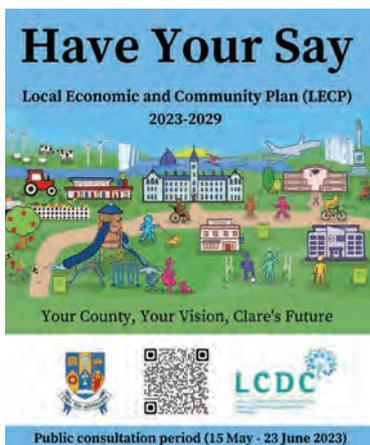
Age Friendly Clare received a delegation from the Older People’s Council of Nordland County, Norway. They came to Clare to meet with members of the Clare Older People’s Council and share ideas about influencing local & national policy making in our respective countries.

The group from Norway had a particular interest in Senior Entrepreneurship and received a very informative presentation from Finbar Tuohy in the LEO office. They participated in LEO’s ‘Start Your Own Business’ Workshop and took part in a dedicated Q&A session with the trainer to gain knowledge to establish something similar back in Norway.

During their stay in Clare, they also visited Dev (Age Friendly) Library to learn about the digital training that has been done with older people, some Age Friendly Businesses and the magnificent Cliffs of Moher Visitor Centre.



Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP 2023-2029)



Members of the Rural & Community team embarked on a series of public consultation events around the development of a new six-year plan that will guide the future economic and community development of County Clare. The Public consultations were part of a wider consultation process. Sessions commenced Monday June 12th on successive days in the Shannon Municipal District Office, Ennis MD Office in Drumbiggle, Killaloe MD Office in Scarriff, and at the West

Clare MD offices in Kilrush and Ennistymon. All sessions took place in the evening time between 5pm and 8pm to

facilitate the public. Additional engagement took place with the business community with a breakfast briefing at the Inn at Dromoland and Ennistymon Digital Hub during the week.

The consultation presented to the public a limited number of draft goals to be achieved over the 6 year lifetime of the new Plan. These will in turn set the overall direction of the plan in its objectives to be achieved through specific actions and giving those interested in Clare an opportunity to contribute to the process of setting the Goals for the County and their underpinning objectives.

Over the course of the week we received feedback from the public on how they would like to see Clare develop over the lifetime of the plan. The public also had the opportunity to have their say on our online portal which closed on the 23rd June 2023. A number of events with key stakeholders will continue over the coming months on the further development and refinement of the objectives and actions.



This plan will consider the future development of Clare from both a community perspective and an economic perspective. In terms of local community development, the LECP aims to meet the needs of individuals, groups, and organisations by developing community infrastructure, programmes and services. From an economic perspective the LECP will provide a framework to guide local economic growth and stability in specific geographical areas through retaining and attracting new business, creating employment, and supporting people to start their own businesses and social enterprises.

The development of a new LECP is being led by the Clare Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) in collaboration with the Economic Development SPC.

All submissions received will be reviewed by the consultants drafting the plan. The Plan will be presented to Council members towards the end of 2023.



Public Consultation LECP



Healthy Clare

Healthy Clare Micro Fund 2023

To Apply
<https://submit.link/107>
For more info. Contact
healthyclare@clarecoco.ie
Closing Date
 7th July 2023

Healthy Clare Micro Fund 2023 launched as part of Healthy Ireland Round 4

Clare’s Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) recognises the importance of supporting initiatives around the county that promote population health and wellbeing.

The purpose of the LCDC’s Healthy Clare Micro Fund is to encourage and support community and voluntary groups to take an active part in improving and protecting health and wellbeing at all stages of life, reducing health inequalities, and creating an environment where everyone can play their part in a healthier Clare.

The fund will support targeted actions in response to the identified 2 priority outcomes for a Healthier Clare:

1. Healthy Weight
2. Positive Mental Health Promotion

These priority outcomes align with the Healthy Clare Strategic Action Plan, Healthy Ireland Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing, and the draft Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP).

Community and voluntary groups promoting health and wellbeing in County Clare are encouraged to apply. Public sector organisations are not eligible to make an application. Groups are encouraged to register with the Clare Public Participation Network (PPN) and be actively involved in the PPN.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The four types of proposals considered for the Healthy Clare Micro Fund 2023 are the following:

1. Support Fund for promoting a Healthy Weight under the following 4 pillars (Max Grant €2,000):
 - Healthy Eating
 - Physical Activity
 - Stress Management
 - Sleep Hygiene
2. Support Fund for promoting Positive Mental Health (Max Grant €2,000)
3. Support Fund for hosting 'We're Breastfeeding Friendly Clare' events during World Breastfeeding week (1st - 7th August) and National Breastfeeding week (1st - 7th October) (Max Grant €1,000)
4. Support Scheme for Multicultural Cooking workshops with the creation of a recipe book (Max Grant €1,000)

To apply for the Healthy Clare Micro Fund 2023, please visit: <https://yoursay.clarecoco.ie/healthy-clare-micro-fund-2023>

Before completing the online application form, please read the grant guidelines carefully.

Closing Date for receipt of Application Forms is **Friday 7th July 2023 at 5:00pm.**

For more information on the Healthy Clare Micro Fund please contact the Healthy Clare Coordinator, Dena Mc Grath at healthyclare@clarecoco.ie or 087 987 8785.

The Healthy Clare Micro Fund is supported by the Clare's LCDC, Healthy Ireland, Department of Health, Pobal and Creative Ireland.

County Clare's 'Health and Wellbeing' Age Expo on 30th June 2023

Health & Wellbeing Age Expo 2023

The Clare Older People's Council and the Clare Age Friendly Programme are hosting a 'Health & Wellbeing' Age Expo' to showcase the supports and services available for older people living in County Clare.

Date: Friday, 30th June 2023
Location: Tracey's West County, Ennis, V95 CPCT
Time: 11am to 4pm

Subsidised Lunch Rates | **Free Health Checks**
Guest Speakers
Taster Sessions
Cooking Demos

All welcome

For more information please contact
agefriendlyclare@clarecoco.ie or telephone (065) 6846240

Clare Older People's Council will host a 'Health and Wellbeing, Age Expo' on **Friday, 30th June 2023, at Tracey's West County Hotel, Ennis from 11.00am to 4.00pm.** All are welcome.

The Age Expo will showcase the supports and services available in County Clare that are of interest and use to Older People. The Mid-West Community Healthcare - Integrated Care Programme Older Persons, Active Ennis, Alone, Clare Libraries, Local Link and Slainte an Chlair are just some examples of those displaying at

the event.

Guest speakers will discuss the new 'Healthy Age Friendly Homes' initiative and 'Preparing for a Healthy Retirement'. Attendees will also have an opportunity to participate in a singing taster session, hear talks on Active Ageing and attend a cookery demonstration. The Irish Heart Foundation will also carry out FREE health checks during the event. On-site parking is available and the public bus stops just outside the venue, Tracey's West County Hotel.

For more information on the event please email agefriendlyclare@clarecoco.ie or call Helen on 086-8226597.

The Clare Age Expo is supported by the Clare Older People's Council and the Department of Health's 'Healthy Ireland Fund'.

Local Authority Free Period Products initiative



Clare County Council's Rural Development Directorate's Healthy Clare team have been successful in securing €10,000 funding from the Department of Health to pilot the Local Authority (LA) 'Free Period Products' initiative.

The provision of period products in public buildings is a recommendation of the draft 'Period Poverty in Ireland' report by the National Strategy for Women and Girls Committee.

As part of this pilot scheme, free period products (i.e., tampons and period pads) are available in participating Local Authority owned and publicly accessible buildings including Clare Libraries, Active Ennis facilities and each of the Municipal District Offices.

The list of participating sites will be available on the Clare County Council dedicated webpage at: <https://yoursay.clarecoco.ie/free-period-products>.

The aim of the Local Authority's 'Free Period Products' pilot project in Clare is to:

- Destigmatize periods
- Combat period poverty in the county
- De-gender periods

For more information on the Local Authority 'Free Period Products' pilot project, visit: <https://yoursay.clarecoco.ie/free-period-products>

- Contact the Healthy County Coordinator, Dena Mc Grath, at: healthyclare@clarecoco.ie or 087-9878785.
- This pilot project is supported by Clare County Council and the LCDC's Healthy Clare initiative and is funded by the Department of Health.

Ukrainian Services Development

As of the 23rd June, 2023 there are 86,000 temporary protection orders granted nationally, up 4,000 on the previous report. The 7 day rolling average is also up at 109 from the previously reported 85 but not as high as the December figures. There are 66,600 accommodated with 18, 168 Ukrainian people working and contributing and a further 15,600 enrolled in school. The total number of Ukrainian people accommodated in County Clare is 4,654 – up slightly on the last figures from 11th May.

Offer a Home

Clare County Council has received 123 offers of unoccupied homes under the 'Offer a Home' scheme since its' launch in December 2022. All 123 homeowners have been contacted and 121 homes have been assessed so far with the remaining home assessments scheduled. Of the homes that have been assessed 9 are not yet available and 30 have been withdrawn from the scheme as they were either unsuitable or the homeowner had a change in circumstances. We have successfully matched 71 of the homes and have accommodated 263 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 16 viable homes currently remaining 44% are located in rural areas of West Clare Municipal District, 22% are located in rural areas of Ennis Municipal District and 33% are located in rural areas of Killaloe Municipal District. We have received in excess of 350 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 or by contacting Clare County Council at offerahome@clarecoco.ie.

Ukrainian Community Response Forum - Information Session

On June 21st Clare County Council hosted an information session for Ukrainian Community Response Forum members on the International Protection System in Ireland. Guest speaker was Karl Quinn, Barrister at Law. He covered the following topics:

- Statistics on number of people seeking International Protection
- How people apply for International Protection
- How the process operates
- Role of IPO - International Protection Office
- Role of IPAT - International Protection Appeals Tribunal
- Role of IPAS – International Protection Accommodation Services
- Direct Provision in Clare
- Temporary Protection Directive (Ukrainians) – what it means
- Questions & Answers Session

We had a great representation of our Forum members in attendance from council staff, Elected Representatives, Clare Local Development Company, Family Resource Centres, An Garda Síochána, Clare Immigrant Support Centre, Clare County Childcare Committee, HSE, TUSLA, Limerick Clare Education & Training Board, Mid-West Simon, Mna an Gaire, Fáilte Isteach.

We received very positive feedback from our 50 attendees and it is intended to run similar events in the future.



SPORTS & RECREATION



Jamie Fitzgibbon, Duty Manager, with some of his Body Blast Class Members

- This term Swim Lesson Programme at the Active Ennis Leisure Complex was completed in June which saw are now complete 1,200 students involved.
- The fantastic weather brought out a significant increase in numbers visiting Lees Road with both sun worshippers and those strolling through the forest area for shelter and fresh air. Over 14,00 cars and 2,000 pedestrians visited.
- Grass pitches in Lees Road are closed at present to allow for seeded grass to take, expect to reopen in mid-July. Soccer matches diverted to the Astro Turf pitch and Tim Smythe Park. GAA training diverted to Glenina pitch.
- Baby buggy bootcamp taking place every Tuesday afternoon on the track
- Forest School continuing to go from strength to strength, running nearly year-round now
- Clare GAA ran 4 primary school blitzes in Tim Smyth Park in June, 100+ kids involved in each
- Soccer Sisters utilising Coote Park for their activity on a Tuesday evenings
- Munster final match screened in AETSP, well received, and attended. (see below)



All sporting activities are welcome at these facilities with prebooking essential on

www.activeennis.ie www.activekilrush.ie

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



Embracing Clare's Outdoors": First Clare Outdoor Recreation Expo to Showcase Clubs and Organizations

Organised by Clare Sports Partnership, County Clare is set to host its inaugural Clare Outdoor Recreation Expo, themed "Embracing Clare's Outdoors," and the event promises to be a celebration of outdoor adventure, while also highlighting the numerous clubs and organizations that contribute to the vibrant outdoor recreation scene in the county.

Running from July 1st to 31st, the expo has partnered with Clare Get Sidetracked, VisitClare.ie, and Healthy Clare to offer a month-long immersive experience for residents and visitors alike.

The expo will feature an extensive range of activities, ensuring there is something for everyone. Participants can look forward to engaging in Curragh Rowing, Nordic Walking, Rock Climbing, Caving, Sailing, Stand Up Paddle Boarding, Surfing, Aquathlon, Snorkelling, Dragon Boat Racing, Wellbeing Walks, and Kayaking. These activities will be led by experienced instructors and guides, catering to participants of all skill levels and providing a safe and enjoyable experience.

Clare Sports Partnership continue to work with clubs and the community in the active participation in sport in the County. For further details on activities please check out

www.claresports.ie

RELAY FOR LIFE ENNIS 2023

Relay For Life is a 24-hour community celebration and a unique, empowering, and fun event. At the heart of Relay is the opportunity to celebrate cancer survivors and to remember those who

have left us. Teams of people take turns walking around a track. Because cancer never sleeps, each team is asked to have a representative on the track at all times during the 24-hour event. Two of the highlights during the Relay event are the Survivors' Lap and the Candle of Hope Ceremony.

Why do we Relay? Cancer will affect one in three people in Ireland during their lifetime. All funds raised through sponsorship and fundraising will go to support the Irish Cancer Society's national services and mission to achieve world-class cancer services, ensuring fewer people get cancer and those that do have better outcomes.

Active Ennis Tim Smythe Park, hosted the 6th Relay For Life Ennis event on 17th & 18th June supported by Clare County Council and Elected members.. This was a family friendly, alcohol and smoke free event, which puts cancer survivors at its heart.. Despite challenging weather, dedicated Relayers persisted with unwavering determination.

Even during the rain entertainers persisted, delivering captivating performances to uplift our spirits.

A turn in weather enabled us to hold our poignant Candle of Hope Ceremony, where the track was adorned with dedicated candle bags, illuminating both the path and team tents. The resolute battle against Cancer reverberated throughout Active Ennis Tim Smythe Park in 2023, as our collective efforts shone brightly.



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Social Directorate continues to face challenges in the coming months and right through 2023.

- We are on course, despite the challenges, to meet our Housing delivery targets of 149 units for this year. There are 43 houses completed to date at Ennis and Tulla, thereby providing high-quality homes to approved applicants on our social housing waiting list. Work on the remainder of these units is at various stages of development.
- Since the ending of the winter eviction ban on 31st March last, we continue to support circa. 80 clients with Notice to Quits in existing private rental agreements. Our staff area actively engaging with these clients to assist them in accessing other housing solutions and to avoid the need for entering homeless services. A new expedited application process has been introduced for the Local Authority Home Loan for tenants who have received a Notice of Termination to inform them whether this loan option is a viable solution for them. We are also investigating options around purchasing a number of properties while Approved Housing Body (AHB) purchases are supporting further clients. We continue to provide advice and support to clients who do not qualify for social housing support but may be able to avail of the Cost Rental tenant in Situ programme through the Housing Agency and one such referral has been made to date.
- 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 and enhance the attractiveness of the town from a visitor perspective.
- We expect that the Enhanced Defective Concrete Block Grant Scheme will become operative shortly when the required Department Regulations are in place. We will then be open to accepting applications and have staff and IT systems in place to support an online portal so that affected homeowners can submit their applications.
- Expressions of Interest for the delivery of Affordable Housing Schemes by developers at Ennis and Shannon were advertised this month and is open until end of July. A scheme of priorities for allocating properties should demand for same exceed availability is also being finalised, and this will be brought before the Elected Members for final adoption in due course.

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 - Assessment of housing need

Our greatest demand throughout the county is for 1 and 2-bedroomed properties. There are 2,180 applicant households (76%) who have a requirement for this property type. The Allocations/Assessment Team are currently carrying out a review of the areas where the demand for this property type is greatest.

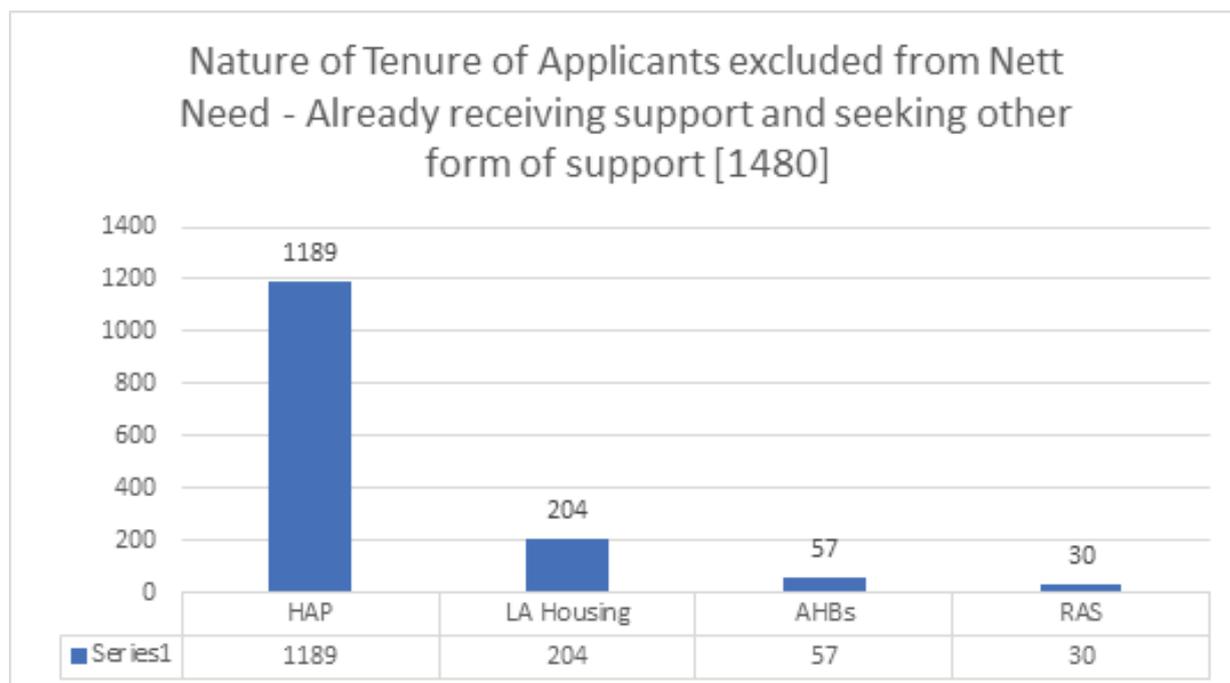
This exercise was carried out recently in the Shannon, Feakle, Scariff and Whitegate areas, which was very successful and was an opportunity to meet with households in person and update their details.

