



COMHAIRLE | CLARE
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

TUARASCÁIL MHÍOSÚIL ÓN PHRÍOMHFHEIDHMEANNACH

MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Aibreán / April
2023



ST PATRICK'S DAY, NEW YORK p4



FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES p2



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT p38



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT p6



RURAL DEVELOPMENT p48



UKRAINIAN SERVICES DEVELOPMENT p36



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT p19

FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

CORPORATE SERVICES

Freedom of Information & Data Protection

Previous years and 2023 to date - statistics to 22nd March, 2023:

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Freedom of Information Requests	152	176	119	34
Freedom of Information Internal Review Applications	6	13	8	1
Appeals to Information Commissioner	1	4	2	4
Data Access Requests – Subject Access Request	5	6	10	5
Data Requests – Erasure Request	0	1	1	0
Data Access Requests – Third Party Access Requests e.g. Gardaí	20	27	27	8

Communications

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

- Renewed Clare Rural Development Strategy 2030 launched
- Status Orange Weather Warning for County Clare
- Clare commits to new Creative Ireland Culture and Creativity Strategy
- Clare Museum seeking to expand its collection.

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 March, the Communications Office:

- Posted 51 times on Facebook, with total followers now 17,828
- Posted 48 times on Twitter, with total followers now 8,001
- Instagram followers are now 2,786.

(Statistics accurate as of 21/03/2023)

Print and Graphic Design

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

Record Management

Transfer of Planning records from Council HQ to the Record Management facility at Quin Road is continuing. In compliance with Planning legislation, planning records must be retained. The secure facility at Quin Road has provided a long-term storage

solution for these records, while also providing additional space in Planning Section for active files.

Procurement

The following Clare County Council tender competitions were published on eTenders in the period from 27th February to 21st March 2023 incl.:

Tender name	Publication date	Response deadline (Irish time)	Procedure
Prescribed spot treatment of weeds on road verges and kerbs in the Ennis and Clarecastle areas for the 2023 season	14/03/2023	14/04/2023 16:00	1. Open Procedure (NON OJEU)
Disposal of Non-Hazardous material	05/03/2023	30/03/2023 16:00	PIN
Disposal of Hazardous material	04/03/2023	30/03/2023 16:00	PIN
Cliffs of Moher Footpath Upgrade	03/03/2023	21/03/2023 16:00	1. Open Procedure (NON OJEU)
Design, Provision and installation of a Children's playground and ancillary works at the Town Park, Ennis, Subject to funding (funding applied for)	03/03/2023	31/03/2023 16:00	1. Open Procedure (NON OJEU)
23-14 Design and installation of Outdoor Exercise/Fitness Equipment ("Sports Equipment) at the following locations in the Ennis Municipal District in County Clare. People's Park, Clarecastle	03/03/2023	31/03/2023 16:00	1. Open Procedure (NON OJEU)
Supply and delivery of Christmas Lighting features	03/03/2023	31/03/2023 16:00	1. Open Procedure (NON OJEU)

HUMAN RESOURCES

Work Area	Update
Recruitment	<p>The following recruitment competitions were progressed during March:</p> <p>Eligibility Exercises & Desktop Shortlisting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Conservation Officer (Eligibility) Executive Engineer (Eligibility) Duty Manager, Active Ennis Leisure Complex (Eligibility) Graduate Planner (Eligibility) Beach Lifeguards & Senior Beach Lifeguards (Pool Test) <p>Interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beach Operatives (Day 3 of 3) Plant Operator A Rural & Community Development Officer Beach Lifeguards & Senior Beach Lifeguards Clerk of Works Bio-Diversity Officer <p>The following competitions were advertised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic Litter Warden Countywide Panel, 2023 Canteen Attendant Sporadic Cover Panel, 2023 Technician Grade II (Civil, Architectural & Building) Panel, 2023 Graduate Planner Panel, 2023 Executive Quantity Surveyor Panel, 2023 Retained Part-Time Fire-Fighter Panels (Ennis, Killaloe, Kilkee, Kilrush, Shannon)
Learning and Development	<p>Online Training programmes / Webinars / Information Sessions held in March include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBS Literacy Week Event 8th March CPC Module 4 Training CSCS Site Dumper Assessment Dealing with Difficult Customers & Personal Safety Forklift Refresher Grade 4 & Analogous Officer Training Grade 5 & Analogous Officer Training Operation & Management of Horticultural Equipment Prevention Management of Aggression & Violence Training Time Management <p>Essential Skillz on-line Courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cyber Security GDPR Health & Safety Induction Safe Pass Slips, Trips & Falls Working in a Covid Era <p>Health & Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire Warden Training Manual Handling
Staff Information Sessions	<p>Partnership Staff Talks 2023</p> <p>Staff Information Sessions took place in Killaloe, Shannon, Ennistymon, Kilkee and Ennis over a two-week period in March and were well attended. A total of 7 sessions were organised. The sessions, led by the Chief Executive and the Partnership Committee, included presentations from the Chief Executive and the Directors of Service. An Employee Information Stand was also available to staff at each session which promoted the many people-centred initiatives available to staff, including employee assistance, health & wellbeing, and learning & development opportunities. Each staff member received a reusable water bottle which was a Partnership initiative in co-operation with Greener Clare.</p> <p>Thanks to all who attended the sessions, gave presentations, and helped in organising these events. A copy of each presentation is available to view on the Intranet and Extranet under 'Partnership'.</p>
Unions	The Human Resources Department engages with unions on various matters.

Council visit to New York for St Patrick's Day 2023



Above left: Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr Tony O'Brien, leading the New York Clare Association in the 2023 New York St Patrick's Day Parade. Top right: The new banner of the New York Clare Association, which was sponsored by Clare County Council. Above right: Cllr O'Brien pictured with Terence McInerney, Vice President of the New York Clare Association. Below left (l-r): Cllr John Crowe, Chief Executive Pat Dowling, Cllr Tony O'Brien, Cllr Michael Begley and Cllr PJ Ryan. Below right: The new banner.

Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr Tony O'Brien, and Pat Dowling, Chief Executive of Clare County Council, were among those who travelled to New York City, US, during March to meet with the New York Clare Association, as well as participate in the 2023 New York St Patrick's Day Parade.

The Council itinerary included meetings with representatives from Enterprise Ireland, Tourism Ireland and the IDA.

During the trip Cllr O'Brien met the Mayor of New York City Eric L. Adams, as well as the Tánaiste, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence, Micheál Martin TD.





Clockwise from top left: Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr Tony O'Brien, and Council Chief Executive Pat Dowling with the Mayor of New York City, Eric L. Adams. Cllr O'Brien with Tánaiste Micheál Martin TD and Cllr Francis Foley, Mayor of the City and County of Limerick. Cllr O'Brien and Pat Dowling with members of the New York Clare Association. The trip included meetings with representatives from the IDA, Enterprise Ireland and Tourism Ireland. Cllr O'Brien with Maureen O'Neill-Regan, President of the New York Clare Association.



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- Our Housing Delivery plan targets for 2023 will bring its own challenges as the conflict in Ukraine continues with resultant effects on availability and cost of building supplies and other necessities.
- The winter eviction ban ended on 31st March, 2023. We have a sizeable number of clients contacting us in relation to Notice To Quits in existing private rental agreements. Our Homeless Action Team are preparing for increased activity as a result while our Acquisitions Team and AHBS are actively engaging with landlords to potentially purchase a number of these properties in order to reduce homeless situations. We are also working with these clients to assist them in accessing other housing solutions and to avoid the

need for entering into homeless services.

- Work on the new County Library continues at pace and great progress is now visible on site. This will prove to be a fantastic addition to the town and county when complete.
- We have completed our submission on draft regulations on the Enhanced Defective Concrete Block Grant Scheme. We expect this scheme to go live during April and this will have significant impact on our housing team resources.
- We have completed a detailed submission seeking the go ahead to utilise the Approved Housing Fund and we are hopeful that we will be given the go ahead to plan for schemes in Ennis and Shannon in the very near future.
- We are confident that the team in the Directorate, supported by the Elected Members, will continue to deal with all challenges and meet targets for the coming year.

HOUSING

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

The Clare Homeless Action Team (HAT) office is open by appointment during office hours and can be contacted on **065 684 6291** or by email: **hat@clarecoco.ie**

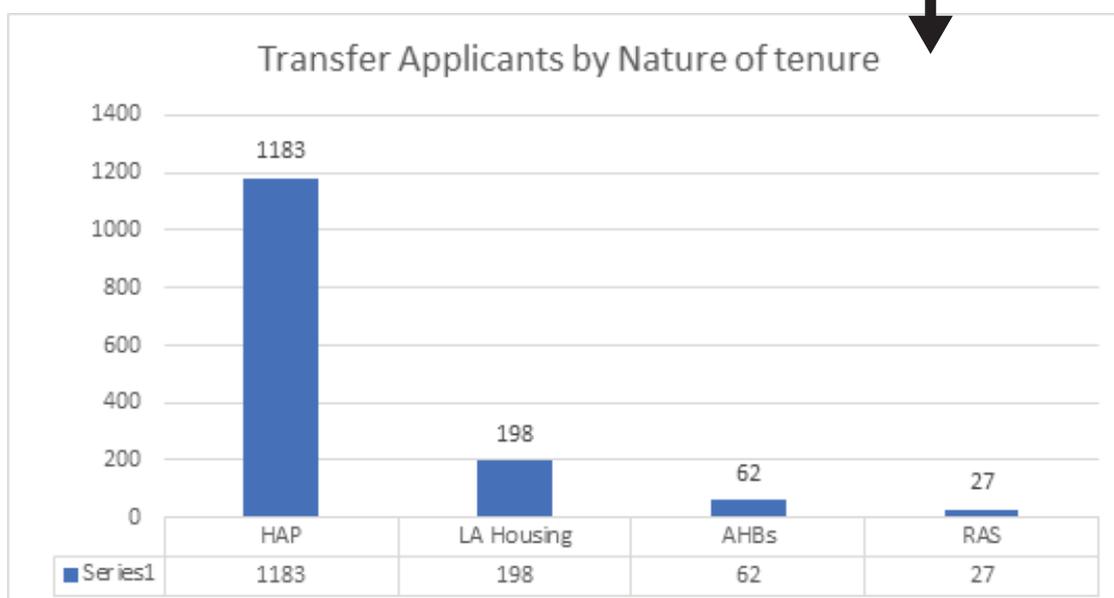
Social Housing Demand

The total households on the Council waiting list is currently 2,823 with 1,470 of these currently receiving support in form

of existing council housing, HAP, RAS or AHBS. The 2,823 households are comprised of 3,908 adults and 2,129 children. This average of 2.2 people per household is reflected in large need for 1 and 2 bed properties in all areas.

Current Housing need as of 23/03/2023

Total Households on Waiting List	2823
Transfer Applicants (see below)	1470
Nett Need	1353



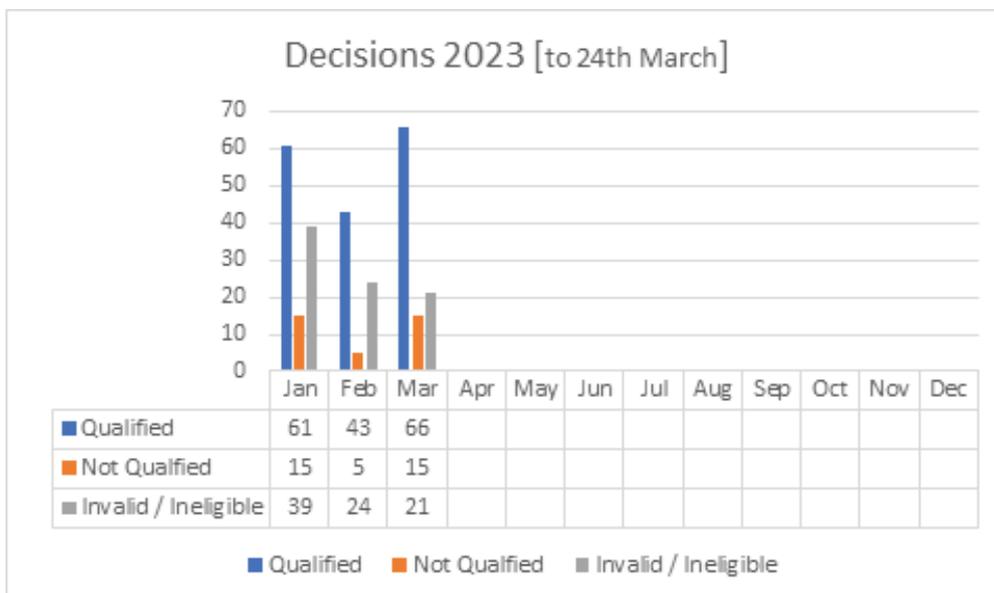
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Count of HOUSING AUTHORITY APPLIED TO BEDS APPROVED				
FIRST AREA OF CHOICE	1 and 2 beds	3 beds	4 and 5 beds	Grand Total
ENNIS	911	193	79	1183
SHANNON	181	25	13	219
CLARECASTLE	127	27	10	164
INAGH/ENNISTYMON/LAHINCH	129	25	5	159
KILRUSH	102	30	7	139
FEAKLE/SCARIFF/WHITEGATE	108	21	4	133
MEELICK/PARTEEN/WESTBURY	73	36	11	120
MILTOWN MALBAY/MULLAGH/QUILTY	69	12	4	85
KILKEE/CROSS/CARRIGAHOLT	67	11	1	79
NEWMARKET-ON-FERGUS	56	15	6	77
COROFIN/RUAN	54	18	2	74
KILLALOE	57	13	2	72
LISDOONVARNA/BALLYVAUGHAN	46	10	3	59
SIXMILEBRIDGE	37	7	8	52
COORACLARE/DOONBEG	35	9	2	46
TULLA/KILKISHEN/BROADFORD	35	7	3	45
CLONLARA	19	8	2	29
KILDYSART/BALLYNACALLY	21	4	2	27
QUIN	17	6	1	24
KILMIHIL	11	5	2	18
KILMALEY	9	2		11
KILFENORA	7	1		8
Grand Total	2171	485	167	2823

Newly Qualified Applicants

New income limits became effective on 1st January, 2023. We are starting to see a slight impact on our housing list as a result with 46 additional households added to list during March end of February. In March we issued decisions on 81 applications with 66 qualified and 15 deemed not to qualify. In addition 21 applications were rejected, either for having submitted incomplete applications, or because they were deemed ineligible for assessment.



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

New Income Limits from January 1st, 2023

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

We are starting to see a slight [2%] increase in our total approved applicants since new limits were introduced in January and expect this to increase further in coming months

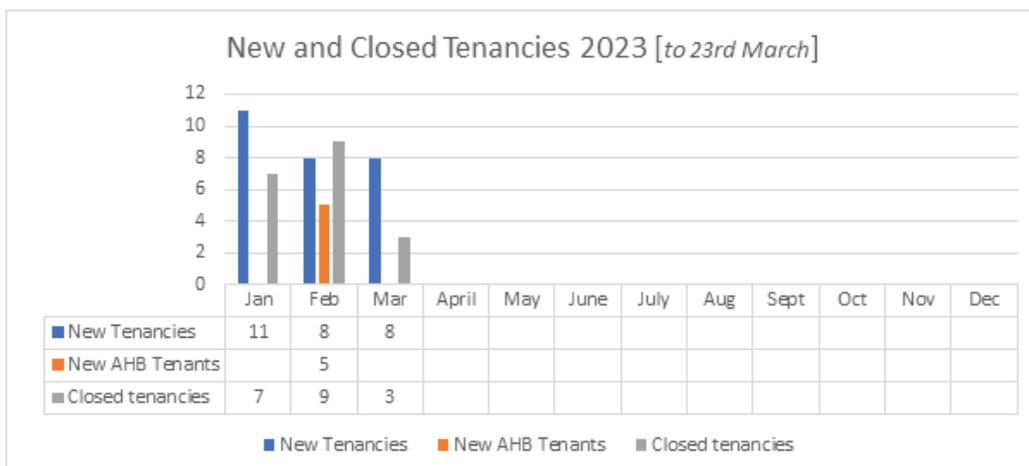
Housing Allocations

The social housing development (CALF Turnkey) located at Cluain Ros Leamhain, Roslevan, Ennis, which will be delivered by Co-Operative Housing Ireland (CHI), was recently advertised on the Choice Based Letting (CBL) website. There were 722 expressions of interest from 371 households for the 5 various property types. A number of households applied for more than one property type]. There are 25 units in this development and Clare County Council have nomination rights in relation to the allocation of these units. The assessment process is now completed, and the nominated households have been forwarded to CHI.