This exercise will continue throughout the county. This ongoing review of applicants will also help to reduce the workload for the annual assessment of needs, which is expected to be announced for November 2023.

Current Housing need as of 22/06/23

Total Households on Waiting List	2,852
Transfer Applicants (see below)	1,480
Nett Need	1,372



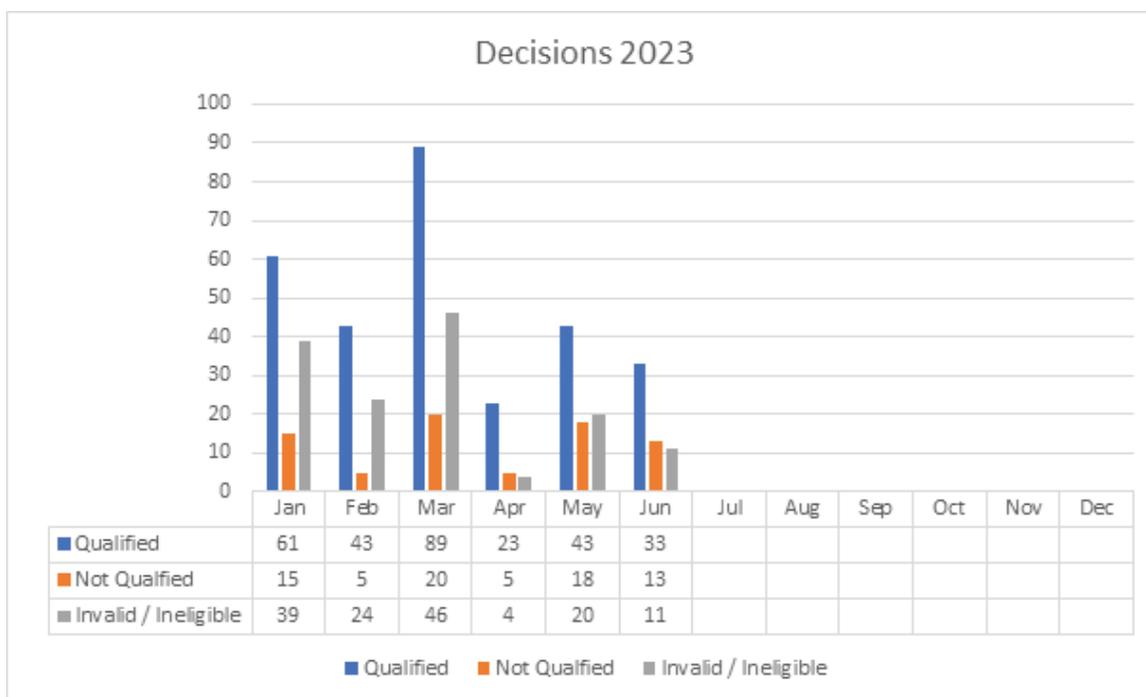


Housing need by Area of choice and number of beds approved:

HOUSING AUTHORITY BEDS APPROVED				
FIRST AREA OF CHOICE	1 and 2 beds	3 beds	4 and 5 beds	Grand Total
ENNIS	920	198	84	1202
SHANNON	177	26	14	217
CLARECASTLE	128	30	11	169
INAGH/ENNISTYMON/LAHINCH	129	26	4	159
KILRUSH	101	31	8	140
FEAKLE/SCARIFF/WHITEGATE	105	22	4	131
MEELICK/PARTEEN/WESTBURY	73	36	11	120
MILTOWN MALBAY/MULLAGH/QUILTY	71	14	2	87
KILKEE/CROSS/CARRIGAHOLT	67	10	1	78
NEWMARKET-ON-FERGUS	55	15	6	76
COROFIN/RUAN	56	18	2	76
KILLALOE	56	15	2	73
LISDOONVARNA/BALLYVAUGHAN	49	10	3	62
SIXMILEBRIDGE	39	9	7	55
COORACLARE/DOONBEG	36	8	3	47
TULLA/KILKISHEN/BROADFORD	34	6	3	43
CLONLARA	22	8	2	32
KILDYSART/BALLYNACALLY	21	4	3	28
QUIN	17	5	1	23
KILMIHIL	10	5	2	17
KILMALEY	8	2		10
KILFENORA	6	1		7
Grand Total	2180	499	173	2852

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 from April onwards. In June, decisions were issued on 46 applications, with 33 qualified and 13 deemed not to qualify. A total of 11 applications were rejected for either being incomplete or being ineligible for assessment.



Housing Allocations

Phase 2 of the social housing development (CALF Acquisition) located at Hogans Place, Limerick Road, Ennis which is being delivered by Cluid Housing has been allocated and the new tenants are currently moving into their new homes. There are 15 units in this development, 12 no 3 bed roomed houses and 3 no 2 bed roomed bungalows.

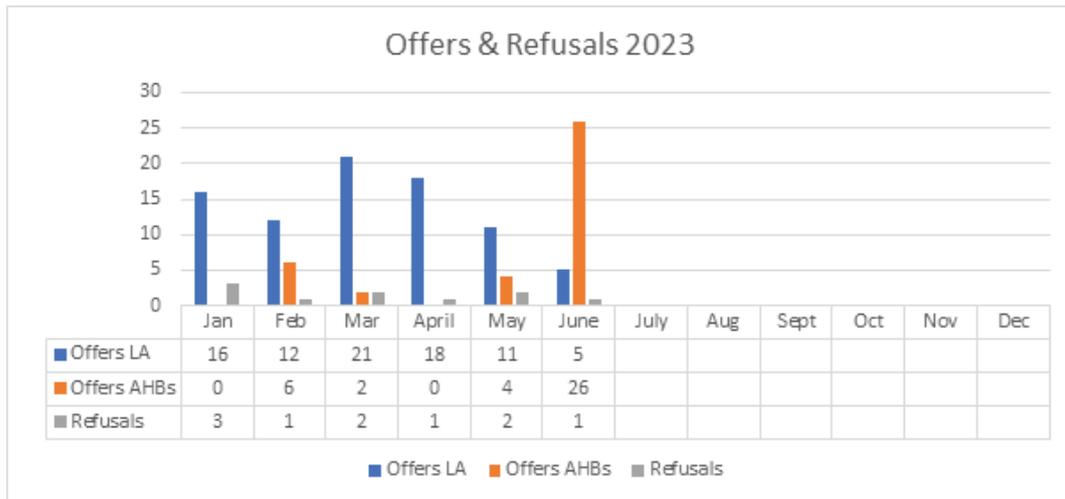
The allocation process in relation to the age friendly social housing development (CALF Turnkey) located at Cluain Ros Leamhain, Roslevan, Ennis which is being delivered by Co-Operative Housing Ireland (CHI) is completed. There are 25 units in this development and include 11 no 3 bed roomed semi-detached/terraced houses, 6 no 2 bed semi-detached houses, 3 no 2 bed ground floor apartments, 3 no 1 bed first floor apartments and 2 no 4 bed semi-detached houses. The prospective tenants have also received their keys to their new homes and are in the process of moving in.

We recently advertised on our Choice Based Letting website a number of 3 bed roomed houses located at Cill Stuífin, School Road, Lahinch which are being delivered by Co Operative Housing Ireland (CHI). In addition, three and four bed roomed properties located at An Cosan Gheall, Limerick Road, Ennis which are being delivered by Inis Housing were also recently advertised on this site. Both of these developments attracted a large number of expressions of interest.

All of our vacant stock, casual vacancies and new developments including those being made available by the Approved Housing Bodies are now advertised on the CBL website. The key overall principle of a CBL approach to letting is that the system is based on applicant initiative, i.e. applicants become more engaged with the process, more proactively involved in seeking a social housing property rather than waiting for the Allocations Team to contact them. It can be seen as being analogous to the way in which households in the private sector source their accommodation. It offers more choice and has the advantage of generally been seen as more transparent and fair for those that take part in it, when compared to the previous traditional direct letting approach previously used.

Homeless including households that were at risk of homelessness	31%
Medical Needs	27%
Financial	25%
Overcrowding, compassionate, involuntary sharing and unfit	19%

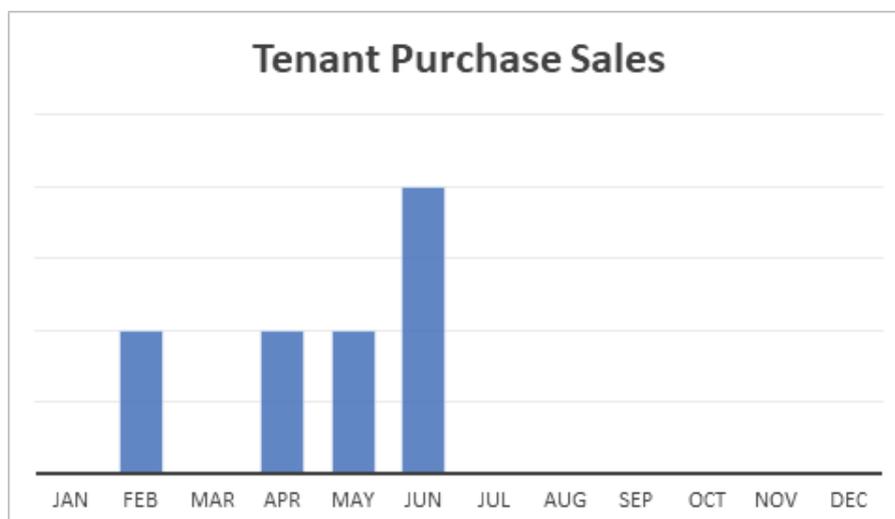
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



Tenant Purchase Incremental Scheme

There remains significant interest in the LA Tenant Purchase Incremental Scheme with 3 new applications this year to date. We currently have 8 open cases at various stages of the legal process which are expected to complete in 2023. Sale of 4 properties has completed in 2023 to date.

Having consulted with elected members in relation to maintaining our newer stock we have agreed that properties purchased or built since 1st January 2016 will not be available for sale under this scheme. This can be reviewed at end of current Housing Delivery Plan period in 2026. We have also agreed that 1-bedroom properties will not be available under the scheme.

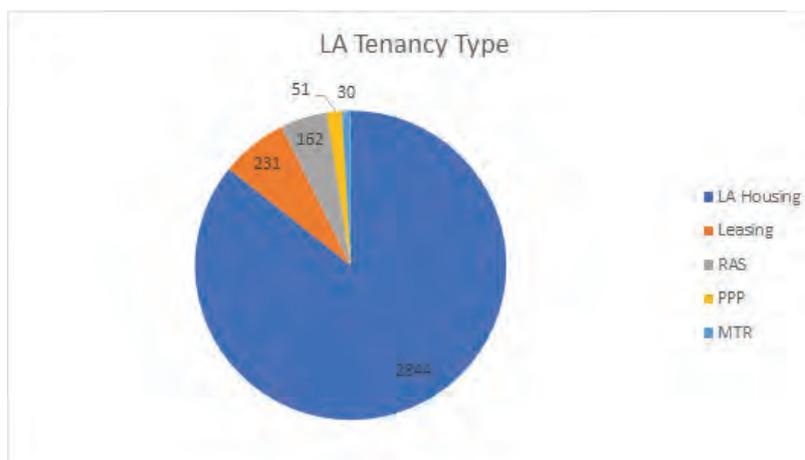


SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Housing Tenancies:

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

30th May 2023			
MD	Allocated	Occupied	Total
Ennis MD	11	1291	1302
Killaloe MD	0	363	363
Shannon MD	4	722	726
West Clare MD	3	949	952
Grand Total	18	3325	3343



In addition, we have 1,189 active HAP Tenancies. Approved Housing bodies 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.

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	17	17	3	3	40
TOTAL	23	35	6	3	67

Estate Management

The Estate Management Team continue to undertake regular routine and response calls to tenants, dealing with ASB complaints as well as inspecting Local Authority tenancies and providing the necessary supports to tenants.

Any matters that need to be brought to the attention of the Estate Management unit can be done so by emailing asb@clarecoco.ie

	25th May to 21st June	Total year to date
ASB Complaints recd	98	380
Housing Inspections	119	426
Referrals to TSS	1	13
Tenancy Notifications/Warnings issued	17	70
Abandonment Notices issued	1	6
Keys collected from Casual Vacancies	4	33
Repossession Orders	0	1

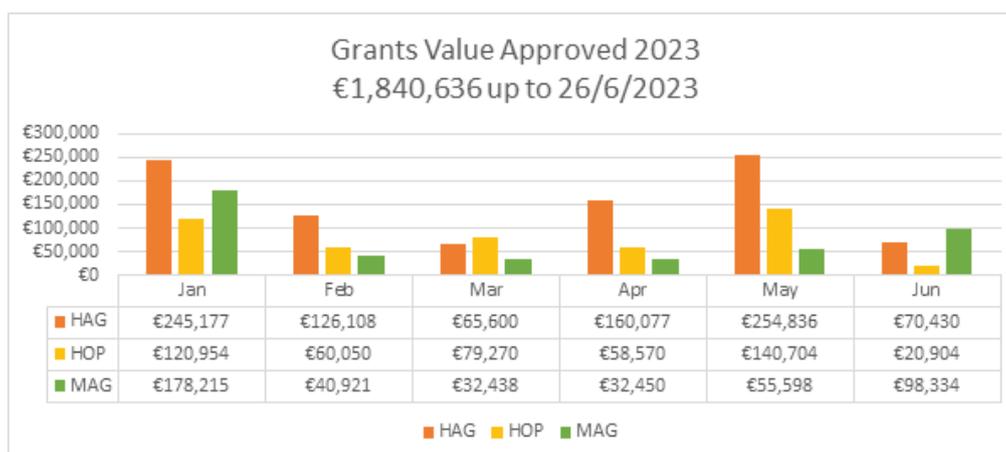
The Tenancy Enforcement team carry out continued patrols of Local Authority housing estates and Traveller sites and have a very visible presence to manage and mitigate against complaints of antisocial behaviour with over 5,300 observations of tenancies as part of these patrols in the year to date. The 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

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

Housing Grants

Grants Approved for June 2023 and cumulative to date this year:



Local Authority Home Loan

Full details on the Local Authority Home Loan (LAHL) and eligibility criteria including the Loan Calculator and Information Booklet can be found on www.localauthorityhomeloan.ie

Loans data for 2023 up to 21/06/2023: There are currently 38 Local Authority Home Loans Approved in Principle. This includes 3 new approvals on the 21 June 2023.



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 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. Clare County Council continue to progress on our Traveller Accommodation Program [TAP] and have recently agreed to work with the Traveller Community Development Program to prepare a detailed needs analysis around traveller needs in preparation for the next TAP for which consultation is which is expected to commence in Mid 2024

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)

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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 19/05/2023 to 22/06/23, 58 new clients presented to HAT, with a further 255 repeat engagements. The needs and requirements of these presentations varied and included:

The need of immediate Emergency Accommodation

- Notice to Quits from Accommodations
- Seeking Homeless HAP Assistance
- apartment fire with regards to a single unit
- Family/Relationship Breakdown
- Couch Surfing/Overcrowding
- Discharge from Women Refuge services
- Members of the travelling Community seeking Emergency Accommodation

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.

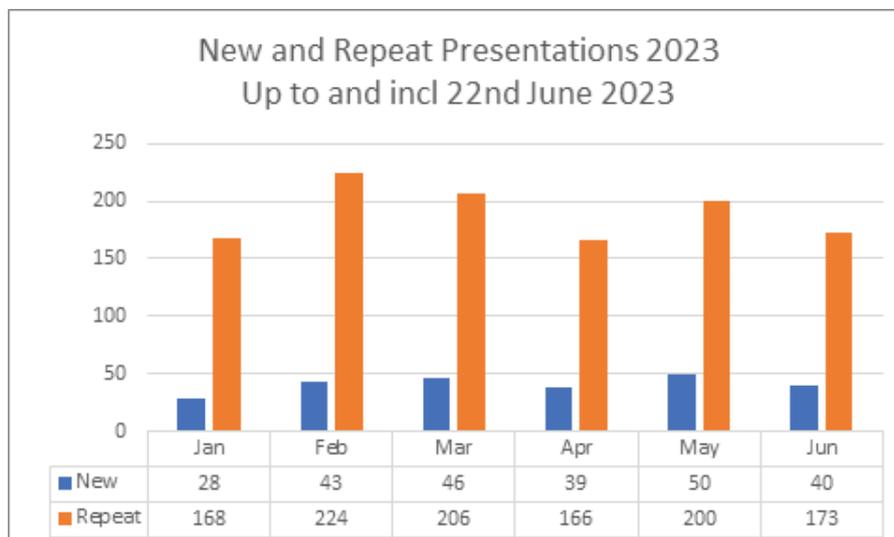
The Council continues to pursue additional emergency accommodation options. However, this is proving challenging due to competing demands for accommodation in the County.

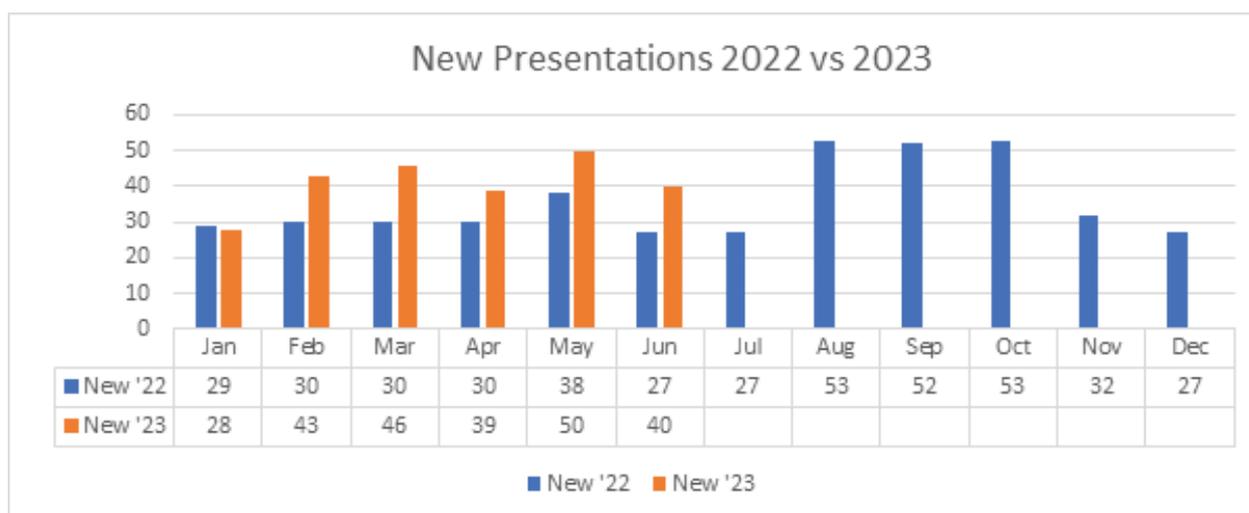
Clare Homeless Action team continues to engage with all necessary stakeholders, service providers and local supports in order to adopt a collaborative approach to the tackling of Homelessness.