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

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



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Tenant Purchase Incremental Scheme

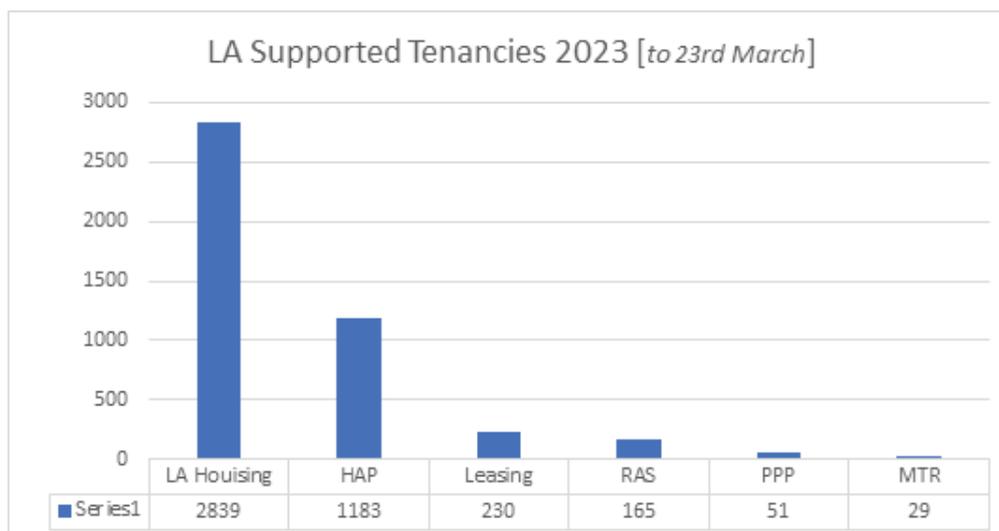
There remains significant interest in the LA Tenant Purchase Incremental Scheme with 3 new applications this year to date. We currently have 12 open cases at various stages of the legal process which are expected to complete in 2023. Sale of 1 property has completed in 2023 to date.

Housing Tenancies

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

23rd March 2023			
MD	Allocated	Occupied	Total
Ennis MD	10	1280	1290
Killaloe MD		360	360
Shannon MD	5	720	725
West Clare MD	2	954	956
Grand Total	17	3314*	3331

*3,331 households comprises of 5,704 Adults and 3,116 children. Total people 8,820, or 2.6 per household average



Vacancies

Vacant Stock	Ennis MD	West Clare MD	Shannon MD	Killaloe MD	Total
Traveller Accom	2	8	2	0	12
Derelict Properties	0	0	0	0	0
Projects	3	10	1	0	14
Casual Vacancies	19	14	6	6	45
TOTAL	24	32	9	6	71

Estate Management

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

	1st to 16th March	Total year to date
ASB Complaints recd	45	115
Housing Inspections	59	209
Referrals to TSS	1	3
Tenancy Notifications/Warnings issued	14	29
Abandonment Notices issued	3	5
Keys collected from Casual Vacancies	7	26
TEO Call Outs	472	1,700

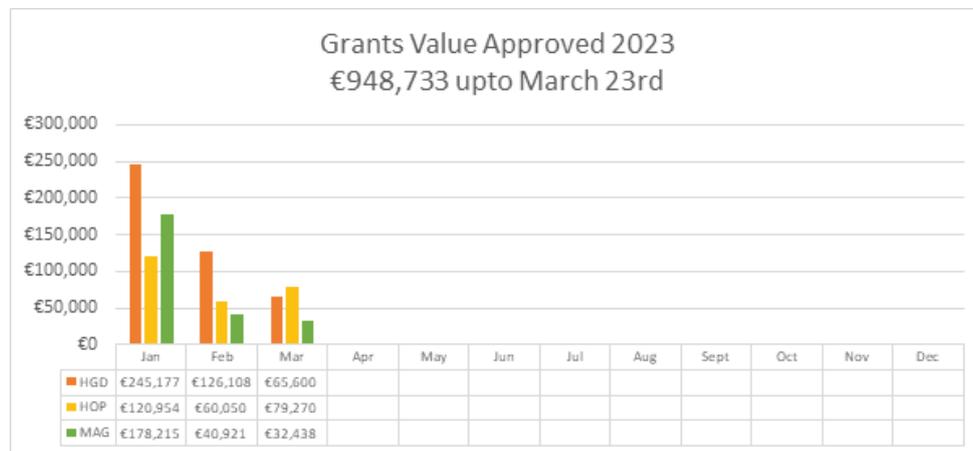
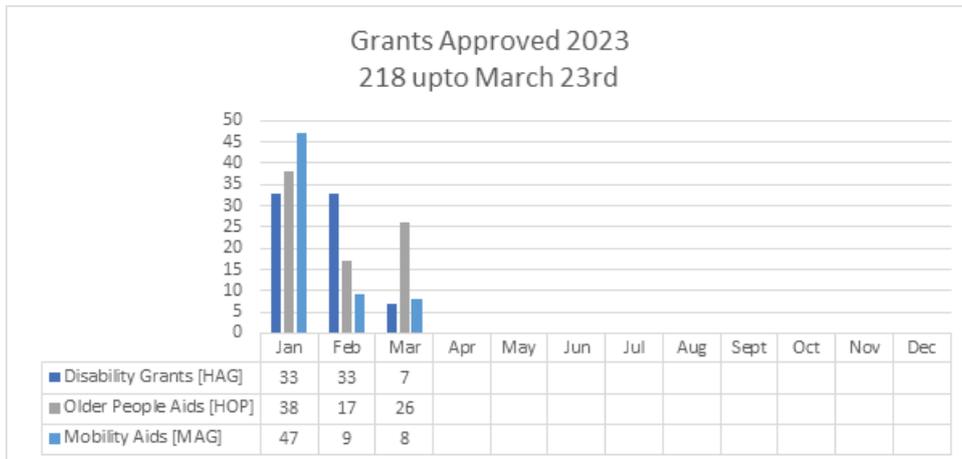
The working hours of the TEO team are flexible to meet required need, involving working after hours and weekends as the need dictates. The TEO team can be contacted out of office hours, should the need arise, by contacting the Council Emergency Phone no. **(087) 4169496**

Private Rented inspections

315 inspections carried out up to March 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

*January shows higher data than subsequent months due to a clear down of a backlog from 2022



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

Changes to the Local Authority Home Loan will come into effect from the 01/03/2023. The changes are as follows:

- Increase in the house price limit band from €250,000 to €300,000 for Clare.
- Increase in the income limit from €50,000 to €70,000 for Single Applicants and €75,000 to €85,000 for joint applications.

Loans data for 2023 up to 15/03/2023: There are currently 32 Local Authority Home Loans Approved in Principle. This includes 1 new approval on 27th February, 2023.

61 Applications Received to 31/12/2022 and 5 Application in 2023

32 Local Authority Home Loans Approved

5 Local Authority Home Loans Drawn Down in 2022

12 Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans Drawn Down in 2022

The interest rate for all Local Authority Loans on a variable interest rate will increase from 2.8% to 3.8% from 01/04/2023.

Homeless Services (Homeless Action Team; HAT)

The demand for Homeless Services, Advice/Support and the provision of Emergency Accommodation within this region is continuous. Currently the moratorium on eviction/Winter Eviction Ban (Residential Tenancies (Deferment of Termination dates of certain tenancies) Act 2022) is in place until 31st March, 2023. However, while this has supported families and individuals from being asked to vacate their properties, this has, in many cases, delayed the issue of potential homelessness.