Exits from Homeless Services

Clare Homeless Action Team continues to focus on exits from homeless services and during the period 19/05/23 to 22/06/23 the following exited from homelessness:

- 1 to a Local Authority Tenancy
- 1 to an Approved Housing Body Tenancy
- 1 Discharged to Residential Treatment
- 1 Discharged to Hospital
- 4 Discharged from Services





Emergency Accommodation Status as of 22nd June, 2023:

	Families	Adults	Dependents	Providers
Laurel Lodge	0	13	0	1
Laurel Lodge Weather Initiative	0	3	0	0
Cusack Lodge	2	3	6	1
Westbrook	0	15	0	1
Westbrook Weather Initiative	0	0	0	0
Ashford Court	10	18	16	1
EA Families	3	3	9	3
EA Individuals	0	5	0	3
TOTAL	15	60	31	10

Affordable Housing Schemes for County Clare

Under the original 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 by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) did not meet their affordability constraint threshold.

However, in consideration of recent flexibility introduced by the DHLGH, Clare County Council undertook expression of interest surveys to ascertain levels of interest and eligibility for potential affordable housing schemes in Ennis and Shannon and submitted a detailed application to the DHLGH in March for both Ennis and Shannon for access to the Affordable Housing Fund (AHF). Recently, Clare County Council has received approval in principle to this application from the DHLGH now allowing Clare County Council to submit detailed applications to the fund for specific developments. In this regard, Clare County Council launched an Expression of Interest (EOI) campaign until the end of July seeking proposals from developers to deliver affordable homes in Ennis and Shannon. This EOI is advertised on various social media channels, local newspapers and also local radio. Also, Clare County Council has engaged with our Elected Members

for the purposes of developing a Scheme of Priorities (SOP) in accordance with the Affordable Housing Act 2021, which is subject to Ministerial approval. This SOP will be referenced regarding the future allocation of affordable homes.

Defective Concrete Blocks Grant Scheme

Clare County Council has the staff and systems in place for the administration of the Enhanced Defective Concrete Blocks Scheme. The Minister announced the commencement of the Enhanced Defective Concrete Blocks Scheme on 3rd July, 2023. Applications to the scheme can be submitted online through Clare County Council’s website and supporting information on same is provided to further assist homeowners regarding the application process on our website currently. Homeowners are directed to the Clare County Council website, where the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage documents are available to provide information on the new scheme. In addition, Clare County Council’s Defective Concrete Blocks Team are willing to assist with any queries homeowners may have.

This Team can be contacted by email at dcb@clarecoco.ie or alternatively by phone at 065-6846334.

A press release issued by the Department on the commencement of the scheme can be viewed at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/23c2e-minister-o-brien-announces-the-commencement-of-the-enhanced-defective-concrete-blocks-grant-scheme/>

Other documents available to homeowners on Clare County Council’s website include the following:

- DCB Regulations 2023
- Your Questions Answered Document
- Ministerial Guidelines Document – for Local Authorities and Housing Agency
- DCB Act 2022.

New County Library Construction Project

Construction work continues to make progress on the new Clare County Library and Art Gallery building. The external composite



Current view of new County Library Project under construction.

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. Curtain wall and glazing frames installation is underway. Precast Stairs throughout the building have also been installed. Roofing Contractor is on site installing Cladding and roofing membrane with M&E contractor's also commencing first- fix works for both trades. Tower Crane on site was removed off site in mid-June, marking a milestone on the project.

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



Construction work in progress on the Clarecastle project.

Approved Housing Bodies

The Approved Housing Body (AHB) sector is providing a major contribution to our housing delivery figures under 'Housing for All' as outlined in Table below. They work in collaboration with our Housing Capital Team to deliver high-quality housing throughout the county. 15 no. units were delivered at Hogan's Place, Limerick Road, Ennis by Cluid during the month of June and construction is underway on a number of other schemes.



Completed bungalow at Hogan's Place, Limerick Road, Ennis.

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. Design recommenced. Documentation being prepared for submission of planning application to An Bord Pleanála.	Q4 2024	Q4 2025
Clarecastle	5	Under Construction.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023
Drumcliff Rd. Ennis	26	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH. Part VIII Withdrawn. Determination issued to ABP and awaiting outcome.	Q3 2023	Q4 2024
Sixmilebridge	15	Under Construction.	Q1 2023	Q2 2024
Ennistymon	30	Stage 2 approved. Stage 3 application currently being prepared.	Q3 2023	Q4 2024
Gort Rd. Ennis	20	Stage 2 approved. Planning application submitted to An Bord Pleanála on 16th June 2023.	Q2 2024	Q2 2025
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, tender assessment commenced.	Q2 2023	Q4 2023
Clarehill, Clarecastle	13	Contracts signed for Turnkey Acquisition. Const. to commence July 2023	Q2 2023	Q4 2024
Subtotal	186			
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 - completed on 26th May, 2023	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 - contracts currently being signed and construction to commence.	Q2 2023	Q2 2024
Cluain na Laoi, Kilkishen (Circle Housing Assoc.)	16	CALF Turnkey - const. commenced. 6 units to be delivered in Q1 2024 10 units to be delivered in Q2 2024	Q1 2023 Q1 2023	Q1 2024 Q2 2024
Church Road, Tulla (Cluid)	2	CALF Turnkey (Part V) - Completed	Q1 2022	Q2 2023
Ballyminogue, Scarriff (Focus)	4	CALF Turnkey - under construction	Q1 2023	Q3 2023
Dooneen Park, Kilrush (Banner Housing)	2	CAS Construction - under construction.	Q4 2022	Q2 2023
Kincora Park, Ennis (Saint Vincent de Paul)	1	CAS Construction - completed	Q4 2022	Q1 2023
Ashfield Close (Sophia Housing)	6	CAS Construction - Dept approved	Q2 2023	Q2 2024
Roslevan (Co-Operative Hsg. Ireland)	25	CALF Turnkey - completed.	Q2 2022	Q2 2023
Lahinch (Co-Operative Hsg. Ireland)	3	CALF Turnkey (Part V) - completed and sale to CHI to close shortly	Q2 2022	Q2 2023
Sixmilebridge (Co-Operative Hsg. Ireland)	3	CALF Turn (Part V) under construction	Q3 2022	Q3 2023
Subtotal	131			
Total	317			

CULTURAL SERVICES - LIBRARY, ARTS, MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

Clare County Library

An Age Friendly delegation from Nordland County in Norway visited De Valera Library this month. They learned about the Age Friendly programmes being delivered by the library service including digital literacy classes and Healthy Ireland events.



Age Friendly delegation from Norway visit De Valera Library.

Online Resources usage in previous month as follows:

1823 E-Books	2835 E-Audiobooks	706 E-Magazines
90 Online courses	2081 Press Reader	141 Transparent Languages

Marketing & social media

Clare Libraries is promoting the public consultation period for its Library Development Plan 2023- 2027. Members of the public can contribute via a survey, focus groups, community ideas pages. Children and schools that visit the library are also invited to complete ideas pages. Clare Libraries outreach events for June include Clare Age Expo 30 June.

	New Followers	Total Followers	Posts Reach/ Impressions	Post Likes	Engagement
	46	7033	16032	841	2100
	2	2115	5279	57	184
	37	1902	3300	257	800

Library Activities in Figures

Total number of in branch and online events	203
Total audiences at live events	2222
Total audiences at online events	5
Total number of outreach events	38
Total audiences at outreach events	679
Total number of deliveries	13

One of the events this month included a celebration of Bloomsday.

The Green Lines exhibition on display at Shannon Library during the month of June features Irish artists that respond to themes of climate change, the environment and sustainability.

Two supporting events with one of the exhibiting artists, Amber Broughton, were attended by 4th class children from St. Conaire's National School, Shannon.

The annual Summer Stars Reading Adventure began in June in all library branches and runs to the end of August 2023. The non-competitive initiative encourages children to continue reading during the summer holidays and earn rewards for their efforts.

Every child who reads one book or e-book is regarded as having completed the programme and will be awarded a Summer Stars certificate.

Activities to promote the reading initiative in Clare libraries will include workshops facilitated by artists on climate awareness, biodiversity, sustainability, and the environment. Green-themed storytimes, book clubs, craft sessions, nature and wildlife, creative writing, illustration and chess classes are just some of the free events for children during July and August.

A second year of the Little Libraries Book Bag initiative also got under way in June. Each child due to start school in September will be gifted a bag of books and a free library card wallet when they visit their nearest library.

Healthy Ireland

Two Healthy Ireland at Your Library events took place this month.

Ten people attended Trish Cleary's Chair Yoga class in Tulla Library. The feedback from this class was excellent, many participants remarked on the great benefits they have gained from taking part in this exercise.

Six people attended a very informative talk on Breast Health Awareness in Kilrush Library, which was given by Juliette O'Connell, Outreach co-ordinator with Breast Health Ireland. Feedback from attendees was excellent. Breast Health Ireland provide these talks free of charge to all members of the public.

Creative Ireland

Creative Ireland Clare hosted another successful Cruinniú na nÓg day on Saturday 10 June. 31 events in total took place around Clare. Highlights include a rap song and video created

by children from Direct Provision in Lisdoonvarna which was included in the end of day highlights on RTE News. Children from the Ukrainian community in Lisdoonvarna produced an amazing show of dance, art, food and culture from Ukraine. Children from the Traveller community in East Clare participated in a rap workshop with local rap artist Wilzee. Children from 12 schools, including St. Anne's Special School Ennis participated in the programme through visual art, music, foraging, drama and coding.

Decade of Centenaries

Lissycasey Historical Committee organised a Remembrance Day earlier this month - the group were recipients of a Decade of Centenaries grant in 2023. Councillor P.J. Kelly was MC at the commemorative event. An event was held in DeValera Library in Ennis to commemorate the awarding of a Nobel Prize to WB Yeats in 1923 - poet Karen McDonnell spoke on 'W.B. Yeats: a portrait in poetry and stories'.

Local Studies

Some recent acquisitions by Local Studies include the Minute books of the Cratloe and Meelick Dispensary, 1835 to 1845. These records are available on microfilm roll.

Local Studies has also received a donation of a full set (33 volumes, 1984 to 2022) of the journal 'Peritia: The Journal of the Medieval Academy of Ireland' from Professor Dáibhí Ó Cróinín of the University of Galway.

Clare Archives

The Barrett collection continues to be catalogued and processed. Due to lack of resources in the section the progress is slow in terms of preservation and cataloguing.

Queries relating to Board of Health Records have been dealt with this month through TUSLA.

Queries relating to various collections within the archives have been dealt with by the archivist in conjunction with the Local Studies Library.

The digitisation project continues with the Kilrush Urban District Council Collection.

The Corofin Board of Guardian Records' metadata is the current project as the next collection to be available through the DRI.

Clare Arts Office



Mayor of Ennis Municipal District, Cllr Clare Collieran Molloy, launching the Riches of Clare CD.

The Mayor of Clare launched the latest Riches of Clare CD, and six concerts took place with over five hundred people attending. The Arts in the Community programme continued with hospital radio taking place twice a week in St. Joseph's Hospital, Ennis and arts activities in Raheen Hospital. Clare Youth Theatre's Junior Group held one production in Glór and they held workshops in Ennis and Scariff on Cruinniú na nOg, on June 10th.

The Arts Office continued to support to artists & arts organisations by promoting their work on two Arts in Clare slots on Clare FM and issuing our monthly newsletter to the sector. We launched a bursary scheme for artists and ran a Starting a Creative Business Course for Ukrainians. Decisions were made on our PRISM scheme for murals countywide. We ran a visual artists webinar on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, held meetings with artists and arts organisations in East Clare and attended the launch by the Minister of the Climate and Cultural Facilities initiative, and an Arts Council local authority exchange day in Dublin. We attended a WRAP meeting to discuss film production in the regions and we assisted with queries on two television productions in the Burren and a short film in West Clare. Two emerging film makers received our Engine Shorts Film bursaries in conjunction with Film in Limerick. We issued our annual Culture Night call out and two schools' residencies were completed in Doora and Tubber National Schools.

Hundreds of people gathered in Killaloe for the Clare Mela, celebrating cultural diversity countywide, organised in conjunction with Fidget Feet attended by the Cathaoirleach, Tony O'Brien MCC. Culturlann Sweeney, Kilkee hosted two film screenings, an exhibition launch and a concert with one hundred and four people attending in total. Three exhibitions took place in Ennis, Scariff and Kilkee. The Embrace exhibition completed a five-week run in Glór and we were successful in re-launching our Musicians in Healthcare programme with Limerick and Tipperary Arts Offices.

The Arts Office Facebook groups had a combined membership of four thousand, seven hundred and two in May, an increase of 2% and Facebook pages reached twelve thousand, four hundred and twelve people in May.

Clare Museum

The Museum is open for summer hours since the start of June. 185 items from the Georgina Frost collection were catalogued during the month. Some of these have been photographed for the website, and all of them will be posted to the website over the summer. A museum volunteer has been helping with the list of the collection to help speed up the cataloguing.

A number of items were donated to the museum collection during the month, including ledgers from Bolton's pub in Scariff, the report and collection of a cannon ball from a garden near Collar and some small portraits of the Scott family from Cah racon House in Kildysart which arrived by post from Canada.

A descendent of Frederic William Burton has informed the

museum that his collection of Burton works and other items has been left to the museum in his will. The museum was chosen because it already possesses some Burton paintings which the collector has seen on the internet. Frederic William Burton grew up in Coronin.

A blog entry on the conservation of a letter was posted to the website blog on 23rd May, while there were 15 social media posts during the month. The Museum's Facebook page has 1,200 followers.

KILLALOE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



Cllr O'Brien elected Cathaoirleach of Killaloe MD

Cllr Tony O'Brien has been elected as Cathaoirleach of the Killaloe Municipal District at its AGM on Friday, 30th June, taking over the role from Cllr Alan O'Callaghan. Cllr Pat Hayes was elected Leas Cathaoirleach for the Killaloe MD.

Rural Regeneration Development Fund - Scariff Regeneration Plan

Progress continues on this Category 2 project which includes proposed public realm improvements to Market Square and construction of a public car park on the adjacent greenfield site.

Discussions on proposed plans between the Municipal District and the community, represented by Scariff Town

Team and Scariff Community Council, concluded in June with the final designs with the community for sign-off shortly with a view to then applying for consent for the Market Square plans over the summer period.

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. Following the procurement process referenced in May's Monthly report, the appointed specialist contractor has begun fabrication of the proposed access facility for water activities at Ballycuggeran Pier, including disability hoist, with installation to be undertaken in August 2023.

Killaloe-Ballina Town Enhancement and Mobility Strategy

As part of the implementation of the Killaloe-Ballina Town Enhancement and Mobility Strategy, preliminary designs for the enhancement of Carrig's Lane were prepared in June. The importance of Carrig's Lane and as pedestrian connectivity between Main Street and Abbey Street to enhance the permeability and vitality and viability of Main Street is



Photo of completed repairs, refurbishment and painting of 'The Green Bridge', Killaloe.

recognised in the prioritising this element of the Masterplan. It is anticipated that subject to funding and agreement with key stakeholders, the laneway could be upgraded in Q4 2023.



Proposed Preliminary Sketch Design of Carrig's Lane Upgrade

In June specialist contractors completed the necessary refurbishment, cleaning, repair and painting of the pedestrian bridge known as the 'Green Bridge'. Works including the set-up of specialist water safety equipment and water quality protection measures and painting. The pedestrian bridge reopened ahead of schedule. The completed works enhances the amenity and means of pedestrian footpath access to Royal Parade and the area known as 'between the waters'.

June 2023 works/projects Killaloe MD

During the month of June Killaloe MD staff were involved in the following Projects/Meetings/ Correspondence:

Junction safety verge trimming has begun throughout the MD, with works prioritized based on the road status and traffic volume.

Amenity area maintenance, including grass cutting contracts have begun at Ballycuggeran, Mountshannon, Killaloe and at the viewing point at Bealkelly.

Ongoing liaison with various Community Council and Tidy Towns groups, on projects supported by the MD and Elected Representatives., e.g. Tulla Tidy Towns – Village Signage upgrade project.

Following the successful breeding and hatching of chicks by a pair of white-tailed eagles discussion with the MD commenced regarding the installation by Killaloe MD of a viewing cabin at Mountshannon, subject to obtaining a mechanism with the community for supervising the information point and telescope.

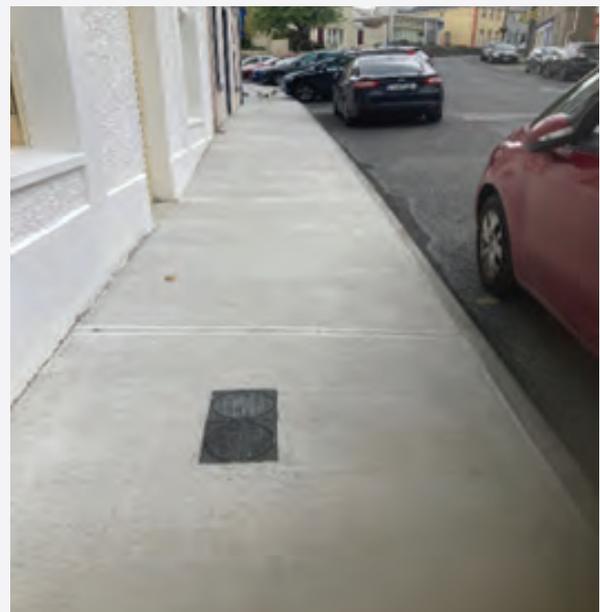
2023 Schedule of Municipal District Works underway on roads in preparation for Surface Dressing, and restoration improvement strengthening roadworks.