It is envisaged that demands and requirements on the Homeless Action Team will increase in 2023 given the lifting of the Eviction Ban and the increasing high levels of referrals being received by the Homeless Action Team in Clare.

Presentations to Clare Homeless Action Team (HAT)

28 new clients presented to HAT during the first 3 weeks of March 2023, with a further 138 repeat engagements. This figure of repeat engagements has increased significantly over this current timeframe. The needs and requirements of these presentations varied and included:

- The need of immediate Emergency Accommodation
- Discharge from Medical Settings

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- Discharge from Women Refuge services
- Members of the travelling Community seeking Emergency Accommodation
- Release from Prison.

A number of these presentations availed of advice and prevention works and supports from the Social Care Team in HAT. As a result, they avoided entering a homeless situation due to early intervention by the team. Advice regarding legislation on NTQs, 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 actually seeking emergency accommodation and shows the positive effect the prevention measures taken by the HAT team can have when people engage at an early stage.

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.

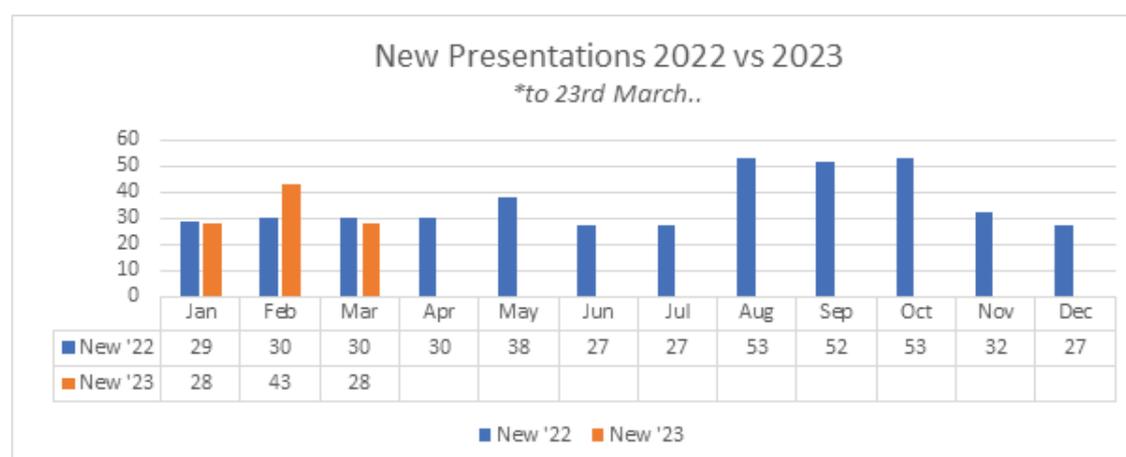
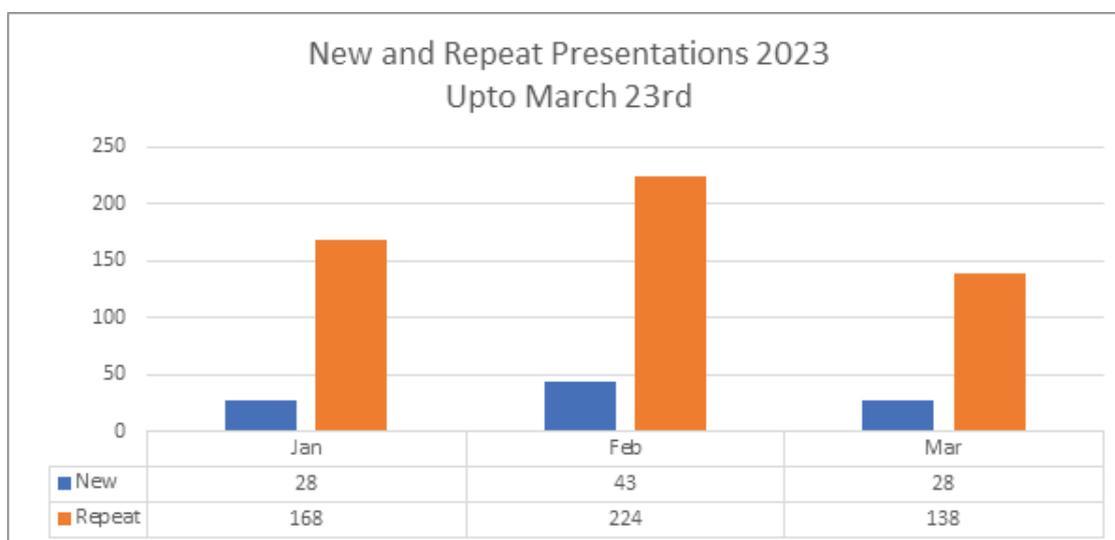
Clare Homeless Action team continues to engage with all necessary stakeholders, service providers and local supports in order to adopt a collaborative approach to the tackling of Homelessness.

Exits from Homeless Services

Clare Homeless Action Team continues to focus on exits from homeless services and during the period 17/02/23 to 09/03/2023, a total of 11 households exited Emergency Homeless Services.

- 2 household moved to LA properties
- 1 household moved to Youth Housing accommodation
- 2 households moved to Residential Treatment
- 2 households moved to Own Front Door properties
- 3 households were discharged due to breach of code of conduct
- 1 household was admitted to hospital.

During this period, 2 further single adults moved within our Emergency Accommodation to best support their identified needs.



Emergency Accommodation Status as of 9th March, 2023:

	Families	Adults	Dependents	Providers
Laurel Lodge	0	13	0	1
Laurel Lodge Weather Initiative	0	4	0	
Cusack Lodge	5	8	11	1
Westbrook	0	14	0	1
Ashford Court	11	19	20	1
EA Families	3	3	7	2
EA Individuals	0	6	0	5
TOTAL	19	67	38	11

Affordable Housing Schemes for County Clare

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

Plan process does not meet the affordability constraint threshold as set by the DHLGH.

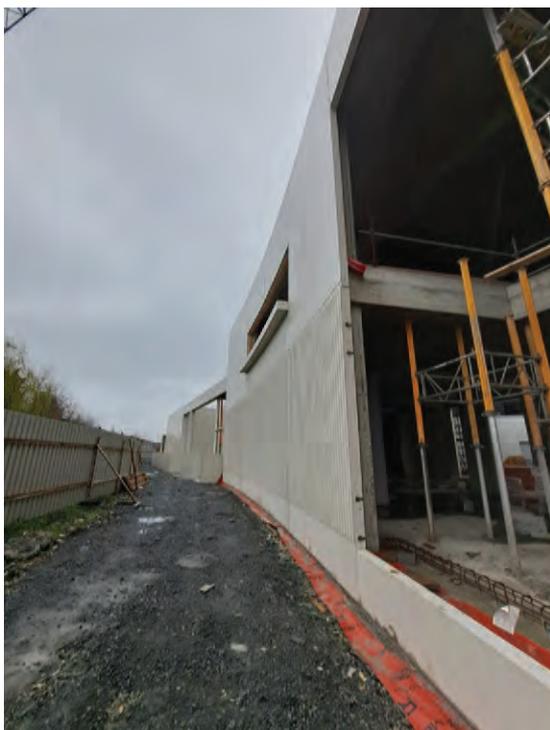
In consideration of recent flexibility introduced by the DHLGH in relation to urban centres in excess of 10,000 population, CCC prepared a submission and applied to the Department in early March for both Ennis & Shannon, for access to the (AHF) Affordable Housing Fund, subject to CCC satisfying the established criteria as set out by the Department.

Defective Concrete Blocks Grant Scheme

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

New County Library Construction Project

Construction work continues on the new Library. All substructure works are now complete and all vertical works between ground floor and first floor are complete. First floor beams are also complete. Preparation for 2nd Floor Slab pour was ongoing in early January and 180m3 concrete pour was carried out in late January. Concrete works are ongoing to various upstands & beams so approx 95% of RC work is completed. Techcrete Concrete panels to façade of building commenced on 21st February last and are making good progress. Techcrete works are due for completion by end of March. Blockwork crews have also commenced on site. The state-of-the-art new build will provide a key resource for research, study, recreation and art in a centralised location adjacent to the well-established glór theatre.