Surface Dressing Programme in progress

NTA Active Travel

Tulla Footpaths – 60% complete - Works on pedestrian crossings and footpath upgrades progressing well.



Completed footpath upgrade at Tulla

Safety Improvement Work (Low Cost Safety) projects

Designs completed and approved. Landowner engagement at Cloonamirran and Cranagher to begin in early July 2023, with works expected to begin in October, outside the nesting season.

Design completed at L3084 - Creche/Playground at Killaloe – Section 38 process to begin by end of June 2023
Construction to begin in July 2023 on R462 Tulla safety improvement works.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

TRANSPORTATION

Roadworks Programme and Operations

The 2023 Schedule of Municipal District Works (Annual Roadworks Programme) is well underway.

Strategic Transportation

Transportation Progress Update

Active Travel

The following is a brief overview of the status of ongoing projects funded under Active Travel:

Tulla Road Cycle scheme:

- The Statutory public consultation advertised under Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act, 1994 has now concluded. Submissions received in respect of scheme proposals are now being reviewed by the Design Team.
- The Section 38 will be proposed for adoption at the July meeting of Ennis Municipal District (MD).

Connecting & Co-creating Ennis:

- A Section 38 for the provision of a suite of raised courtesy crossings within the town was adopted by Elected Members at the June meeting of Ennis MD.

Limerick Road (incl. St. Flannans Drive) Cycle scheme:

- Consultants Brief is being prepared for the appointment of a Design Team to advance Options Selection and Preliminary Design for this scheme.

'Safe Routes To School' program:

- A Section 38 has been advertised for proposed works to improve walking and cycling routes to Clonmoney National School.
- Preliminary Design has commenced for proposed works at the Holy Family National School in Ennis.

Public Lighting

The PLEEP (Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project) has commenced in Clare with surveying works. The surveying & condition assessment of the existing public lighting network is being carried out by the PLEEP contractor – the Le Cheile Consortium.

For the benefit of Councillors, public lighting faults can be reported online at <https://enerveo.com/report-a-fault/republic-of-ireland>, by Phone (0818-372772) or via Local Authority Identification (<https://www.clarecoco.ie/services/roads-and-transport/road-maintenance-issues/report-a-broken-streetlight>).

Road Design Office

TII Road Safety Projects

Project	Progress Update
TII HD 15 Sites	N85 Clareabbey roundabout: Arup on behalf of TII are working on capacity modelling for any proposed changes to the roundabout. A meeting was held on-site with TII and their Consultants to observe traffic flows, in the context of potential alterations to the roundabout, to improve pedestrian and cyclist permeability.
TII HD 17 Sites	For the N67: A Feasibility and Option Report for N67/L50222 (New Quay Church) has been submitted to TII for Gateway 1 approval. A Feasibility and Option Report for N67/L6051-0 (Mount Charles Terrace, Kilkee) has been submitted to TII for Gateway 1 approval. Minister Place, Kilkee; Design Report and Quality Audit submitted to TII for approval.
Special Speed Limits	Tobin Consultant Engineers, on behalf of TII, are carrying out pre-installation speed surveys at Caherea, New Quay and Rineen National Schools.

Other Projects 2023

Project	Progress Update
Bridge Rehabilitation Programme	<p>Works completed with snagging ongoing for the following bridge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Magherabaun Bridge <p>Section 50 application being prepared for the following bridge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ballycloghessy Bridge <p>Construction works to commence on the following bridges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cloghera Bridge Crean Bridge Drimeen Bridge Gortnaglough Bridge Gortnagonella Bridge Inchiquin Bridge <p>Tender evaluation complete with Contractor to be appointed for the following bridges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alagha Bridge Ballybran Bridge Dromore Bridge Gortalassa Bridge Wyndham Bridge Knockanena Bridge <p>Tender competition advertised for the following bridges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erinaghmore Bridge Rathmeehan Bridge Mahonburg Bridge
Liaison with NTA regarding bus stops	The TII are reviewing the Kilnamona Bus stop proposal and are also reviewing the location of the existing Limerick bound bus stop at Setrights Cross.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Liaison with NTA regarding bus shelters	<p>The NTA has approved 15 bus shelters for the 2023 programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In June the NTA proposed the replacement of the existing bus shelter in Clarisford Killaloe with a new bus shelter.
Low-Cost Safety Schemes 2023	<p>Section 38 advertised for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benson Box Killaloe Summerhill Ennis

Health And Safety

The Health and Safety Team are continuing with their schedule of Annual Safety Statement and Risk Assessment Review. 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, a trial of Traffic Management Software using a handheld device underway in West Clare MD and Serious Incident Simulated Workshops being delivered to Senior Staff in each Department.

The Health and Safety Team has 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.

General Design Office

Project	Progress Update
Town and Village Renewal Schemes	Clonlara - Tender assessment completed, contractor due to be appointed end of June/early July.
Vandeleur Walled Gardens, Kilrush, Upper Carpark.	Tenders/quotations received; tender assessments completed. Contractor due to be appointed end of June with works scheduled to start on site, early July 2023.
Schools Flashing Lights/ Driver Feedback signs	<p>Work has commenced on a county wide survey of all Schools Flashing Lights and Driver Feedback signs so that a request for tender can be issued for the maintenance and or replacement of sign installations.</p> <div style="text-align: right;">  </div>

CAPITAL DELIVERY / PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

<p>Doolin Pier Visitor Services Building</p>	<p>Design development is scheduled to resume in the coming weeks, following resolution of land-use options impacting on the proposed development and following conclusion of surveying, monitoring and consideration of some of the more significant environmental requirements.</p>
<p>Ennis Public Realm Regeneration (Project B)</p>	<p>The URDF Section of the Department is at present reviewing the Final Business Case which has been updated to reflect increased tender costs as a result of construction industry inflation. The approval of the Final Business Case will enable contractor appointment, following which procurement of materials will proceed and the construction programme can be finalised. In parallel, the Design team has been retained by Uisce Éireann 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 Uisce Éireann in Ennis to future proof and improve the services within the town centre which is welcome news indeed.</p>
<p>Ennistymon Inner Relief Road and Bridge Crossing (Blake’s Corner)</p>	<p>The Judicial Review proceedings are still ongoing following which we will be better informed as to our next step in the delivery of this critical and much awaited infrastructure.</p>
<p>Killaloe Bridge and By-Pass</p>	<p>The good weather continues to play a role with increased productivity across the scheme. Earthworks, mass haul and deposition continue apace. Marine Works are progressing well. R494 upgrade road construction and accommodation works are making good progress. Photo Ref:-2023-70 Works are progressing on the Eastern Embankment (Tipperary side). East Pier 1 Pier Riser Stem is scheduled to be poured next week. East Pier 2 piles have been installed and its Precast Pile Cap is currently being manufactured off site.</p> <p>On the Clare side of the River, steel fixing and formwork to the Western Abutment is in progress. Steel fixing to West Pier 1 has also commenced.</p> <p>Piling to West Pier 2 is in progress.</p> <p>Excavation to the main Bypass Cutting continues. The installation of surface water drainage on the Bypass has commenced. Trimming of batters and topsoiling to same has commenced. Rock breaking is almost complete.</p> <p>Deposition of fill materials to Kincora continues.</p> <p>Deposition of fill materials to embankments at CIE Railway and Kilmastulla River bridges continues.</p> <p>Installation of earthwork walls to embankment at Shannonside Business Park has commenced.</p> <p>Accommodation works boundary walls are progressing along the R494</p> <p>Installation of culvert between double attenuation pond on R494 has commenced.</p> <p>A road closure of the R494 Ballina to Birdhill Road is required to facilitate the demolition of the Railway Bridge on the route. The closure application for a 9-month period is currently being considered by Tipperary County Council. The road will be closed to through-traffic but will remain open for residents and local businesses from both sides. A number of diversion routes will be provided and signposted. The main diversion route is the R496 (i.e., the old Ballina-Nenagh Road) but alternative routes include O’Briensbridge and Portroe.</p> <p>Further details surrounding the Road Closure will be advertised in the national newspapers and other media outlets in the coming weeks.</p> <p>The current Temporary Traffic Management arrangements along the R494 will continue to be in place. Temporary Traffic Management on the R353 (adjacent Shantraud Housing Estate) will come into operation next week.</p> <p>Further information including monthly drone footage on the scheme is available on https://www.clarecoco.ie/services/capital-projects/roads-and-bridges/killaloe-bypass-shannon-bridge-crossing/</p>

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Kilkee Flood Relief Scheme	During the past month, our scheme Consultants, JBA_JB Barry have continued work on the preparation of documents including the AA Screening Report, Buildability Report and the EIAR Scoping Report. The EIAR Scoping Report will be issued to the statutory consultees following Clare County Council's review. The consultant is also nearing completion of the draft planning level design for the scheme and this is expected in the coming weeks.
Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF)	<p>RPS Consulting Engineers have now finalised the detailed design and preparation of the tender documents associated with the road element of the scheme. Review of these documents is currently under way which when completed, will be considered by the Consultants prior to going to Tender.</p> <p>Discussions and cross directorate meetings are continuing with our colleagues in Housing & Planning regarding the optimum design and composition of the housing element of the scheme.</p> <p>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.</p>
Lough Donnell Culvert Repair works	The successful tenderer (Donnelly Brothers) has been formally appointed and is to commence construction works in early July. The construction works will take approximately 4 months to complete.
N19 Shannon Airport Access Road	<p>The Phase 3 (Design and Environmental Evaluation) stage is currently ongoing. The due Preferred Option includes a combination of active travel measures, improvements to public transport, along with new and improved road infrastructure between Drumgeely roundabout and Knockbeagh Point roundabout on approach to Shannon International Airport. Utility diversions have now been agreed with all utility providers for the scheme and our scheme Consultants have updated the land-take requirements which will assist with landowner negotiations.</p> <p>Phase 3 is expected to be completed in Q3 2023 with Phase 4 (Statutory Consent) stage progressing thereafter. This will involve a Development Consent Application & EIAR to An Bord Pleanála.</p> <p>As always further information and associated literature on the project can be accessed via the scheme website www.shannonaccess.ie</p>
Quin Flood Relief Scheme	Delighted to advise that the OPW Direct Labour Crew mobilised on site on June 21st to commence construction of the flood relief scheme. The initial programme of works will include compound set-up, haul road construction and temporary drain installation.
Remediation of sites containing ACM	Screening assessments are ongoing as part of the due diligence for which completion will be required prior to finalisation of contracting strategy. In parallel, tender packages are being finalised to incorporate geophysical survey data, and proposals from the workshop held in May with MD staff to finalise traffic planning arrangements necessary to minimise disruption during the export of bulk soil material from the sites. It is intended that tenders in respect of disposal of bulk soil material will be published shortly upon conclusion of these steps. In the interim, the sites continue to be routinely monitored and maintained as required by Council staff in accordance with our agreed approach following discussion and consultation with the EPA.
Shannon Town & Environs Flood Relief Scheme	The Hydrology and Hydraulic Reports have been updated by the scheme consultant RPS and will now be reviewed by the Council and the OPW. Also, the consultant, supported by a number of third-party specialists, is progressing with the detailed ecological surveys required which include Badger, Bat, Otter, Pine Martin Amphibian, Common Lizard, Aquatic Species, Annex I, Reptile, Marsh Fritillary and Flora Protection Order surveys. These will be ongoing for the next 3 months approximately.
Springfield, Clonlara FRS	The final elements of work are continuing on site. The ductile iron pipework to connect the pumps to the outfall and the sump have been installed. The reinforced concrete sump and trash screen, the pump discharge area and the maintenance building have been completed. Ducting and sleeves for lighting and power have also been put in place. A date has been arranged for the manufacturers and their agents to travel to Springfield to commission the pumps and provide training and instruction for the Clare County Council staff. Work is progressing in parallel on the accommodation works associated with landowners, drainage, land restoration and the fencing. A contractor has been appointed to erect the permanent fencing. The grass and the wildflowers sown on the embankments as part of the seed mixture to encourage biodiversity have thrived. There is no change to the programme and all works are expected to be completed by the end of July 2023.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 1: Kilrush to Kilkee)	The Topographical Surveyor has completed site works and is currently processing the survey data. Priority areas have been received. Clare County Council is, as always, available to meet landowners to discuss their concerns throughout this process. Work continues on the 'Option Selection Report' in line with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) Requirements. Preparations for the Emerging Preferred Route Corridor Public Consultation (PC3) are ongoing. Consultation with TII Land Valuation Department continues in preparation for the Voluntary Land Acquisition Agreements in line with the National Greenway Code of Best Practice. The procurement of a land valuer is ongoing.
West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 2: Ennis to Ennistymon)	Feedback from Public Consultation 2 has been assessed and the PC2 report has been circulated by the consultants. Work has commenced on the 'Option Selection Report' in line with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) Requirements based on the desktop constraints studies undertaken by the environmental specialists and the feedback from PC2. Information on other planned complementary works at Corofin has been collated and is being assessed by the consultants in the finalisation of the Option Selection process. Engagement with landowners is ongoing. The NPWS has been contacted to explore synergies with its separate plans in Corofin.
West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 3 & 4: Ennistymon to Miltown Malbay & Miltown Malbay to Moyasta)	Letters of Intent and Regret have been sent to tenderers. Following the standstill period and approval of funding by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), Clare County Council will enter contract with the successful tenderer and begin initial Public Consultation in this area.
Other Greenway Proposals	Landowner negotiations in Shannon, Bunratty and Sixmilebridge are continuing. Clare County Council continue to work closely with TII and Waterways Ireland on developing the proposal between Limerick/UL and Scarriff.

Killaloe Bridge and By-Pass



Quin Flood Relief Scheme



Springfield, Clonlara



FIRE & BUILDING CONTROL SECTION

National Retained Fire Fighter Industrial Action

Fire-fighting personnel across the Country including Clare took part in strike action as part of a national dispute which commenced on the 13th June with rolling strikes in 50% of the stations.

On the 19th June, the strike action was postponed due to the intervention of the Labour Court.

Training Courses

Clare County Fire & Rescue Service personnel attended a Chainsaw Operator Refresher course in June.

Replacement Programme – 2 No. Vans

As part of the replacement programme for Fire Service vehicles, approval was granted by the National Directorate for Fire & Emergency Management for the procurement of 2 No. vans and the fit out of same for Killaloe and Kilrush Fire Brigades.

Fire & Building Control Section Main Activities	May 2023	June 2023 (Up to 22.06.23)	Year to Date
Emergency Calls Attended	74	36	426
Fire Safety Certificates Received	5	11	50
Fire Safety Certificates Granted	12	3	35
Fire Safety Certificates Invalidated	0	0	4
Disability Access Certificates Received	3	8	22
Disability Access Certificates Granted	7	0	18
Commencement Notices Received	33	23	185
Dangerous Structures/Places Complaints	3	0	5

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

CLARE CIVIL DEFENCE

Clare Civil Defence

Operational Duties

In June, Clare Civil Defence provided medical cover for

- 24hr Relay For Life – Irish Cancer Society - Tim Smythe Park
- Big screen for Munster Hurling Final – Tim Smythe Park
- West Clare Cycling Club – Smithstown Shannon
- Garda Station Open Day – Crusheen

Civil Defence also conducted the following operational duties:

The Clare Civil Defence Drone Team were tasked by Clare County Fire and Rescue Service to assist at a large forest fire at the 12 O’Clock Hills near Sixmilebridge. Two members of the team responded and provided an aerial view of the fire to assist the Rostered Senior Fire Officer on scene.

Members of the Civil Defence Medical team took part in an RTC exercise at Ennis Fire Station. The team roleplayed as the National Ambulance Service and assisted the fire crews with patient care and extrication.

A National Radiation Monitoring Exercise was attended by Clare Civil Defence along with all Civil Defence units from across the country in conjunction with the Civil Defence Branch of the Department of Defence.

Members Training & Professional Development

- Members participated in weekly training set out by Civil Defence instructors - this training included boat training, vehicle training, search training and use of drones.
- The 8 new recruits participated in safe working near water training exercise near Ballyalla Lake.
- Large search exercise was conducted near Clareabbey with over 20 members taking part.



ENVIRONMENT

SDG Champion programme 2023 / 2024

As part of the SDG Champion Programme we commenced weekly social media posts raising awareness around the Sustainable Development Goals. The posts focused on promoting simple daily actions that can be taken to support SDG1 – No Poverty, SDG2 – Zero Hunger, SDG 3 – Good Health and Well Being and SDG 4 – Quality Education. Our Environmental Awareness Officer also presented on the SDGs and our role as SDG Champions to the Physical Development SPC as well as to Management Team.

National Food Waste Recycling Week

It was National Food Waste Recycling Week 2023 during week beginning 5th June 2023. To support National Food Waste Recycle free My Waste Ireland Food Waste kitchen caddies were available to the public during the week at Áras Contae an Chláir (Ennis), West Clare Municipal District Offices (Kilrush and Ennistymon), Shannon Municipal District Office, Killaloe Municipal District Office (Scariff).

A media release was also issued supported by social media posts. Adverts were placed on the Clare Champion and The Clare Echo. Our Environmental Awareness Officer participate in a Morning Focus Clare FM interview promoting food waste recycling and its benefits.

An Taisce Blue Flag Programme

During June Blue Flag Beach awareness sessions took place at Ballycuggeran, Whitestrand, Miltown Malbay and Kilkee with four primary schools - Doonaha NS, St Flannans Inagh NS, St Joseph's National School (Miltown Malbay) and Ogonnelloe NS.

Students learnt about water quality and catchment science, water safety as well the importance of planning ahead and leaving no trace when visiting Clare's Blue Flag and Green Coast Beaches.

Gardening

In June, the Gardening Team commenced with the cutting and lifting of grass from lawn areas at Áras Contae an Chláir. During May, grass cutting had been temporarily suspended to allow for lawn areas to grow wild and promote the growth of nationally occurring pollinator friendly plant species to act as a food source of insects in early summer. This continued cycle of altered grass mowing and collection will ensure the proliferation of a natural variety of plant species in lawn areas, as part of the Council's commitment to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

Having undertaken extensive planting of public spaces in May with pollinator friendly plant species, the extended hot and dry weather experienced in June required the Gardening Team to commit significant resources to ensure the successful establish-

ment and growth of the new plants. This considerable effort has paid dividends and plants are now beginning to flourish and bloom to help enhance streetscapes and urban areas.

Continued collaboration with Ennis MD staff during June also saw the Gardening Team deliver and install dozens of tiered planters and containers to locations throughout Ennis Town, all as part of the preparation for the "Communities in Bloom" competition which is to be judged in late July.

Water Enforcement Scientific Team	June 2023	Jan to June 2023
Bathing Water (testing)	60	79
Domestic Wastewater Treatment Plant Inspections (NIP Plan)	30	30
Enforcement actions (\$12 issued or number of 'active' cases)	0	0
Inspection of Section 4 licenced premises	5	19
Planning applications (Agriculture)	3	8
Planning applications (Domestic)	32	147
Planning applications (Large Developments)	0	12
Planning applications (Forestry)	10	35
Pollution complaints received	11	42
Private Commercial Drinking Water Supplies	0	22
Private/Public Group Water Scheme supplies	0	85
Rivers	12	141
Warning & advisory letters issued	2	2

Waste Management

Recycling Centres - The tenders for Waste Management Services have all been assessed in conjunction with the Office of Government Procurement (OGP). The tender will be awarded shortly following final consultation with the OGP.

Bring Banks - Seasonal Bottle Banks at White Strand Doonbeg and White Strand Miltown Malbay are now in place and will remain so until the end of the season. An additional collection has been added at the Kilkee bottle bank site for the summer season.

Waste Enforcement

The team continue to respond to illegal dumping complaints. 96 complaints of litter and dumping were received in June, 46 of which are now closed. The remainder are under investigation, enforcement actions are underway i.e. Warning Letters and Notices under the Litter Pollution and Waste Management Acts.

Unauthorised Collector

Investigations carried out by the Waste Enforcement team have led to an unauthorised waste collector (man in a van) being identified. He has been spoken to and written to by members of the Waste Enforcement team. Unauthorised activity has currently ceased. It will continue to be monitored by the Waste Enforcement team.

Kilkee Green Hub

Work on this initiative is ongoing. The Waste Enforcement team are liaising with the Municipal District, local food retailers and caravan park owners to improve the litter management issues in Kilkee.

Anti-Dumping Initiative 2023

Clare County Council have been approved for €90,000 under the Anti-Dumping Initiative scheme for 2023. Work is underway organising various projects under this initiative i.e. Amnesty Days, Fencing Projects and support to community groups.

Routine Inspections of WFP/COR Sites

To meet the requirements set in the 2023 RMCEI plan routine inspections of WFP/COR sites by the Waste Enforcement team are ongoing throughout June 2023. Follow-up actions have been taken and are being monitored.

Fines and Directions issued under the Waste Management Act 1996 (as Amended) and Litter Pollution Act 1997 (as Amended)

A total of 10 Litter Fines issued in June. One litter fine was appealed and cancelled; one fine was paid. The Waste Enforcement Team continue to pursue open fines and investigate new complaints for evidence.

Beach Bye-Laws

The Waste Enforcement team have begun Beach Bye-Law patrols at weekends in June, to monitor compliance with the Clare County Council Beach Bye-Laws, 2021.

Beach Lifeguards

Clare County Council is the first local authority to introduce beach lifeguards during the month of May. Lifeguards were on duty full time in June at Lahinch, Spanish Point, Fanore and Kilkee. Weekend lifeguard duty remained in place at the other beaches.

Bathing Water Monitoring

The bathing season officially commenced on the 1st June with the pre-season samples taken in the last week of May. Fourteen designated bathing areas will be monitored throughout the season until the 15th of September next. The fourteen designated areas are listed below.

Designated Bathing Area Monitoring Locations 2023	
Bishopsquarter	Kilkee
Fanore	Carrigaholt
Lahinch	Cappagh Pier (Kilrush)
Whitestrans (Milltown)	Ballyallia
Spanish Point	Mountshannon
Seafield Quilty	Ballycuggeran
Whitestrans (Doonbeg)	Seafield Quilty

In accordance with the requirements of the Bathing Water Quality Regulations 2008 (SI No 79 of 2008, on Saturday the 17th of June Clare County Council put prior warning notices at 6 locations as outlined below:

- Lahinch,
- Kilkee,
- Spanish point,
- Whitestrans Doonbeg
- Whitestrans Miltown Malbay
- Cappagh Pier, Kilrush.

These notices were to warn swimmers that short-term pollution (lasting no more than a few days) may occur due to heavy rainfall. Scheduled monitoring carried out on the 19th of June indicated that no short-term pollution event occurred at the following locations:

- Lahinch,
- Kilkee,
- Whitestrans Doonbeg
- Cappagh Pier, Kilrush

Monitoring results for samples taken at both Spanish Point and Whitestrans Miltown Malbay indicated elevated levels of bacteria. On the advice of the HSE Bathing Prohibition Notices were erected at both locations. Repeat samples were taken on the 20th of June by Laboratory staff. The results of these samples indicated a return to Excellent Quality for both locations. Following consultation with the HSE the Bathing Prohibition Notices were removed from Spanish Point and Whitestrans Miltown Malbay on the 22nd of June.

CLIMATE ACTION

Climate Action Plan Development

The Climate team are continuing through the processes related to the development of the Climate Action Plan. Stage 1 Initiation stage is nearing completion with the team now focusing on developing out a range of Climate Actions under various thematic headings (Stage 2). We are working towards a draft plan by end of September 2023.



CAP Stage 1 & 2 Graphic

Stakeholder Engagement :

Stakeholder Engagement at pre draft stage of the Climate Action Plan is crucial to inform the proposed actions. A number of workshops, public consultation events and media events were held in late May & mid June to allow stakeholders to have their say namely:

- May 29th – Decarbonising Zone workshop held at Cross Digital Hub. The Climate team met with representatives of Loop Head Together to discuss possible action areas for Kilkee and the Peninsula.
- June 8th - Clare FM Morning Focus interview with Climate Action Co Ordinator raising awareness of the Climate Action Summary report.
- Online surveys relating to Climate Awareness are live on Council Yoursay page.
- June 10th to June 15th - Climate Action Plan open Public Consultation events held in Shannon, Ennis, Scarriff Kilrush and Ennistymon.
- Sectoral Workshops – The Climate Action team and colleagues in relevant sections attended Regional Sectoral workshops aimed at informing actions in the various areas such as biodiversity and the Natural Environment, Transportation and the Built Environment.

There are other legislative and regulatory instruments that must be considered by local authorities in developing the Climate Action Plan. The Plan is subject to compliance with the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment.

Habitats Directive-Appropriate Assessment (AA): The local authority climate action plan is subject to appropriate assessment under Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) to determine if its implementation is likely to have significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites. In that regard, the Council in collaboration with CARO (Climate Action Regional Office), Limerick City and County Council and Kerry County Council will work with Fehily Timoney & Co to ensure that the CAP development is aligned with these environmental directives. Screening for both the SEA and AA will begin in mid June.



WATER

Future Delivery Of Water Services

The Council held briefings with Water Services staff on the 22nd June to update staff on the future of water services in Clare. The briefings were well attended and afforded staff the opportunity to engage with Council management. Also in June the Council was advised that the effective date for transition of functions to Úisce Éireann is the 20th September 2023.

Water Services Operations

Water Operations

Hereunder is a synopsis of activity of water services staff in response to water outages:

Area	Date	Location	Issue
East Clare Area	25.05.23	New Rd., Killaloe / Twomilegate	Burst main
	26.05.23	Killaloe Town Centre	Valve Re- placement
	07.06.23	Scarriff Harbour	Burst main
	12.06.23 – 14.06.23	O'Briensbridge / Ardnataggle / Bridgetown	Burst main
	19.06.23	Corbally	Valve Failure
Ennis Area	23.05.23	Silvergrove, Ballybeg & Surrounding Areas	Burst main
	26.05.23	Ballybeg / Rockmount	Burst main
West Clare Area	29.05.23	Alva / Kilmacduane	Burst main
	29.05.23	Doonmore / Baltard , Doonbeg	Burst main
	30-05.23	Alva / Kilmacduane / Cooraclare	Burst main
	01.06.23	Doonmore / Ballard / Killard	Burst main
	03.06.23	Kilrush Town & Surrounds	Burst main
	06.06.23	Cooraclare / Alva / Clohanmore	Burst main
	13.06.23	Station RD. / Dough., Kilkee	Burst main
	13.06.23	Alva / Cooraclare / Cree	Burst main
	13.06.23	Ballykett, Kilrush	Burst main
	14.06.23	Lisheen / Bansha & Surrounding Areas	Burst main
	15.06.23	Doonmore / Killard / Baltard	Burst Mains
	19.06.23	Alva / Kilmacduane / Cooraclare	Burst main
	North Clare Area	26.05.23	Lickeen
30.05.23		Noughaval / Kilshanny / Kilfenora	Burst Mains
01.06.23 – 19.06.23		Fanore / Fanoremore / Murroughy	Loss of Supply / Burst Mains / Water Con- servation
Shannon Area	23.05.23	Ballycasey	Burst main
	02.06.23	Ballinoosky / Lemenagh / Carrigoran	Burst main
	09.06.23	Shannon Industrial Estate	Burst main

Significant tankering of water was commenced in North Clare on the 30-05-23 and continues to a lesser level currently. A burst mains on the 30.05.23 put additional pressure on the network and depleted reservoirs north of Kilshanny. Tankering was necessary to Carron, Fanore, New Quay and into Ballymacreavan to replenish reservoir levels which are presently returning to normal operating conditions.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Water Conservation

Leak Detection Works	Mid Clare – Drumbiggle in Ennis DMA North Clare – Kilfenora, New Quay / Bellharbour Shannon/East Clare – Killaloe, Ardnacrusha, Shannon (various) including Shannon Ind. Est.
Leak Detection Fix Operation	Various locations including Bellharbour, Kilmihill, Kilmurray McMahon

Wastewater Operations

Joe Rouines PS Ennistymon	A rising main break occurred on the foul rising main near Joe Rouines pumping station on the 9th of June. It was successfully repaired by the North Clare Operations Crew without any disruption to service or negative environmental impact.
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Ennistymon WwTP	The sprinkler distribution system over the Trickling Filter (TF) at Ennistymon WwTP was replaced in June. A TF consists of a permeable medium made of a bed of rock over which wastewater is distributed. The wastewater trickles through the rock degrading and removing the organic matter in the process.
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Úisce Éireann Capital programme

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 ongoing, with final mechanical and electrical work expected to be completed in July. 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 with a decision originally due on 06/06/23. Further information has been requested by the planning section and a response is under preparation.
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 inline to follow. Phase 1 Work has commenced with the construction of a new third water clarifier complete and commissioning of this tank will be undertaken before moving on to improvement works on the existing clarifier and filters. This phase 1 upgrade is programmed to be complete by Q4 2023.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Ballyvaughan WWTP	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.
Clarecastle Sewerage Scheme	This scheme consists of a new pumping facility at Quay Road and new rising main from Quay Road connecting to Clareabbey Wastewater Treatment Plant inlet. The routine discharge of raw sewage to the River Fergus at Clarecastle Quay has ceased. Final sign off of the construction project is due in the coming weeks.
Clonroadmore & Clareabbey WTPs	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 preparing options reports for each plant and assessing the assimilative capacity available in the River Fergus.
Doonbeg Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade	This scheme is in the 'Early Contractor Involvement' programme. Uisce Éireann appointed Consultants to produce a marine model for the coast of Clare and the contract commenced in late May. This is required to inform the design of the WWTP upgrade. Clare County Council has supplied data to the Consultants on the wastewater treatment plants and licenced sites which discharge to the west coast of Clare.
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 Uisce 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.
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 in the coming months. Data from the marine model mentioned above will be used in the design.
Inagh Wastewater Treatment plant Upgrade	Úisce Eireann is progressing the design for an upgrade including additional headroom at the Inagh Wastewater treatment plant under the IWSS programme. A designer/contractor has been appointed and is undertaking options development for the upgrade.
Kilfenora Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade	Entrance walls, fencing and grass seeding were completed at the percolation area. Process testing continued at the WWTP.
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.
Kilmihil WTP upgrade	A project under the National Certificate of Authorisation Programme (NCAP), to modernise the existing wastewater treatment plant for Kilmihil, is at design stage. The project includes new inlet works, primary and secondary treatment with nutrient removal and a storm water holding facility. It will provide sludge dewatering and storage capacity. The stage 4 design workshop was held in May.
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. At the WWTP mechanical and electrical fitout was completed along with some snagging works. Pre commissioning works continued. At Frances St Pump station grading and seeding were undertaken at the storm tank area. Some site units were demobilised by the Contractor. Completion of the overall scheme is due in mid-2023.



Liscannor Wastewater Treatment Plant	<p>The scheme now consists of a new wastewater treatment plant at Corcomroe, a pumping station adjacent to John P Holland Park, rising main, gravity sewer and connection to the existing outfall. Treatment of wastewater is continuing. The project is awaiting final sign off before official commencement of the one-year operating period by Contractors EPS.</p> <p>The upgrade project is now at the investment planning stage. Workshop minus 1 re-rerun was held in mid May to further discuss options for a proposed outfall and potential WWTP sites. The issue of inclusion of Spanish Point in the scheme is being pursued. Uisce Éireann indicated that funding may not be available. Data from the marine model mentioned above will be used in the design.</p>
Miltown Malbay Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade	<p>The upgrade project is now at the investment planning stage. Workshop minus 1 re-rerun was held in mid-May to further discuss options for a proposed outfall and potential WWTP sites. The date for Uisce Éireann Workshop Zero is June 30th. Data from the marine model mentioned above will be used in the design.</p>
	<p>Úisce Eireann is progressing the design for a package plant to be installed to supplement the water supply at Doolough and facilitate the decommissioning of the Old Doolough water treatment plant. Options are being developed for this work.</p>
Newmarket on Fergus Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade, rising main and outfall	<p>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 response to the further information request is being finalised. Preparation of the tender documents is ongoing and it is anticipated that the project will go out to tender during 2023. Construction is anticipated to commence in 2024.</p>
Old Doolough Water Treatment Plant	<p>Úisce Eireann is progressing the design for a package plant to be installed to supplement the water supply at Doolough and facilitate the decommissioning of the Old Doolough water treatment plant. Options are being developed for this work. The project team carried out an initial site assessment during June.</p>

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 which need further investigation or information /approval from another council section to proceed.
- **National Special Projects Office (NSPO) (79 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.
- **Outstanding assets to be reported on (0 assets)** – All identified sites have now had reports completed.
- **With County Solicitor (10 Assets)** These assets are now with the County Solicitor to either progress by ordinary transfer or by adverse possession processes. A new batch of five sites is being prepared.
- A review of assets which were originally determined to be disused has been commenced.

Rural Water Programme

The Rural Water Team continues to support group water schemes to ensure a robust and sustainable quality and quantity supply of water is available.

Ballycar GWS	<p>Full Road Restoration has been completed following the mains replacement of 4.2km of mains for the Ballycar GWS which brings the project to a close. It is hoped the scheme will transfer to the public network in the near future pending some necessary minor works by the GWS.</p>
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The Council is still waiting on the call for requests for submission of bids for the 2022-2025 Multi Annual Rural Water Programme. Given that we are in June the scheme operators are expressing frustrations with the delay as they have projects ready for inclusion in this call.

Under the 'Grant for the Improvement of a Private Water Supply to a House' 34 applications have been received to date in 2023.

SHANNON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



Cllr McGettigan elected Cathaoirleach of Shannon MD

Cllr Donna McGettigan was elected as Cathaoirleach of the Shannon Municipal District at its AGM on Thursday, 29th June, taking over the role from Cllr Michael Begley. Cllr John Crowe was elected Leas Cathaoirleach for the Shannon MD.

Cathaoirleach Michael Begley welcomes Springfield, Clonlara Flood Relief Scheme

At a recent site visit to the Flood Relief Scheme works at Springfield Clonlara, Cathaoirleach Michael Begley expressed his delight and appreciation that the project is nearing completion. The installation of the two 400mm large pumps at



the location is an impressive sight as part of the overall project and will ensure that the community of Springfield Clonlara is protected from flooding into the future. The Office of Public Works has worked diligently on this project together with the staff of the Project Management Office and with support from Shannon MD.

Shannon Commercial Properties brief MD Members

On 7th June 2023 Shannon MD crews responded swiftly to a traffic incident involving a lorry that hit Poulawilly Railway Bridge on the Sixmilebridge to Cratloe Road. Significant damage was caused to the bridge which resulted in rail services being halted and a temporary road closure being put in place for a num-



ber of days while remedial works were carried out by Irish Rail contractors. Given that it was nearing Munster Final weekend, the incident generated considerable media interest. Shannon MD including local Councillors, Irish Rail and local Gardai worked collaboratively with the community to minimize disruption. Shannon MD staff were on hand to advise local residents and other road users of the road closure and the diversions in place in addition to ongoing media updates and press releases. The remedial works were completed in time for the road to be re-opened and the rail service to resume for Clare fans heading to the Munster Final.

Shannon MD Members contribute to draft Local Economic and Community Plan

Shannon MD Members attended a workshop on the preparation of the draft Local Economic and Community Plan and gave their input and expertise into the 6-year strategic statutory plan which includes high level goals. The Plan will consider the future development of Clare from both a community and economic perspective. It will be a key driver for funding across Clare during this timescale. The Elected Members of Shannon MD keenly discussed relevant perspectives such as developing community infrastructure, support, and services as well as job creation, transport, and housing issues. The workshop was facilitated by Dr Sean O Riordain and Ms Bernie Haugh. Shannon MD Offices also hosted a public consultation evening where members of the public actively engaged and had their say on the Plan. It was a hugely successful evening with a steady stream of attendance throughout its duration. This in-person consultation event underpins the importance of public involvement in having meaningful input into decision making processes that affect communities.