New County Library Construction Project.

Update on capital programme

Works continue on our ambitious capital program and projects at Scarriff and Clarecastle are now under construction following signing of contracts in February. In March, construction contracts were signed for the Ballyliddan, Sixmilebridge housing development. Contracts were also signed for the appointment of a design team for a housing development on the Doonbeg Road in Kilkee and a town centre apartment development on Moore Street, Kilrush.



Contract signing with Jada Construction Ltd. for housing development in Sixmilebridge.



Contract signing for appointment of design team for housing development in Kilkee.



Contract signing for appointment of design team for apartment development on Moore Street, Kilrush.

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.	Q4 2024	Q4 2025
Clarecastle	2	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.	Q2 2023	Q4 2024
Sixmilebridge	15	Stage 4 approval. Contractor appointed.	Q1 2023	Q2 2024
Ennistymon	30	Stage 2 approved. Stage 3 application currently being prepared.	Q2 2023	Q4 2024
Gort Rd. Ennis	20	Stage 2 approved. Public consultation held in January 2023. Planning application being prepared for submission to ABP.	Q3 2023	Q4 2024
Moore Street, Kilrush	21	Stage 1 approval. Design Team appointed.	Q1 2023	Q2 2025
Doonbeg Road, Kilkee	25	Stage 1 approval. Design Team has been appointed.	Q4 2023	Q2 2025
Subtotal	165			
Bruachlan, Westbury (Cooperative Housing Ireland)	22	CALF - Property transfer complete, reapply for planning permission in due course when site assessment completed	Q2 2022	Q2 2025
Limerick Road, Ennis (Cluid Housing Assoc)	15	CALF Acquisition - Under construction	Q3 2022	Q2 2023
Limerick Road, Ennis (Inis Housing)	18	CALF Turnkey - construction in progress	Q1 2022	Q3 2023
Market Street, Ennis (Peter McVerry Trust)	14	CAS Turnkey - construction to commence.	Q1 2023	Q1 2024
Cluain na Laoi, Kilkishen	16	CALF Turnkey - construction commenced. 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	2	CALF Turnkey (Part V) - under construction	Q1 2022	Q2 2023
Ballyminogue, Scarriff	4	CALF Turnkey - under construction	Q1 2023	Q2 2023
Dooneen Park, Kilrush	2	CAS Construction - under construction.	Q4 2022	Q2 2023
Kincora Park, Ennis	1	CAS Construction - completed	Q4 2022	Q1 2023
Ahsfield Close	6	CAS Construction - Dept approved	Q2 2023	Q2 2024
Roslevan	25	CALF Turnkey - construction in progress	Q2 2022	Q2 2023
Subtotal	125			
Total	290			

CULTURAL SERVICES - LIBRARY, ARTS, MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

Clare County Library

Clare Library service supported Ennis Book Club Festival this month through sponsorship and other resources. Over 150 people attended the Eavan Boland tribute event sponsored by the Library and Poetry Ireland. Thirty events took place over the Ennis Book Club Festival weekend with an audience of over three thousand attendees.

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

Online Resources usage as follows:

1497 E-Books	2906 E-Audiobooks	636 E-Magazines
914 Online courses	1760 Press Reader	57 Transparent Languages

Marketing & social media

Three media releases were circulated by the Marketing Department for cultural services during the month of February: Ireland Reads Day, the launch of the new Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023-2027 and the Into Europe: EU50 exhibition. All three were published in the Clare Champion and two were published in the Clare Herald and featured on the Council website. New promotional material has been ordered to promote Englishtype Junior and multilingual promotional material has been ordered in Arabic, Bengali, Russian, Spanish and French to promote the online resource LOTE4Kids.

Two outreach events were held in February - a presentation to 200 1st Year students at St Flannan's College and an information stand at the Westpark Business Park, Shannon for World Book Day.



Students visiting Shannon Library for World Book Day.

	New Followers	Total Followers	Posts Reach/ Impressions	Post Likes	Engagement
	61	6868	24400	1191	2800
	9	2098	12497	132	354
	35	1841	6981	975	1500

Total number of live events	194
Total attendances at live events	2307
Total number of outreach events	5
Total audiences at outreach events	308



Teen Week event in Ennistymon Library.

Right to Read

"Seachtain na Gaeilge" was celebrated in library branches all over the county this month with guest authors, storytellers and illustrators engaging with primary school classes to promote and encourage young library visitors to speak the Irish language. Newly published author Rachel J Cooper presented a celebration of the centenary of our National Anthem to 70 children from Gaelscoil Mhíchíl Cíosóg, Inis on Tuesday, 7th March, at deValera Library, Ennis. Her new book, "Our National Anthem" published by Abair Linn, teaches children about Amhrán na bhFiann. Cathal Crowe TD joined the happy group of children and teachers and answered many questions as gaeilge from the group.

Children and teachers from local schools visited local branch libraries for "World Book Day" on 2nd March to spend time looking at the displays and to choose books from the wide selections available for all ages. World Book Day gift bags were

packed at Library HQ and presented by branch staff to family visitors on the day. Library staff visited schools and special storytime sessions were arranged in branches.

A series of events for teenagers was programmed in collaboration with Ennis Book Club Festival for the Library's annual "Teen Week" in Ennis and Ennistymon libraries. Events included history presentations, author visits, teen health and wellness talks and Fighting Words workshops.

Both participating libraries successfully joined with students and staff of local schools along with festival contributors to deliver an exciting schedule of events each day over the week to 3rd March.



Storyteller Ruth Marshall in Tulla Library.

Healthy Ireland

A total of 4 Healthy Ireland at Your Library events took place this month.

A parent and baby yoga class was delivered to 15 participants of 'My Baby & Me' group in Kilkee Library. Physiotherapist Colette O'Flynn presented talks on staying well to 66 teenagers in Ennis & Ennistymon Libraries. Expert advice was delivered on the subjects of exercise, eating well, sleep and study-life balance.

Claire Flynn, from Mental Health Ireland, delivered a talk on 'The 5 ways to Wellbeing' to parents and carers attending 'My Baby & Me' group in Kilrush Library.

Creative Ireland

The planning for Cruinniú na nÓg is underway. Schools, artists and facilitators were invited to submit proposals for projects and events for children to be held on the national day of creativity on 10th June 2023. A curator has been employed to put together a programme for the day. It is anticipated that up to 50 events will take place across the county in numerous venues. The "voice of the child" is integral to the day and a survey is currently underway to allow children to submit ideas for activities that they would like to participate in.

Decade of Centenaries

The Decade of Centenaries Project Awards grant scheme for 2023 was advertised with nine applications for funding received in March. Clare Decade of Centenaries supported three events

for Ennis Book Club Festival – a lecture on Nan Hogan by author Colm Liddy from Newmarket-on-Fergus and two talks for secondary school students by historian Flor McCarthy on Stories of the Revolution.

Local Studies

The Local Studies Centre has added new resources to its extensive collection of church records. Baptism, marriage and burial records for the Church of Ireland parishes of Killaloe, Kilrush, Newmarket-on-Fergus and Ogonneloe have been acquired on microfilm. The Killaloe register dates as far back as 1679 and the Kilrush register of baptisms dates to 1741. These local documentary sources will be warmly welcomed by family historians, near and far.

Clare Arts Office

Arts in the Community

An intergenerational "Artists in Schools" Scheme residency with Tulla NS resulted in the Cairde Project led by Shona McGillivray. A strategy meeting with Clare Education Centre took place. Siobán Fawl started working with the Brothers of Charity Empowerment Group in Ennis and John Lillis completed mentoring with a young musician from St Anne's School, Ennis. Hospital radio continued twice a week in St Joseph's Hospital, Ennis and arts activities in Raheen Hospital.

Clare Youth Theatre continued to meet in glór and in Kilkee where a second group has been established. The Ennis Group performed at Ennis Book Club Festival. A youth theatre group from Germany came to Ennis for one week to work with Clare Youth Theatre. Mela Festival was shortlisted for a LAMA award. Three new murals were unveiled in Ennis and a prototype of the Outdoor Performance Space was delivered to Áras an Chontae. The Arts Officer assessed the Student Enterprise Awards Scheme for the Local Enterprise Office.