Meeting with Bunratty Local Development Group

Officials of Shannon MD met with Bunratty Development Group



during the month and discussed progress on various projects underway in the village. The strong working relationship between the MD and the Group was highlighted and the fruits of that work are very evident throughout the village. The works under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme have commenced with the contractor now on site. The works are significant enhancement works which will modernize the public realm in the village. Under the Town & Village Renewal project, key projects will be delivered including, - construction of a pedestrian crossing to safely link the castle to the commercial area also crossing points at three other locations to allow pedestrians safe crossing locations for the first time, traffic calming from JP Clarkes to Limerick exit slip road and a bandstand and other enhancement to the public green area to the rear of the Creamery public house. The project will also incorporate place making at three approaches to the village. When completed this project will greatly enhance the village as a safe, enjoyable and interesting tourism offering for visitors and locals.

New Rural and Community Development Officer appointed

Shannon MD welcomes the appointment of Grainne McCormack to the role of Rural and Community Development Officer. The Rural and Community Development Officer plays a crucial role in building the capacity of voluntary community leaders and organisations and Grainne has commenced active engagement with community groups and individuals.

Great news for Shannon

Cathaoirleach Michael Begley welcomed the news that a new Aer Lingus Shannon to Paris service will commence from September. It is a very positive announcement for Shannon and the mid-west region given the connectivity offered by this new service to Charles de Gaulle which is one of Europe’s busiest airports.

Appreciation for works carried out at junction on Rossmanagher Road in Sixmilebridge.

Shannon MD office received a thank you email from StJohn McCloskey for works carried out at junction on Rossmanagher Road in Sixmilebridge. StJohn said “Just a quick word of thanks for the new Stop sign & corresponding road markings...feeling safer already”. Thanks StJohn for the thoughtful email, it was very much appreciated.



Summary Of Other Works

Newmarket on Fergus ORIS

These works will offer a greatly enhanced accessible amenity in the area and will have a positive impact on the health and well-being of residents and visitors. It involved 2000m² of footpath refurbishment.



Grass-cutting

The grass cutting continues throughout the MD.

Surface dressing

Surface dressing is substantially complete across the MD

TII Overlay works

TII have started overlay works on N18 from Bunratty to Limerick tunnel junction.

Town Village Renewal Schemes

Contractor on site in Bunratty and works have commenced; Letter of intent has issued in respect of Clonlara (Clonlara); Finalising details on the Tender package (Drumgeely); Discussions and proposals ongoing with relevant landowners (Pardeen).

Footpath Refurbishment Contract

Footpath improvement works 2000m² are underway near L3148 (near Inn at Dromoland). Roadstone footpath completed.



Junction tightening at Avondale Estate Newmarket on Fergus. Footpath overpass at Bunratty to Setrights Cross – preparation works have been carried out.

Railings and accessibility works

Improvement works were completed near to Joe’s Shop in Shannon Town.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Transfer of Shannon Heritage to Clare County Council



Stephen Hanley, newly appointed General Manager of Clare Tourism East (Bunratty, Craggaunowen, Knappogue and Inis Cealtra /Holy Island), pictured centre at the Regency Walled Gardens in Bunratty Castle and Folk Park with Pat Dowling, Chief Executive of Clare County Council; Leonard Cleary, Director of Tourism Development, Clare County Council; Elaine Hiney Wall, Gardens Manager, Shannon Heritage; and Bunratty Castle & Folk Park Entertainers. Photo: Arthur Ellis.

Stephen Hanley Appointed to Key Clare Tourism Roles

Clare County Council has announced the appointment of Stephen Hanley as General Manager of Clare Tourism East, with responsibility for Bunratty Castle & Folk Park, Craggaunowen Bronze Age Park, Knappogue Castle & Gardens, and the Inis Cealtra /Holy Island Experience.

Mr. Hanley has extensive experience in the tourism and hospitality sector having previously held the position of General Manager of The Shelbourne Hotel in Dublin and General Manager of the Radisson Blu Hotels in Galway, Limerick, and Cork.

The appointment of Mr. Hanley, a native of County Kerry and graduate of Shannon College of Hotel Management, comes just weeks after Clare County Council and The Shannon Airport Group signed a historic agreement marking the official handover of the Clare assets of Shannon Heritage to the local authority.

“I am honoured to assume the position of General Manager of some of Ireland’s best known and most loved heritage attractions,” commented Mr. Hanley. He continued, “County Clare and the wider Mid-West Region are fortunate to have

an abundance of top-tier visitor attractions on their doorstep. Working under the auspices of the local authority, I look forward to exploring new opportunities for further developing the sites and promoting a tourism product that delivers for visitors to the county and the local economy.”

Pat Dowling, Chief Executive of Clare County Council, welcomed Mr. Hanley to the role, adding, “Stephen’s appointment is a huge boost to the local tourism sector as he has vast experience of working at the highest level of the Irish tourism and hospitality sector.”

“Clare County Council has embarked on an exciting new chapter in recent weeks, and we look forward to working with Stephen in bringing forward fresh and innovative ideas that will further enhance the tourism offering at Bunratty, Craggaunowen and Knappogue, and contribute to the future development of a brand-new tourism experience at Inis Cealtra / Holy Island in East Clare,” added Mr. Dowling.

Leonard Cleary, Director of Tourism Development, Clare County Council, said the new appointment is the latest in a series of positive announcements for the Shannon Heritage sites in recent weeks. Stephen joins the newly formed Tourism Development Directorate team with a dedicated focus on the implementation of the ‘County Clare Tourism Strategy 2030’ in partnership with the private sector tourism industry and host communities.

“Working with Lambert Smith Hampton, Clare County Council has commenced an in-depth technical review of Bunratty, Craggaunowen, Knappogue, and the retail unit at the Cliffs of Moher Experience, which will guide future, much-needed investment in maintenance, remedial and conservation works at the sites. Working with Stephen in his new role, Clare County Council is committed to investing in the future development of the sites for the benefit of the tourism sector and the wider economy as well as the communities in which they are situated,” concluded Mr. Cleary.

Cliffs of Moher Coastal Walk ORIS Funding

The Cliffs of Moher Coastal Walk has benefitted from €500,000 in funding from the Department of Rural and Community Development under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS).

The project will see the repair and upgrade of a looped section of the Cliffs of Moher Coastal Walk north of the Visitor Centre. The funding will be used to carry out repair and upgrade works on a section to improve visitor safety along the popular walking trail. In consultation and by agreement with landowners, the works include the repair of a 1.3km section of the existing walkway, part of which links in with the historical Doolin Road. In addition to the upgrade of the gravel paths, works will include drainage, fencing, stone wall repairs, handrails and the erection of safety signage. The contract was recently awarded to Cotter Plant Hire to complete the works on behalf of Clare County Council.



Photographed above: Councillor Shane Talty; John Moylan, Clare County Council; Pat Dowling, Chief Executive, Clare County Council; Sheila Browne, Cliffs of Moher Experience; David Bridge, Clare County Council; Michael Cotter, Cotter Plant Hire Ltd; and Leonard Cleary, Director of Tourism Development and West Clare Municipal District for Clare County Council, pictured on the Cliffs of Moher Coastal Walk, which is the subject of repair works. Photo: Arthur Ellis.

Review Of Shannon Heritage Clare Sites



Clare County Council (Tuesday, 30 May 2023) signed a contract with Lambert Smith Hampton (Ireland) to undertake an in-depth review of the Clare-based assets of Shannon Heritage.

The property condition survey of Bunratty Castle & Folk Park, Craggaunowen Bronze Age Park, Knappogue Castle & Gardens, and the retail unit at the Cliffs of Moher Experience will guide all future investment in maintenance, remedial and conservation works at the sites.

The results of the technical audit will be presented to the Local Authority before the end of the year.

Pat Dowling, Chief Executive of Clare County Council, commented, “In order to commence our programme of investment in the assets, it is of critical importance that a detailed technical audit be carried out to determine the scale and nature of appropriate repairs and retrofitting measures that may be required. Clare County Council is committed to investing in the future development of these sites for the benefit of the tourism sector and the wider economy, as well as the communities in which they are situated.

Leonard Cleary, Director of Tourism Development for Clare County Council, said Clare County Council, as the operators of the four sites, has an obligation to meet the heritage, conservation, and education objectives of the Trustees.

“It is recognised in the wider community and those operating in the tourism sector across Clare that the Trustees have held the mantle of responsibility for the visitor attractions over a long number of years and in doing so, have given huge service to the State,” explained Mr. Cleary.

He continued, “Clare County Council looks forward to building a productive working relationship with all stakeholders, including the Trustees of the Gort Museum Trust, Bunratty Castle and the Bunratty Castle Ownership Trust, the Hunt Museum Trust at Craggaunowen and Knappogue Corporation at Knappogue.”

Niki Alderdice, Director of Building Consultancy of Lambert Smith Hampton (Ireland), said, "We are delighted to work with Clare County Council in delivering a detailed technical examination of the four sites, and look forward to delivering a full and comprehensive overview of the general health and infrastructural needs of the buildings and properties in question before the end of 2023."

Aodhagan Behan, Operations Manager at Bunratty Castle & Folk Park, stated, "Investment is required at Bunratty, Knappogue and Craggaunowen. I am very much looking forward to the outcome of this survey and, subsequently, plans being put in

place to remediate the sites for the benefit of those who visit and work there."

Bunratty Castle & Folk Park, Craggaunowen Bronze Age Park, Knappogue Castle & Gardens, and the retail unit at the Cliffs of Moher Experience are managed, developed and promoted by Clare County Council as part of its existing portfolio of signature visitor attractions and sites, namely the Cliffs of Moher Experience, Loop Head Lighthouse, Vandeleur Walled Gardens & Visitor Centre, and the Inis Cealtra Visitor Experience.

For more visit www.shannonheritage.com or www.visitclare.ie.

Twinning Visit to Ennis - June 2023 - Langenfeld & Phoenix



Twinning Relationships with Ennis. 35 years with Phoenix, Arizona, and 10 years with Langenfeld, Germany. Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr Tony O'Brien, and Mayor of Ennis Municipal District, Cllr Clare Collieran Molloy, recently hosted two visiting groups from Phoenix, Arizona, and Langenfeld, Germany. Nurturing strong relationships and embracing renewed commitments have been key to these committee's longstanding success.

Visit Clare Marketing and Promotion

While the Tourism Department is continuing its Visit Clare promotions across local print and regional/national radio, weekly posting continues across the Visit Clare platforms: Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn to ensure traffic is directed, at all times, towards the VisitClare.ie website.





I am VisitClare.ie - the home of great times

I am VisitClare.ie, your trusty guide to the wonders of your county. I've recently curated a selection of activities in Clare to ignite your sense of adventure - from heart-pounding thrills to family-friendly suggestions for days out. While I highlight some of these below, you can find all the options at www.VisitClare.ie/great-ideas. And hey, if you have any other brilliant suggestions for things to do, please let the humans in 'Visit Clare' know, via www.VisitClare.ie/suggestions.



Win a Holiday in County Clare
 Enjoy a vacation of your choice right here in your own County Clare! You can enter to win your choice of holiday at www.VisitClare.ie/win

12 activity ideas to give you an adrenaline rush

Attention, thrill-seekers! I, your trusty website, have selected 12 adrenaline-rush activities that will leave you buzzing - from windsurfing and kayaking to hawk walks, and from rib boat adventures to rock climbing. There's something for everyone to get their hearts racing.



7 places to meet animals in Clare

I, VisitClare.ie, am your go-to guide for family-fun experiences. Check out a selection of places where you can meet the animals: watch birds of prey, meet friendly alpacas, go dolphin watching, or head to a pet farm to say hello to rabbits, ducks, goats, donkeys, emus, and more.



10 experiences in Clare children will love

Well, family-fun adventurers! I, your favourite digital sidekick, VisitClare.ie, feature suggestions for days out that children will love, like the beaches, forests, castles, show caves, aqua parks, playgrounds, visitor farms, wildlife watching, boat trips and more.



10 places to walk in the footsteps of our ancestors

Embark on a journey through time as I, VisitClare.ie, unveil a selection of 10 places in Clare to immerse yourself in the ancient heritage of the county, and follow in the footsteps of our ancestors. These treasured places reveal the rich tapestry of Clare's past.



 VisitClare.ie/great-ideas

VisitClare.ie Website



Work continues on managing the VisitClare.ie website to ensure that:

- Stakeholders update their website links from Clare.ie to VisitClare.ie.
- Local tourism providers are listed to the website, across all relevant areas.
- New blogs and stories are created.
- Feedback is invited at www.VisitClare.ie/suggestions

GSTC Green Team



Left to Right: Sile Cahill, Danielle Devaney (Shannon Sports and Conference Bureau), John O'Malley, Karen Foley, Geraldine Enright, Joan Tarmey, Deirdre O'Shea, James Hanrahan (ATU), Carol Gleeson, Fiona Mc Kenna (ATU), Christine O'Brien (Tourism East Clare), Cllr Cillian Murphy, Sean O'Farrell. Missing from the photo is Anne Griffin; Morgan Lahiffe, Irene Hamilton (Scattery Island), Luke Aston (Loop Head Tourism), Linda Coleman (Loop Head Tourism), Colette Costello, Jarlath O'Dwyer (Burren Ecotourism Network) and Bernard Cahill (Armada Hotel, Spanish Point). Photograph taken at the second meeting of the Green team.

The GSTC Green Team has been established and the mission of the Clare GSTC Green team is to work collaboratively to develop a common understanding and approach to sustainable tourism. It is also to achieve Global Sustainable Tourism Council's Destination Certification for County Clare, in line with one of the Strategic Objectives of the Clare Tourism Strategy 2030. The Green Team will use the Global Sustainable Tourism

Council's Destination Criteria to guide standards and practice and to develop more sustainable services, increase public awareness and engagement, and assist with policymaking at local level.

This work is being done in partnership with ATU Sligo who will research the most effective way to apply for and achieve destination certification.

UNESCO Revalidation Mission



An evaluation team from UNESCO concluded a five-day visit to County Clare on 26th June as part of a revalidation process for the Burren and Cliffs of Moher's designation as a UNESCO Global Geopark.

Headed by Dr Babis Fassoulas of the University of Crete and Adina Popa of Hațeg Country UNESCO Global Geopark in Romania, the review team met with representatives of Clare County Council and the Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark, State Agencies, local Elected Members and local business and community representatives during their revalidation visit, which takes place every four years.

Led by Clare County Council, the Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark first achieved Global Geopark status in 2011 before the designation was fully incorporated by UNESCO in 2015 to become a UNESCO Global Geopark. Geopark status was retained following a similar revalidation visit in 2019, and officials are hoping that the Geopark will once again be successful this year.

Through its designation, the Burren and Cliffs of Moher region forms part of a global community of 195 UNESCO Global Geoparks in 48 countries that shares knowledge and expertise on heritage management and sustainable development, leading to well-managed protected landscapes with preserved local heritage.

A decision on the redesignation of UNESCO Global Geopark status for the Burren and Cliffs of Moher is expected later this year.



Pictured at Áras Contae an Chláir in Ennis (1st row): Adina Popa, Hațeg Country UNESCO Global Geopark, Romania; Cllr. Tony O'Brien, Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council; Dr. Babis Fassoulas, University of Crete; (2nd row) Koen Verbruggen, Director of Geological Survey of Ireland; Carol Gleeson (Manager) and Dr Eamon Doyle, Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark; (3rd row) Siobhan King, Client Services Officer at Fáilte Ireland; Leonard Cleary, Director of Tourism Development and West Clare MD, Clare County Council; Deirdre O'Shea, Head of Tourism, Clare County Council; (4th row) Helen Carty, District Conservation Officer, National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS); Michelle O'Dea, Senior Conservation Architect, OPW; Síle Cahill, Tourism Department, Clare County Council; (5th row) Eoin Hogan, Rural Recreation Officer, Rural Recreation and The Walks Scheme; Nicola Killeen and Philomena O'Connell, Tourism Department, Clare County Council; William Cormacan, Divisional Ecologist, NPWS; (6th row) Councillor Joe Killeen.

Bronze Bust Of Michael Cusack Unveiled By Dr Mary McAleese

Dr Mary McAleese unveiled a bronze bust of Michael Cusack at the birthplace of the founder of the GAA in Carron, County Clare on Saturday, 24th June, 2023. The former President of Ireland (1997-2011) was joined at the Michael Cusack Centre in the heart of the Burren by representatives of Clare GAA, Munster GAA, Clare County Council, the Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark, Elected Members, and members of the local community.

The Cusack Bronze Head Bust is designed by Bray artist Paul Flynn and has been donated to the Michael Cusack Centre by Mick McCarthy, a former producer of RTE's 'Up for the Match' programme and a native of Parteen in County Clare. Mounted and inscribed to a plinth by Tubber-based Irish Natural Stone, the bust is available for public viewing at the visitor attraction which relates Cusack's remarkable story through an audio-visual exhibit set in the original Irish Famine era thatched cottage where he was born in September 1847. The unveiling of the Michael Cusack bust forms part of 'Cusack 175', a yearlong celebration of the Clare man's love for education, Irish culture and sport that led to the foundation of the world's largest amateur sporting organisation.

Speaking at the unveiling ceremony, Dr Mary McAleese said, "Who would have given tuppence for a child, any child born in Ireland in Black 47, the worst year of the Irish famine. Mass deaths and mass immigration left clouds of bleak depression and grief hanging over our country for generations. Yet in that very year a child was born here in Carron who would help our people at home and abroad navigate a remarkable pathway to hope and light. We call that pathway the GAA and that child was Michael Cusack."

"Through a unique meld of sport, community, culture and a fierce belief in unselfish service to the nation Cusack introduced Ireland to its best self and to the sheer sporting exuberance Gaelic games generate wherever in the world they are played. His legacy simply gets better year on year," added Dr McAleese.

"Everything begins with an idea. Michael Cusack, through his promotion of Gaelic Games, established an Irish sporting and cultural institution," commented Cllr Ann Norton, Leas Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council. She continued, "Cusack's dream of a Gaelic Athletic Association became a reality almost 140 years ago when he and a group of spirited Irishmen had the foresight to establish a national organisation that would make our traditional, indigenous sports more accessible to the masses. Here in Carron, Michael Cusack's place of birth, it is right and proper that his legacy be commemorated and celebrated."

Cllr Norton also acknowledged Dr McAleese's recent appointment as independent Chairperson of the integration process between the Camogie Association, the GAA, and the Ladies Gaelic Football Association. "The integration towards a One Association model marks a new chapter in the storied history of the GAA. It is an endeavour that I am sure Michael Cusack would have been supportive of," she added.

Dónal Ó hAiniféin, Chair of the Board of Michael Cusack Centre, said, "The GAA that Michael Cusack helped to establish in 1884 has since developed a presence in every parish and community in all of Ireland and worldwide. We are proud to play our role in promoting a key element of Ireland's rich heritage, and we are delighted that Dr McAleese has honoured us with her presence." Visitors to the Michael Cusack Centre more than doubled in 2022 with 4,100 visiting the attraction.

According to Leonard Cleary, Director of Tourism Development, Clare County Council, "The Local Authority is delighted to support the Michael Cusack Centre in its ongoing work of promoting the legacy of Michael Cusack and the organisation that he helped form, which today is an integral part of Irish life and is deeply rooted in communities through more than 1,600 clubs in Ireland and 450 clubs around the globe."

Deirdre Murphy, Chief Operations Officer for Clare GAA, commented, "Clare GAA is thrilled that former President Mary McAleese has unveiled the Michael Cusack Bronze Head Bust. The achievements of her Presidency and commitment to peace in Ireland and beyond have had a lasting impact. As a former camogie player who has always been supportive to the GAA community, her current role as independent chairperson of the steering group on integration for the GAA, the LGFA, and the Camogie Association is one of huge significance for the future of our games. We really look forward to having her present and engaging with her." Education and community outreach programmes form a key part of the Michael Cusack Centre's efforts to promote the GAA founder's legacy.

"Our ambition is to build a lasting legacy and tribute to the work of Michael Cusack and the passion and energy which he brought to the formation of the GAA," explained Tim Madden, Manager of the Michael Cusack Centre. He continued, "The GAA's Going WeLL, National Wellbeing Programme has been rolled out to nearly 300 schools since it was launched in 2019. Through workshops at the Michael Cusack Centre, we have helped teenagers to improve their wellbeing and to build their resilience, which is something we hope Michael Cusack himself would have been very much supportive of."

The unveiling ceremony was also attended by representatives of the UNESCO Global Geopark Network who have travelled to County Clare as part of the revalidation process for the Burren and Cliffs of Moher region, in which the Michael Cusack Centre is located.

"In 2018, Hurling and Camogie were designated under the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage inscription, thereby recognising the sports as key elements of Ireland's living heritage to be safeguarded for future generations," commented Mr Madden. "The Michael Cusack Centre will continue to play its role in promoting and protecting this heritage." The unveiling ceremony also featured a hurley making demonstration by MacCódá Hurleys, based in Inagh, County Clare.

Meanwhile, tributes were paid at the unveiling ceremony to Brother Seán McNamara - a retired Christian Brother and specialist on the life of Michael Cusack - who died aged 95 last week. Tributes were also paid to Séan Keating, former Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council and father of Clare GAA Chair Kieran Keating, who was laid to rest on Friday.

Guided tours of the Michael Cusack Centre are available each day from 10.00am. Located in the centre of the award-winning Burren & Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark, the visitor attraction features the original Cusack Famine era cottage, the 6km Cusack Way Walk, a recently developed Fairy Trail and the Púca artwork. The attraction also hosts team building weekends, wedding ceremonies and school tours. Visit www.michaelcusack.ie and look out for the new website launching this July.



Dr Mary McAleese, former President of Ireland (pictured centre) outside the Michael Cusack homestead in Carron, County Clare, during the unveiling of a bronze bust of the founder of the GAA. Also pictured Dónal Ó hAiniféin, Chair of the Board of Michael Cusack Centre; Tim Madden, Manager of the Michael Cusack Centre; and Cllr. Ann Norton, Leas Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council. Photo: Eamon Ward.



Dr Mary McAleese, former President of Ireland (pictured centre) outside the Michael Cusack homestead in Carron, County Clare, during the unveiling of a bronze bust of the founder of the GAA. Also pictured front row L-R: Tim Madden, Manager of the Michael Cusack Centre; Cllr. Ann Norton, Leas Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council; Deirdre Murphy, Chief Operations Officer at Clare GAA; Ger Ryan, Chair of Munster Council GAA; Dónal Ó hAiniféin, Chair of the Board of Michael Cusack Centre; Martin McAleese; Brian Nevin, Fáilte Ireland. Photo: Eamon Ward.

Cliffs Fundraiser for Three Clare Charities



Pictured at the Cliffs of Moher Experience at the announcement of the Cliffs of Moher Charity Fun Day on May 27th is (L-R) Geraldine Enright, Director at the Cliffs of Moher Experience, Theresa Murrhry Chairperson of Sláinte an Chláir, Mary Kelly Chair of the Clare Branch of Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind and Tom Mernagh, Volunteer for Irish Guide Dogs. Pixie and Elodie her puppy. (Elodie is currently in training)

Much-needed funds were raised for three County Clare organisations during a Charity Fun Day at the Cliffs of Moher Experience on Saturday, 27th May. Representatives of Sláinte an Chláir, Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind Clare Branch and Brothers of Charity Services Clare travelled to the world-famous visitor attraction for the fundraising event, which featured live music and dancing, singing, facepainting and spot prizes. The charities were there on the day to meet and speak with members of the Clare public about the vital services they provide. The Cliffs of Moher Experience Charity of the Year programme, which was first initiated by staff in 2020, is part of the ongoing support and social responsibility activities that help the Cliffs of Moher Experience build bridges with the local community.

Exhibition Marks 60 Years of The Bunratty Castle Medieval Banquet



The 60th anniversary of the Bunratty Castle Medieval Banquet was celebrated in County Clare today with the launch of a new exhibition charting the history, evolution and popularity of one of Ireland's oldest running evening entertainment shows. More than 3 million people have attended the banquets since the dramatic idea of a medieval meal in a 15th century Irish castle captured the imagination of travel agents, dignitaries,



and celebrities worldwide in the 1960s.

The event was attended by past and present banquet performers and producers, Elected Members and officials of Clare County Council, the Trustees of Bunratty Castle and family members of the late Dr. Brendan O'Regan, who introduced the first commercial medieval banquet at the newly restored Bunratty Castle in April 1963. Officially opening the exhibition, Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council Cllr. Tony O'Brien said the banquet's international appeal remains as strong today as it did back in the 1960s when the visionary Dr O'Regan spearheaded its inception. He added, "An integral driver to the growth of US visitors to the West of Ireland in the 1960s, this magical evening of medieval music, mead and merriment is still going strong 60 years later having welcomed over 3 million guests and overcome economic and social adversity throughout its long history. I want to congratulate everyone associated with its continued success."

The Bunratty Banquet Exhibition, which is located within the grounds of the Folk Park, features pictorial records of the banquets over the past six decades, video footage of performances from the past to the present day, interviews with former and current performers and producers, and displays of costumes and instruments that have been donated by past entertainers.

Pat Dowling, Chief Executive of Clare County Council, commented, "Aside from being a notable landmark in the Clare countryside, Bunratty has been at the forefront of the Mid West Region's tourism story for many decades. Dr O'Regan's vision brought about this venture and the commitment and creativity of hundreds of people down through the past 60 years has ensured its enduring popularity."

Declan O'Regan, son of the late Dr O'Regan, said his father would be proud of how the banquet remains an important fixture on the itinerary of many visitors to Ireland 60 years on. "The family is honoured to be represented at the official opening of this exhibition, which stands as a legacy to those pioneering early days of promoting cultural tourism in County Clare and the wider Midwest to a growing international market," he added.

Adrienne O'Flynn, Brand Marketing Manager for Shannon Heritage, commented, "From humble beginnings during the early trial banquets of 1962 when employees of Shannon Development volunteered to don medieval costume and entertain guests, the success of Bunratty castle as a medieval banqueting venue prompted other castles to be sought for similar revitalisation, including Dungaigue Castle, near Kinvara, and the 15th century Knappogue Castle, near Quin. Collectively the three sites have attracted more than 5 million people to their banquets since the 1960s, which is testament to everyone involved."

Entertainment at the banquets is provided by the world-famous Bunratty Castle Singers with enchanting melodies to harp and violin accompaniment. Less than 3 months after the first commercial banquet got underway, international fame came to the Singers when they performed twice for US President John F Kennedy. The Singers performed for President Nixon at the White House, and have appeared at Carnegie Hall, the Rockefeller Centre and as the interval act for the 1971 Eurovision Song Contest. The group has also performed for US President Ronald Reagan, President of France Charles de Gaulle, Pope John Paul II, Crown Prince Akihito of Japan, Princess Grace, Bob Hope and The Beatles.

Colette Davis, who has been the musical director of the Bunratty Castle Singers for almost 50 years, commented, "The Bunratty Singers are an intrinsic part of the Bunratty Castle success story and are renowned the world over. We are very proud of the group's contribution to making the medieval banquet an integral part of this iconic visitor attraction and the wider tourism product in County Clare." Meanwhile, Bunratty Castle and Folk Park will host a festival later this year, marking the integral role of the Irish Harp to the banquet offering and the importance of the instrument and national emblem in the growth and popularity of Irish music worldwide. The Festival, hosted in collaboration with Deirdre O'Brien Vaughan of The Irish Institute of Traditional Music, will present visitors with the opportunity to enjoy performances by past and present Bunratty Castle Entertainers and renowned harpists, as well as partake in specially commissioned harp workshops.

The Banquet Exhibition launch was followed by a tree planting ceremony in the Folk Park. Dr O'Regan's children, Carmel, Andrew and Declan, planted a 'Councillor' apple tree in their father's memory. The Bunratty Banquet Exhibition runs until

November 2023. Admission is included in the standard Bunratty Castle and Folk Park ticket which can be purchased on www.bunrattycastle.ie.

Ireland's National Circus Marks 135 Years with Bunratty Shows



The 135th anniversary of Fossett's Circus is being celebrated this month in the unique and beautiful surrounds of Bunratty Castle and Folk Park in County Clare.

'The Big Top' of Ireland's national circus will be set against the backdrop of the country's most famous medieval castle on June 17th and 18th.

The award-winning show will feature the very best of international circus acts, including jugglers, aerial acrobats, dare devils and much more.

Aodhagan Behan, Operations Manager at Bunratty Castle & Folk Park, said, "We are delighted to welcome Fossett's Circus back to Bunratty for the first time since 2018. The show is very much part of Ireland's rich entertainment heritage, so it is appropriate that one of the country's best known heritage attractions hosts the circus on the occasion of its 135th anniversary."

"Circus goers will receive free entry to the Castle and Folk Park,

which guarantees a fun-filled day out for families and people of all ages at our visitor attraction," Mr Behan added.

The story of Fossett's Circus stretches back exactly 135 years ago when George Lowe, the original Amazing Doctor Powell, set out on a tour throughout Ireland with his own circus. He and his troupe, which included Edward Fossett, performed at traditional fair greens and marketplaces during the summer of 1888, marking the origins of the internationally acclaimed circus.

Marion Fossett, the ringmaster of Fossett's Circus, has been carrying on a family tradition that has lasted for generations. "All of our performers and crew have very fond memories of our last visit to Bunratty in 2018 and this year, we promise to put on an even bigger and better show to the people of Clare," she stated. "Highlights of our circus include the Globe of Speed featuring FMX Stunt Motorcycle riders, The Wheel of Death, and the thrilling Flying Trapeze high in the roof of the Big Top."

WEST CLARE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



Cllr Lynch elected Cathaoirleach of West Clare MD
 Cllr Ian Lynch was elected as Cathaoirleach of the West Clare Municipal District at its AGM on Thursday, 22nd June, taking over the role from Cllr Shane Talty. Cllr Joe Killeen was elected Leas Cathaoirleach for the West Clare MD.

Kilrush LEA

The weather is reasonably good and we are in the middle of our Roadworks Programme so in June - much as in recent months- our roadmaking crews have been concentrating on strengthening and resurfacing the roads listed on the 2023 Schedule of Municipal District Works (Roadworks Programme).

Road strengthening & resurfacing works are complete and surface dressing has commenced.

We also carried out other works such as resurfacing work at Labasheeda Quay (a BALAMI project, funded by the DAFM) & placing concrete bases on O'Connell Street to hold flower planters in conjunction with Kilkee Tidy Towns.

Resurfacing completed at Labasheeda Quay



Install concrete base at O'Connell Street, Kilkee



Road works programme

Recycling Works at Shragh.
 Recycling Works at Lisluinaghan, near Kilkee.
 Recycling Works at Cree.



North Clare Area

The roadworks programme is progressing well as a result of the good weather. Crews are very busy trying to manage the amenity sites along with completing the roadworks programme.

Below is a status update for the roadworks programme:
 Restoration Improvement - 85% complete.
 Restoration Maintenance - 90% complete.
 CIS Roads 50% complete.
 LIS Roads 20% complete.

The area office recently installed recycled plastic planters on the Main Street in Ennistymon in conjunction with the tidy towns.





Works also commenced on Phase 2 of the Active Travel project on the Ennis Road in Miltown Malbay.



PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LECP – Clare Business Consultation

The Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2023-2029 draft high level goals and Socio-Economic Statement were recently published for public consultation. The Economic SPC has responsibility for developing the economic elements of the LECP and in that context two focused business workshops were facilitated in the Inn at Dromoland on the 13th June and in Ennistymon Hub on the 16th June. Attendees represented a wide cross section of business owners/managers from different business sectors and locations across the County representing micro/SME and our larger FDI businesses. Both workshops were well attended with good engagement from the participants. An online survey, capturing feedback from the business community, is also being published. Comments and feedback will be incorporated in the next iteration of the LECP 2023-2029 as the plan evolves.

Stephen Kinsella Professor of Economics, Head of the Department of Economics, and Chief Economics Writer for TheCurrency.news was a guest speaker at the Dromoland workshop where he spoke on the theme of “Local Economic Development in a Global Economic Context: What matters for Clare”. This proved to be a very thought-provoking topic and facilitated a discussion on the future economic opportunities for Clare, particularly the potential economic benefits of off-shore wind.



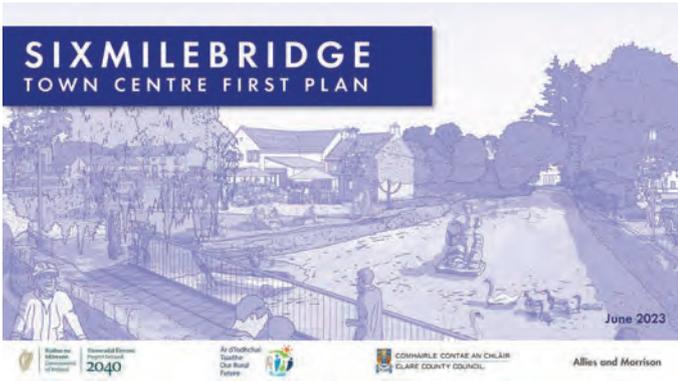
Town Centre First Sixmilebridge Town Centre First Plan



The Sixmilebridge Town Centre First Plan is now finalised. On Thursday 08th June 2023, Linda Earlie Town Regeneration Officer was accompanied by Anthony Benson of Allies & Morrison to meet with Sixmilebridge Town Team at St Finnachta’s National School to present the final plan. The presentation to the Town Team received overall positive feedback with the Town Team giving formal approval and final endorsement. Following this, final edits and proofing of the plan were carried out and the plan was issued to the Minister for the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Town Centre First National Network on Friday 23rd June 2023.

The vision for the Sixmilebridge Town Centre First Plan is to ensure that Sixmilebridge develops as an attractive and desirable place to work, live, visit and do business. Therefore, the implementation and delivery of this plan is now the focus of the Town Team in collaboration with Clare County Council.





event was opened by Pritzker Prize-winner architect and co-founder of the prestigious architect firm Grafton Architects, and Lisdoonvarna native Shelly McNamara. This project builds on the recent heritage plan completed by Clare County Council Planning Department and offers the community of Lisdoonvarna the scope to set a clear vision for the long-term development of their town.



Background work has already commenced to identify upcoming funding streams that align to key projects identified in the implementation plan, and the Town Regeneration Officer and Rural & Community Development Officer is working with the Town Team to prioritise these projects.

Shannon Town Centre Masterplan:

As part of the implementation strategy of the Shannon Town Centre Masterplan to relocate the existing library in Shannon to within the town centre on a site own by Clare County Council, an application for funding was submitted under the Libraries Capital Programme 2023-2027 to obtain funding to commence this process.

The Town Centre First team in collaboration with the Shannon Municipal District continues to engage in ongoing discussions with key stakeholders as part of the implementation of the Shannon Town Centre Masterplan.

Lisdoonvarna Vision:

The Town Centre First Team, in collaboration with the Rural Community Development Officer, 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 is a community co-designed project to reimagine the town's future and is seeking to reclaim the heritage of Lisdoonvarna as a flagship Irish well-being town. An initial consultation evening "Tapping the Well" was held in Lisdoonvarna on Wednesday 28th June 2023. The

Clare Maritime Economic Zone (Clare MEZ) - Kilrush Maritime Training Centre

The Project Delivery Team are currently identifying industry partners who will work in partnership with Clare County Council to deliver the Kilrush Maritime Training Centre.

Virtual, augmented and/or simulated safety training is now recognised as a risk-free training method providing learning experiences that rival traditional training methods and infrastructure. Given the global shift to this type of training the Project Delivery Team are currently exploring the potential to incorporate such simulators and virtual reality training methods into the Business Model and proposed facility in Kilrush. This would provide a world-class training facility with state-of-the-art training equipment that would rival any other training provider worldwide.

On Thursday the 8th of June, members of the Project Delivery Team attended the Marine Industry Network event at Foynes Yacht Club, Co. Limerick. This forum and event provided an opportunity to hear about the future development plans and vision for the region together with hearing from innovative marine companies who operate within the Shannon region. The event provided some excellent networking opportunities for the Kilrush Maritime Training Centre project and to further discussions with potential partners.

FORWARD PLANNING

Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029

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

provision for 'Existing Accesses onto National Secondary Roads' under 'Exceptional Circumstances' of section 11.2.9.3 of the Plan.

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 the 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 the 28th April to the 11th May.

A total of 25 submissions were received during the public consultation period. The Chief Executive's Report on submissions received in relation to the Draft Ministerial Direction to the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 was completed in June and circulated to the Elected Members, the Office of the Planning Regulator, the Minister and the Southern Regional Assembly. The Office of the Planning Regulator is considering 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 aimed at activating existing planning permissions, increasing housing supply and regeneration of vacant and idle lands in urban locations. RZLT will come into effect from 2024.