Support to Artists

The Arts Officer conducted two Arts in Clare slots on Clare FM in March.

The Arts Officer assisted with Darkwater production filming in Killaloe/Scariff & Mountshannon and Hidden Assets filming in Bunratty, Shannon and Parteen and is liaising with Film in Limerick with the Cineposium Conference announced in March and scheduled to take place in September.

A webinar on Restarting Your Career took place in conjunction with Visual Artists Ireland as well as series of 4 webinars for musicians. The Arts Office monthly newsletter was issued. Four new artists started in the studios in Tulla and EASI.

Five advisory meetings took place with individual artists and community groups and a meeting of the Mid West Advisory Group for Helium arts took place.

Arts Events

Culturlann Sweeney, Kilkee, showed two Irish films, Pure Grit and The Bansees of Inisheerin, and held one of the partnership

talks. Seven youth theatre workshops also took place. Three exhibitions took place in Ennis, Scariff and Kilkee.

The Arts Office Facebook groups had a combined membership of 4,482 an increase of 1.8% on February 2023.

Clare Museum

The Museum building is hosting the 'Reading the Landscape' course for Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and is in keeping with the museum's strategic aim of providing support to local education providers. The museum also accommodated a workshop for Ennis Book Club Festival.

The Museum is also being used as a case study for Occupational Therapist postgraduate students at University of Limerick. A small team of students are designing an OT plan for the museum which will focus on increasing access to elderly clients in daycare centres. It is hoped to be able to use this plan once it is completed.

Five hundred and thirty photos of objects have been uploaded to the museum website, while four new items have been catalogued. The curator is now engaged in planning activities in the museum for the remainder of the year, including workshops for primary school children for the Bealtaine festival and public talks for adult learners.

Clare Archives

The Barrett collection continues to be catalogued and processed. Work has begun on the Grand Jury collection, the plan is to upload some of the digitised content onto the Digital Repository of Ireland to make it publicly accessible. Data is being inputted into the DRI website system to allow a new digital collection to be added to the repository each month.

KILLALOE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Projects/Meetings/Correspondence

- 2023 Schedule of Municipal District Works – Draft plan finalised – for adoption by MD Councillors at March meeting.
- Outdoor workers' annual Health & Safety briefings completed.
- Partnership talks attended by all indoor and outdoor staff.
- Emergency salting works during the snow event, undertaken by MD crews in the vicinity of schools to supplement the countywide winter maintenance plan treatment salting routes.



- Carrig's Lane (Carriage Lane) – Tender issued for paving element of upgrade works.
- Ongoing liaison with Gael Force Events to discuss a proposal for Mountshannon to host OPEN WATER LAKE SWIMMING event.
- Ongoing liaison with PMO regarding Killaloe Bypass construction progress and haulage route impacts.
- Meetings onsite with Coillte regarding licensed felling operations in Cloontra and haulage route impacts.

- Restoration improvement roadworks completed at Carrowena.



- Advance preparation works being completed at various locations for both restoration maintenance and improvement roadworks.

ORIS

- Ongoing consultation with various disability stakeholders on the proposed access facility for water activities at Ballycuggeran Pier, including disability hoist.

NTA Active Travel

- Clarisford – 80% complete – Substantial completion on southern section between Clarisford and Bypass crossing.
- Tulla – Works on pedestrian crossings and footpath upgrades to re-commencing in end of March 2023.

IPB/GMA

- Footpaths works complete at Crossroads & Thomas Street – Killaloe.



Safety Improvement Work projects

- Draft designs being developed in advance of landowner engagement at Cloonamirran and Cranagher.
- Meetings arranged with Road Design to review measures at L3084 Killaloe and R462 Tulla.



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

TRANSPORTATION

Roadworks Programme and Operations

The draft 2023 Schedule of Municipal District Works (Annual Roadworks Programme) was listed for presentation to the Municipal Districts at the end of March. The allocations are as follows:

Department of Transport €38,784,600
National Transport Authority €4,500,000
Transport Infrastructure Ireland €5,869,840.

Strategic Transportation

Bus Connects

The Transportation Department within Clare County Council has liaised with Limerick City & County Council, Bus Éireann, the National Transport Authority (NTA) and their consultants Jarrett Walker & Associates (JWA) and Systra in the development of the draft routes under Bus Connects. Public consultation on the draft plan has been ongoing since 22nd February and will run for 6 weeks until 7th April, 2023.

Active Travel

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

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

- A non-statutory public consultation is ongoing for the Tulla Road Cycle Scheme. Open evenings were held on Tuesday, 14th and Wednesday, 15th March where members of the public interacted with the design team in what was a very positive engagement.
- Construction works have been completed at St Flannan's National School in Inagh under the 'Safe Routes To School' programme.
- Construction works are continuing in Ennis, Tulla, Spanish Point, Miltown Malbay, Clarisford (Killaloe) & Ballycasey Close (Shannon).
- Transportation Consultants are continuing to advance the Option Selection phase including preparation of feasibility reports to assess permeability across bridges throughout the county.
- Preliminary design is being advanced for Clonmoney National School in consultation with An Taisce under the 'Safe Routes To School' programme.
- Consultation with the wider schools community has commenced for the Holy Family school, Gaelscoil and Ennis National school in Ennis.

- Preliminary design has been completed with landowner engagement being concluded for schemes in Roslevan and Meelick.
- Concept development being advanced for cycling schemes at Limerick Road (incl. St Flannan's Drive) and Lahinch Road in Ennis and Bothar Sioda in Shannon.



Public lighting

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

Following the successful conclusion of the procurement process for the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency (PLEEP) Regional Project, surveying works have commenced in Cork, Kerry and Waterford. The most current project programme indicates surveying work is scheduled to start in July 2023 in County Clare. Design and retrofit works will follow the survey.

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

- Internet: Direct reporting on our website – <https://enerveo.com/report-a-fault/republic-of-ireland/>
- Phone: Enerveo (Formerly SEE Airtricity) dedicated call centre at 0818-372772
- Local Authority Identification – via Local Authority's website or contact number. <https://www.clarecoco.ie/services/roads-and-transport/road-maintenance-issues/report-a-broken-streetlight/>

An energy saving measure the flood lights at the Height, Ennis, were changed to energy saving LEDs. These LEDs are programmable and in honour of our national festival the O’Connell Monument was lit in green.



Winter Maintenance

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

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



On 9th March there was significant snowfall event in the early hours which resulted in significant disruption. This was anticipated and the necessary preparation was made by the Winter maintenance team. Pre treatment of the routes was carried out the night before and snow ploughs were ready for deployment Thursday morning to clear significant snow accumulations on the network. All drivers and reserve drivers were deployed to respond to the snowfall to clear and treat routes. The N68 between Lissycasey and Knockerra was hit particularly badly hit along with the N67 Corkscrew Hill.