The first phase of the RZLT process included the publication of a Draft Map on 1st November 2022 identifying zoned and serviced land which fell within scope for the tax. This was followed by public consultation during which 63 submissions were received. All submissions were assessed by the Planning Authority (PA) and landowners were notified of the PA's determination (decisions) by 1st April 2023. Subsequently, 15 appeals were received by An Bord Pleanála and a decision is due on these by 21st August 2023.

The second phase of the RZLT process commenced with the publication of a Supplemental Map on 1st May 2023 identifying additional zoned and serviced land - not included on the Draft Map - which falls within the scope for the tax. The Supplemental Map was on public display from the 1st May to the 1st June 2023. During this time, a number of enquiries were made from landowners and the public and a total of 4 submissions were received. All submissions have been published on the Council website.

The next step is to consider the submissions received on the Supplemental Map. This is ongoing and the Forward Planning Team are currently in the process of assessing and making a determination on submissions. The Council is required to notify those who made submissions requesting their lands to be removed from the scope of the tax, of its determination, by 1st August 2023. Following this, if they wish to do so, submitters can appeal the decision to An Bord Pleanála. The closing date for appeals is 1st September 2023.

'Enhancing Ennistymon' receives commendation in RIAI Awards:

The Ennistymon Enhancement Plan was shortlisted for two awards at the RIAI Architecture Awards. The RIAI Architecture Awards are a national awards scheme that recognise excellence

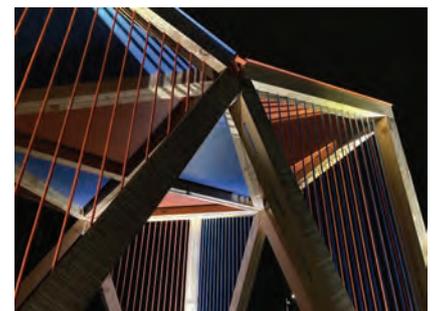
in Irish Architecture. Enhancing Ennistymon was shortlisted in the 'Urban Design/Masterplanning' category and received a commendation from the awards jury. The project was also shortlisted in the RIAI Public Choice Award, which was decided by a public vote. The recognition received at the RIAI Architecture Awards is another significant achievement for this project, and it follows on from its success at this year's 'Building and Architect of the Year Awards' where the plan was awarded the Social Impact Award. This award acknowledges architectural projects on the Island of Ireland that improves the economic, social, and environmental well-being of their surrounding communities. Ennistymon Town Team, Clare County Council and a design team led by Helena McElmeel Architects collaborated in the preparation of a strategy for the enhancement of Ennistymon town centre, with support from Clare Local Development Company.



Representatives from Ennistymon Town Team, Clare County Council, Helena McElmeel Architects and Clare Local Development Company at Ennistymon.

Flexible Outdoor Structures

Clare County Council has received funding under the Outdoor Public Space Scheme as promoted by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. This funding stream asks us to



reimagine how we use our outdoor public spaces and proposes a series of flexible outdoor structures which can be erected in outdoor locations during one-off events. The structures are designed to animate the streetscape and will have incorporated lighting to create a presence in the street at night. A design team led by GKMP Architects have been appointed to provide specialist input into the project. Alan Meredith Studio Ltd have been appointed to fabricate the structures. The fabrication of the structures continued in June and the design team undertook an inspection to monitor progress. It is anticipated that the structures will be completed in July.

Project at Cappa Village, Kilrush:

The Forward Planning team was successful in securing funding to deliver works at Cappa Village under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2022. The project arises from the Cappa Enhancement Strategy which identified key sites to sustainably develop the village while preserving its maritime character and scale. The funding provides for a new connection to be made from an existing recreational amenity to the adjoining coastal walk. This will further usage and increase connectivity with adjoining residential areas while opening up views to the Shannon Estuary. Universal design and inclusivity underpin the proposal, which will open up a valuable recreational amenity to all who wish to use it. The proposed amphitheatre seeks to create a social space in the village which can accommodate day to day, as well as special outdoor events. The brief development stage is nearing completion and tenders will be sought for consultancy services in early July.



Corofin Enhancement Strategy

Clare County Council and National Parks & Wildlife Services (NPWS) are working in partnership to prepare an Enhancement strategy for the village of Corofin. A multi-disciplinary design team led by Hall McKnight Architects have been appointed to prepare the plan. The design team have finalised the Enhancement Plan and are now working on developing a signage strategy for the village. The signage strategy looks to create a new identity for the village, and proposes a cohesive strategy which improves wayfinding around the village. Interpretation will be a key focus of the signage strategy, looking to highlight the significant built and natural heritage assets in Corofin. It is anticipated that the signage strategy will be finalised in July.



HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY

Ardnaculla Summer School

National Biodiversity Plan funding has been allocated to Clare County Council from National Parks and Wildlife Service to fund the Ardnaculla Summer School. The summer school consists of three days of trainings and workshops on Ireland's native biodiversity. Through this project, there will be a range of practical workshops, informative talks, discussion groups and other events. The key target audiences include farmers, landowners and community groups with a proportion of the events aimed at the wider public. This project aims to center biodiversity action within this year's summer school programme. Events will focus on biodiversity conservation, restoration, recording, and action. Clare County Council's Biodiversity Officer will present a talk around coastal habitats at the event. The project will take place at Hometree Headquarters, Ardnaculla South, Ennistymon, Co. Clare and the event runs from the 7th – 9th of July.

White-tailed Eagle Breeding Success for County Clare

There has been significant success for the White tailed-eagle Reintroduction Programme. A total of five eagle chicks were reported by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) to have successfully hatched at Lough Derg in County Clare in early June. This has added significance for raptor populations

nationally and in the wider community. A male white-tailed sea eagle released in 2008 has paired with a female released in 2020 and two chicks have successfully hatched. In addition, at another site in County Clare, NPWS staff have observed and tagged three chicks reared by one of the male eagle's offspring from a previous pairing. The Reintroduction Programme was originally launched in 2007 and involved releasing 100 young white-tailed eagles (hatched in Norway) in Killarney National Park, County Kerry where the species subsequently dispersed throughout Ireland thereafter. The White-tailed Eagle is Ireland's largest raptor and sits at around 1 metre in height with a wingspan of over 2 metres and can be found along coasts, large lakes and rivers. The news is a huge biodiversity boost for local communities in East Clare.

Shannon Airport Group Biodiversity Action Plan

Shannon Airport Group launched their Biodiversity Action Plan in June. The plan aims to gather data of the biodiversity present across Shannon Airport Groups landbank and to protect and conserve habitats using the most appropriate and biodiversity enhancement methods available. It outlines a number of actions, which includes pollinator friendly planting, woodland enhancement, monitoring habitat transition, and education, outreach, and engagement. The Shannon Airport Campus lies

in a unique location on the Shannon Estuary, County Clare. It is an area of rich biodiversity, most notably in relation to the Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA). Environmentalist and Broadcaster, Éanna Ní Lamhna was present at the launch day. The plan is available to view on Shannon Airport Groups website.

Moínín, Kilkee: Remedial works are now completed on this development, comprising of twenty-eight houses. The total contract value was €136,000 including repairs to roads, footpaths, storm, and foul water network, watermains and other general items within the estate.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT – PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The table below shows the number of planning applications processed during the month of June 2023, together with the year to date figures. The percentage of e-planning applications continues to grow with 44% of the planning applications received in June being submitted by electronic means.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS	June (to June 29th) 2023	Year to date
No. of planning applications received	101	605
No. of Planning Decisions made	82	480
No. of decisions notified by An Bord Pleanála	4	10
No. of pre-planning enquiries received	20	118
No. of Section 5 applications	9	47
No. of Section 97 Exemption Cert applications (in respect of Part V of the Planning & Dev Act 2000)	3	21
Submissions received regarding Compliance	23	169



BEFORE



AFTER

Tender for Remedial Works to Roads, Footpaths, Foul, Storm and Fresh Water Items and Other General Infrastructural Items at Cappagh Drive Upper & Cappa Estate, Fort Road, Kilrush, Co. Clare are currently advertised.

TAKING IN CHARGE OF HOUSING ESTATES

Curates Court – Cúirt an t-Sagairt, Roslevan Ennis, an estate comprising of twelve houses was taken in charge on the 6th of June 2023 at the Ennis Municipal District Meeting.



PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

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

June 2023 Stats are as follows:

New complaints received	24
New files opened	2
Files closed	2
Warning Letters issued	5
Enforcement Notice issued	1
Legal	1

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

- The Trading Online Voucher Scheme, which provides grant support to small businesses to develop an e-commerce website. In June, one further application was approved, and four grants were drawn down. So far in 2023 LEO Clare have approved 20 businesses for a Trading Online Voucher.
- 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. So far in 2023 LEO Clare have assigned over 130 mentor applications.
- Training: LEO Clare continued their training support offering during June. LEO Clare ran six training programmes throughout the month with over 90 participants registered. Training included, Start Your Own Business Programme, Digital Marketing Workshops and Financial Planning Workshop.

Clare Company Wins at National Enterprise Awards:

Wild Irish Seaweeds, who are supported by Local Enterprise Office Clare, were winners at this year's National Enterprise Awards. The awards, which took place at the Round Room in the Mansion House in Dublin, were in their 23rd year and run annually by the Local Enterprise Offices. Wild Irish Seaweeds, a family business from Quilty took home the Best Export Award.

The 15 National Enterprise Awards trophies were designed and handcrafted by Conor Murray of Kilkee Forge, an award-winning design and manufacture studio in Kilkee, Co. Clare.



Back: L-R: Ashling Moloney - Wild Irish Seaweeds, Cllr. Ann Norton - Leas Cathaoirleach Clare County Council, Sinéad Dixon-Slattery - LEO Clare, Eileen Talty - Wild Irish Seaweeds, Michelle Guthrie - LEO Clare, Carmel Kirby - Director Clare County Council Front: L-R: Padraic McElwee - LEO Clare, Evan Talty & Gerard Talty - Wild Irish Seaweeds

Nordland, Norway Old People's Council Delegation:

As part of the Clare Age Friendly group, Local Enterprise Office Clare delivered a presentation showing Services available by LEO Clare to five members of the Norway's Old People Council who recently visited. The group also attended a Start Your Own Business Training Course.



Norway's Old People Council Delegation meeting with Clare's Age Friendly Group in Clare County Council.

Regional Skills Mid-West

LEO Clare attended the recent Regional Skills Mid-West in EI Electronics where the team met employees from both EI Electronics and close Shannon Businesses to advise of courses and supports available to them. The event also included Colleges and Universities from close proximity.



LEO Clare Regional Skills Mid West.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

DERELICT SITES

Property Transactions and Conveyancing

The Table below shows the number of property transactions completed by Property Management Unit in June 2023 (up to 22nd June), 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	June 2023	Year to date 2023	Full year 2022
Lease / Sub Lease of Property / Building	0	1	4
Licence to use property / building	2	4	13
Grazing Agreement for Lands	0	17	22
Deed of Transfer signed	0	9	19
Contract for Sale / acquisition signed	0	1	2
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

As we enter the Summer season, licence applications are currently being assessed for events and Festivals such as Willie Clancy week in Miltown Malbay and the Lisdoonvarna Matchmaking Festival to be held in September. In addition, there is a focus on enforcement of the Casual Trading Act, 1995 which can be a particular issue during the summer months.

To date in 2023, a further 24 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 the number of derelict and vacant properties on the market at the current time.

We are also seeing the outcome of sales agreed in 2022 and 2023 to date, 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 and the amalgamation of the Vacant Homes Team and the Derelict Sites Team is accruing benefits. 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.

Work is almost complete on a number of properties in Ennis, which had remained vacant and derelict for many years. The properties in question are a detached house at Acha Bhile in Loughville and four terraced houses in Harmony Row, in the heart of Ennis.



The table below provides a snapshot of the activity in June and the year 2023 to date, together with comparative figures for the full year 2022.

VACANT PROPERTY REFURBISHMENT GRANT- FOR DERELICT AND VACANT PROPERTIES

Derelict Sites	June 2023	Year to date 2023	Full Year 2022
No. of new files opened	2	24	69
No. of Section 8(2) Notices issued - Intention to enter site on Derelict Sites Register	2	20	33
No. of Section 8(7) Notices issued - Entry of site onto Derelict Sites Register	0	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	1	5	21
No. of Notices served to Compulsorily Purchase (CPO) (see note below)	3	9	6
No of Vesting Orders signed	0	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 CPO's have been initiated this month and are publicly advertised, this brings the total this year to date to nine. These proposed acquisitions by CPO are at the following locations and in some cases, if engagement arises following commencement of the procedure, we will work with owners:

- End of Terrace house at 35 Pella Road, Kilrush
- Kilkee Courthouse (title rectification)
- Detached house at Main Street, Lisdoonvarna

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has recently launched a CPO activation programme for local authorities and has 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 CPO's on a rolling basis with the objective being that these properties would then be released to the open market.

Since the Government made the decision 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 rental and also increased the levels of grant aid, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of enquiries and the number of applications. 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 that came into effect in May are:

- Vacant properties built prior to 2007 (previously 1993) will now be eligible.
- The grants have been increased:
- Vacant Property – Maximum grant increased from €30,000 to €50,000
- Derelict property requiring structural works – Maximum grant 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 time period for completion of works is 13 months from the date of grant approval.

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 are published on the Council's website. The contact email address for further information and guidance on the grants scheme is vacan-thomes@clarecoco.ie. We continue to meet individual owners to guide them through the process and to ensure they have all the documentation when submitting their application.

The following table shows the status of the applications received to date. Following on from the appointment of a technical member of staff to this area, much progress is being made on the technical inspections and issuing of approvals / approval in principle. 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 Submitted		Overall %
2022	33	26%
2023	92	74%
Total no. of Grant Applications	125	100%

Proposed Use		
Private Residence	115	92%
Rental Property	10	8%

Decisions Made		
Approved	17	
Approved in Principle	18	
Rejected	3	
Withdrawn	7	
Total	45	36%

In Progress		
In Progress	33	
Further Information Requested	27	
Awaiting Technical Inspection	20	
Total	80	64%

ENNIS MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



Cllr Daly elected Mayor of Ennis MD

Cllr Pat Daly was elected as Mayor of Ennis Municipal District at its AGM on Thursday, 29th June, taking over the role from Cllr Clare Colleran Molloy. Cllr Johnny Flynn was elected Deputy Mayor of Ennis MD.

Nta briefs elected members on Ennis public bus service project

A Senior Transport Planner with the NTA provided a status update on the Ennis Town Bus Service to Members, following the June meeting. The briefing outlined achievements in



the last 6 months and outlined the plan for the second half of 2023.

- The preferred routes have been finalised and will traverse Ennis from the Lahinch Road to the Tulla Road and from Clarecastle to Ballymaley via a town centre terminus at Friar's Walk, with scope for the development of an additional route from Doora Industrial Estate to and

from the town centre.

- A route stop alignment process was completed and the potential location of bus stops, termini and other kerbside infrastructure that are required for the future service have been identified.
- The bus fleet requirement and type, for the town service, has been identified.
- He assured Members that the plan is currently on schedule for implementation in early 2025.
-

Delegation from Phoenix and Langenfeld

A Mayoral lunch reception was held in the Civic room, Drumbiggle on Tuesday June 13th to welcome delegates and representatives from both the Phoenix and Langenfeld twinning groups. In 2023 Ennis are celebrating 35 and 10 year twinning anniversaries respectively. A group of 4 Youth Ambassadors from Phoenix, together with 4 of their Irish counterparts, were welcomed by the Mayor of Ennis MD Clare Colleran-Molloy, Cllr Mary Howard and Cllr Tony O'Brien as reps of the Twinning Committee and Padraig McElwee, Acting Director of Service.



Big Screen At The Fairgreen

Those fans who were unable to attend the Munster Final, Clare versus Limerick, in TUS Gaelic Grounds had the opportunity to watch the match live on a big screen

in the Fairgreen with family, friends and the local community. The Council engaged an event management company who fulfilled the requirements in delivering a family friendly, non-alcohol, free, not ticket event in a safe environment. While the result on June 11th, may not have been favourable to those sporting the saffron and blue, the atmosphere, the buildup and intensity of the game was enjoyed by young and old in a sun filled Fairgreen/Tim Smythe Park.



The Fleadh Down in Ennis took place between May 27th and June 5th. The event involved numerous pop-up workshops, street sessions and concerts in and around the town centre. Ennis MD liaised with the Fleadh committee before and during the event to ensure pedestrian and vehicular access was accommodated and that the safety of the musicians and spectators was catered for.



Scoil Christ Ri – Kayaking Week

Ennis MD facilitated Scoil Christ Ri 'Kayaking week' at the beginning of June on the River Fergus south of Victoria Bridge. Flood gates at the Mill Water Wheel were managed to ensure safe conditions on the River.



Getting ready for the Judges

The Department of Rural and Community Development nominated Ennis as the Irish entrant at the international Communities in Bloom competition in 2023. As part of the evaluation process, two international judges will visit Ennis from July 23rd-25th. The criteria on which we are judged community appearance, environmental action, heritage conservation, tree management, plant and floral displays requires a concerted effort from a number of sections of the Council. The judges will want to meet as many people as possible, including the Executive, Elected Members and Community Groups to capture the essence of community life in Ennis.

This is a great opportunity to shine a light on the Council's achievements, in creating and developing sustainable communities.

Physical works are ongoing in and around the town centre in preparation for the judging event on July 24th. Ennis MD outdoor and street cleaning crews are working through a schedule of works including repair/upgrades to public plaza areas, de-weeding, footpath repairs, Ennis sculpture trail works and waste management.

Ennis Men's Shed and Ennis Tidy Towns – Cappahard Roundabout

Ennis MD outdoor crew, in collaboration with Ennis Men's Shed and Ennis Tidy Towns, helped install a pair of 'Deers' on the Cappahard roundabout. The pair are a welcome feature to the roundabout on the approach to the Town on the Tulla Rd.

Relay for Life

Relay for life took place in Tim Smythe Park between 17th – 18th June. Ennis MD were happy to provide assistance in the form of crowd barriers, traffic cones and waste control during the event.