Road Design Office

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

TII Road Safety Projects:

Project	Progress Update
<p>TII HD 15 Sites</p>	<p>For the N85: The revised concept design for Clareabbey roundabout has been approved by the TII. Modelling of the proposed changes and their effects on the traffic flow is necessary and this is being progressed by the TII through their consultant.</p> <p>The TII are of the view that any proposed design for the Lahinch Rd/Shanaway Rd junction should be incorporated in the Active Travel Strategy and plan for the wider area. The RDO carried out an extensive topographical survey of the N85 from Claureen roundabout to the speed limit and are currently developing conceptual designs for this area. A further topographical survey from Claureen roundabout to Cloughleigh National School has been carried out and conceptual designs are under development.</p>

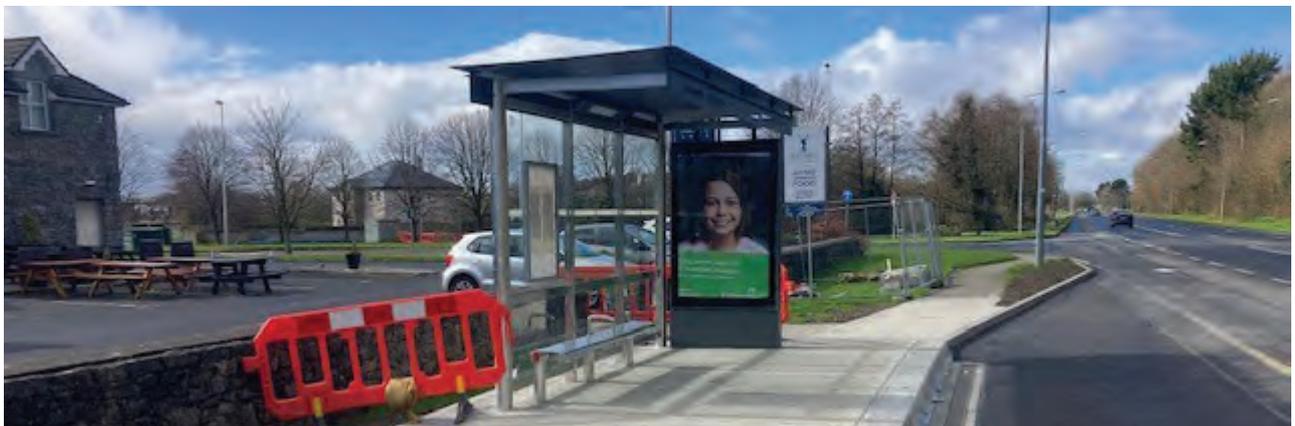
PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Project	Progress Update
TII HD 17 Sites	<p>For the N68: A topographical survey of the Monvana Rd. junction N68/L2510 is complete and conceptual designs are progressing. Interim measure proposed and being developed for N68/L2138.</p> <p>For the N67: Topographical surveys of junctions N67/L1022, N67/50222/, N67/L50221 & N67/L1016 now completed. The preferred option for N67/L50222 has been agreed and a Feasibility Report is under review by TII Road Safety Engineers.</p> <p>Conceptual designs progressing for N67/L1022 and N67/1016.</p> <p>Gateway 1 approval has been received from the TII for the proposed road safety scheme at Ministers Place, Kilkee. A draft Design Report is with the TII Road Safety Engineers for their review prior to formal submission. A Quality Audit Report has now been requested by TII and a draft report has been prepared and sent to TII Road Safety Engineers for comment. The preferred option for the junction between Mount Charles Terrace and the N67 has been agreed with TII Road Safety Engineers. A Feasibility Report has been issued to TII Road Safety Engineers for comment.</p>
Special Speed Limits	Clare County Council is proposing to introduce Special Speed Limits at Caherea N.S. on the N68 as well as New Quay and Rineen National Schools on the N67. These will be periodic speed limits to cover school drop off/collection times.

Other Projects 2023:

Project	Progress Update
Low Cost Safety Schemes 2023	<p>The funding application for Low Cost Safety schemes for 2023 was submitted to the Department of Transport in November 2022. Funding of €530,000 has been granted for 2023 for the following projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Junction of the R473 and L-82503-0 in Tiermaclane • Ardnacrusha • O'Connors Cross • Sixmilebridge Shannon Road • Carmody St / Parnell St • Summer Hill • Ballkeel South Kilfenora Junction R476 & L-5084-0 • Ballkeel North Kilfenora Junction R476 & L-5092-0 • R462 North of Tulla • R352 Junction Sightlines - Cloonamirran L4036 • Tennis Club - Benson Box Factory, Killaloe L3084 • Inch Bridge • Kilnaboy Corofin Junction R476 & L-5250-30 • Cloughleigh Road • Cooraclare • Connolly • R352 Junction Sightlines - Cranagher L4060 <p>Design has been completed for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ballkeel South Kilfenora Junction R476 & L-5084-0 • Ballkeel North Kilfenora Junction R476 & L-5092-0 • Junction of the R473 and L-82503-0 in Tiermaclane • Kilnaboy Corofin Junction R476 & L-5250-30 <p>Design has commenced for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shannon Road, Sixmilebridge

Project	Progress Update
EuroVelo 1	The project is substantially completed. All the signage has now been installed with snagging ongoing.
Liaison with NTA regarding bus stops	Bus Stops are being considered at Manus Cross Clarecastle on the R458, Ballyea Cross on the N85 & Kilnaboy on the R476 regional road. The NTA have submitted a design detail for the bus stop proposal at Kilnaboy with a road safety audit being undertaken
Liaison with NTA regarding bus shelters	The NTA has approved 15 no. bus shelters for the 2023 programme. The tender process has been completed with construction works to commence in early 2023. Construction has commenced on the 3 bus shelters in Westbury and the bus shelter at Shannon Springs Shannon. The 2 bus shelters in Aidan Park, Shannon have been completed in the last month. Works on the bus shelters at Skycourt Shannon and Inagh have commenced.
Road Schedule & Queries	Search requests from the public and Municipal Districts regarding the road schedule are being carried out on an ongoing basis. Updates to the roads schedule is carried out as updates are being received.
Cycle and traffic counts	Ongoing monitoring at various locations.
Planning Reports	Planning reports are being provided for the Planning Department on a continuous basis.
Clare County Cycle Network	Surveying and mapping of the existing cycle infrastructure for the entire county commenced in 2022 and will continue as an ongoing project for 2023 feeding into the Clare County Cycle Network under Cycle Connects. This will include the Ennis Urban Cycle Network and the Shannon Urban Cycle Network. The draft cycling strategy is being developed in conjunction with the NTA and their consultants AECOM.
Latoon Cycling Infrastructure	Procurement process has commenced however it has been paused pending the outcome of a Planning Application lodged by Irish Water, the outcome of which may have a direct impact on the project.
Climate Adaptation	The funding application for 2023 Climate Adaptation Grants has been announced.



‘Malbay Track and Trail’

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

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

Kilrush Cycle Routes

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

Bridge Rehabilitation Programme

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

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

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

Health and Safety

The Annual Management Review of the 2022 Annual Safety Report was conducted on the 6th March, 2023. At this meeting the following Top Level H&S Objectives for 2023 were approved and issued to Senior Management for implementation in conjunction with the Annual Safety Inspection and Audit Plan for 2023.

- Focus on Digitalisation of the Occupational Health & Safety Management System in order to improve efficiency, effectiveness and minimise paperwork through utilisation of the following tools:
 - ProWorks
 - ArcGis
 - Meta Compliance
 - Online E-Learning Modules
- Roll out further Serious Incident Simulated Exercises to Senior Teams at Department Level and issue briefings to all outdoor staff
- Develop Work Related Vehicle Safety Programme of Work with a focus on:
 - Workplace Transport Safety
 - Driving for Work
 - Working on or Near a Road
- Continually Revise, Update, Implement and Monitor the Clare County Council Covid 19 Response Plan and support the Government Transitional Arrangements to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

The Health & Safety Team commenced their programme of work for 2023 starting with the updating and communication of the Clare County Council Occupational Health & Safety Management System and ongoing revision of routine Risk Assessments and Safety Statements.

The implementation of the programme of work will be monitored throughout the year by the Health & Safety Teams ongoing reviews of Safety Statements, Risk Assessments and H&S Audit and Inspection plans.

General Design Office

Drumgeely Neighbourhood Centre

Construction drawing and Tender documents being prepared.

Town and Village Renewal Schemes

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

Clonlara Town & Village Renewal Scheme - Section 38 placed in Clare Champion, 18th November. Proposals put before Shannon MD members on Tuesday, 15th November. QS procured. Tender package to be published on e-tenders April 2023.

Barefield Town & Village Renewal Scheme - Phase 2, Village Centre Focal Point - Preliminary design proposals and budget cost estimate finalised.

CAPITAL DELIVERY / PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

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

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

Ennis Public Realm Regeneration (Project B) – The Project Team continue to engage with the URDF Section of the Department regarding allocating additional funding to the project. Related to this, we are currently revising aspects of the Final Business Case which when complete, will be forwarded to the Dept for their consideration and approval prior to the appointment of the Contractor. In parallel, the Design team has been appointed

by Irish Water 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 Irish Water, and will future proof and improve the services within the town centre.

Ennistymon Inner Relief Road and Bridge Crossing (Blake's Corner) – The Judicial Review proceedings are before the High Court for decision. The next Court date is scheduled for March 30th 2023, the outcome of which will inform our next course of action.

Killaloe Bridge and By-Pass – Works on the ground continue at pace in all three sections of the scheme, namely the Shannon Bridge Crossing, the Killaloe Bypass and the R494 Upgrade.

Piling works on the Tipperary side of the river crossing have been completed and the first concrete pour has been completed for the Eastern bridge abutment. Long term traffic management arrangements are still in place to facilitate the construction of the R494 upgrade with site clearance and enabling works progressing well. Works to the foul sewer line

have also commenced in the Roolagh area. On the Clare side of the river, piling works are also being carried out with the intention of progressing the in-stream Bridge Piers thereafter in line with the Fisheries Environmental window.

The construction of the Killaloe Bypass section is progressing with storm culvert installations and earthworks operations now commenced. There is a large volume of material to be excavated from this section of the project which will be transported to areas requiring build-up of fill to road formation layer on the Killaloe Bypass section and on the R494 in Tipperary. Other works include site clearance, archaeological monitoring, ecological monitoring & property pre-condition surveys. Utility service diversions are also being carried out on the R494 and utility investigations are progressing elsewhere via slit trench identification and ongoing coordination with the relevant providers.

Sisks are conducting Traffic Management & Emergency Services review meetings with the Gardai, HSE, Local Authority Areas & Local Authority Fire, Rescue & Emergency Services staff. The purpose of these meetings is to review ongoing traffic management arrangements on site and discuss the implementation of new proposed traffic management in line with works sequencing.

The few remaining Land Acquisitions are currently being progressed, mostly by agreement with others via the Arbitration process, with the next one scheduled to be heard on the 28th of March 2023.

Kilkee Flood Relief Scheme – Scheme consultant JBA have issued their response to our comments on the fluvial and pluvial option costings and the Multi-Criterial Analysis (MCA). The Council, OPW and JBA have attended a further three technical meetings and a site visit in preparation for finalising the preferred option for the fluvial and pluvial scheme.

The steering group has been issued with the Public Consultation Day (PCD) Event Plan which sets out the details and timeframes for key PCD elements such as advertising, document preparation and review. The final documents and drawings to be presented at the PCD will be made available for our review in early April and will include the Options Report. PCD advertising will commence two weeks before the day itself. Further information is available on the Project Website www.kilkeefrs.ie

Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF) – RPS Consulting Engineers are currently progressing the detailed design stage of the road element of the scheme. Survey information has been considered from the site investigation works completed by Priority Geotechnical Ltd late last year. The final detailed design will assist with the land-take requirements, preparation of the scheme drawings and specifications for a competitive Tender process for the works and is expected to be completed in Q2 2023.

A progress meeting was held with RPS on the 1st of March to review the detailed design and landowner accommodation works which will better inform our engagement with landowners regarding the acquisition of the necessary lands required for the road element of the scheme.

We also continue to liaise closely with the Lihaf Section of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage regarding the proposed delivery of the overall scheme. Moreover, cross directorate meetings are continuing with our colleagues in Housing & Planning regarding the optimum design and composition of the housing element of the scheme.

Lough Donnell Culvert Repair works – Engagement with Inland Fisheries continues with a very worthwhile meeting taken place only last week. Detailed design is finalised, and we are now progressing to tender stage with the aim of appointing a Contractor at the earliest juncture to carry out the works in accordance with the Fisheries window.

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

Members are advised of the current scheme Design Update. Drawings are now available for viewing at www.shannonaccess.ie with hardcopy maps on display at Clare County Council's Head Office in Ennis, Shannon Municipal District Office, and Shannon International Airport. A briefing to the Shannon MD Councillors on the current status of the project was scheduled for their meeting of March 10th last. However, that meeting was postponed due to poor weather so the briefing will be rearranged for a mutually suitable date. As always further information and associated literature on the project can be accessed via the scheme website.

Quin Flood Relief Scheme – The Archaeological Impact Assessment report has been issued to the Council and confirms that nothing of an archaeological significance was found during the survey. It should be noted however, that archaeological site monitoring is still required during the main construction works. Poor weather conditions experienced during recent weeks have

resulted in unworkable ground conditions but the Council is routinely monitoring the situation with a view to recommencing the works on site at the earliest juncture.

Shannon Estuary Embankments Works. – As part of the ongoing repair works to infrastructure along the Shannon Estuary embankments, two existing sluices were repaired at Cooga and Covraghan, Kildysart. The works involved replacing sections of the existing culvert and constructing new headwalls and provision of new non return valves. The works will provide added protection to the agricultural lands during high tides and facilitate the discharge of storm water from the land drains following a flood or heavy rainfall event.

Remediation of sites containing ACM – Tender documents in respect of the appointment of operators for the acceptance and processing of Asbestos Containing Materials are now prepared and it is our intention to publish same in the coming weeks. Detailed design for the works contract involving the excavation, screening and transport of the ACM material is also nearing completion, with a view to issuing to the market in Q2/Q3 this year. Prior Information Notices were published on eTenders in recent weeks to facilitate earlier engagement with appropriate operators with a view to streamlining the procurement process. In the meantime, the sites continue to be routinely monitored and maintained as required by Council staff in accordance with our agreed approach following discussion and consultation with the EPA.

Shannon Town & Environs Flood Relief Scheme – The revised Hydrology Report has been issued by RPS, who are also currently updating the final version of the fluvial Hydraulic Report. The breach analysis modelling has been completed by the consultant and will soon be issued to the steering group. A joint desktop review of the updated embankment drawings/designs was carried out between the Council, OPW and RPS, following the March monthly Steering Group Meeting. RPS are currently addressing observations and issues highlighted during that review.

Seasonal environmental surveys are planned to commence in April at various locations around the scheme area. The final survey locations are currently being agreed with the RPS environmental team. Further information on the scheme is available on www.shannontownandenvironsfrs.com

Springfield, Clonlara FRS – Our Scheme Consultants, Byrne Looby & Partners, have now amended the Operation and Maintenance plan to incorporate new information learned following the flood events in January. A workshop involving the Shannon Municipal District Office, PMO, Office of the Public Works, Byrne Looby will be held in the coming weeks to finalise the O & M Plan. Ecology monitoring is ongoing. Water levels continue to be recorded by the ground investigation contractor.

Our intention to recommence works on site in late March have

now been pushed out to April following a period of unfavourable weather conditions. Outstanding works include the installation of the two permanent pumps, associated pipework, trash screen for the pump sump, landscaping, drainage channels and fencing. All works are expected to be completed by the end of July 2023.

West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 1: Kilrush to Kilkee) – The Topographical Surveyor is preparing to commence works on site in the next week or so and the survey will take approximately 8 weeks to complete. The findings of this survey will inform the Preferred Route Corridor. In tandem, landowner meetings and ecological surveys are ongoing, and our office is available to meet and discuss issues/concerns with any interested party or affected landowner.

West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 2: Ennis to Ennistymon) – Public Consultation 2 concluded in early March. The Consultation process was very productive. Clare County Council are now reviewing the feedback received and will include same in the consideration and development of the preliminary design and route corridor selection.

West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 3 & 4: Ennistymon to Miltown Malbay and Miltown Malbay to Moyasta) – The Tender Assessment for the Appointment of Technical Advisors for these sections are now complete following the recent public competition. Clare County Council is now following up on due process with a view to appointing the successful Consultant as soon as possible. Once appointed, the Design Team will meet with the immediate task to be arranged being to commence Public Consultation for the “Route Option Selection” phase.

Other Greenway Proposals – The PMO continues to engage with TII and other interested stakeholders to progress Greenway Proposals between Shannon and Bunratty/Sixmilebridge as well as being part of the Steering Group in the Waterways Ireland led proposal between Limerick/UL and Scarriff.

FIRE & BUILDING CONTROL SECTION

Recent Training Courses

The following brigade training courses were held during March:

- Emergency Services Driving Standard Training with independent testing by the RSA.

Message in a Bottle Launch

Ennis Lions Club formally launched “Message in a Bottle” initiative in County Clare on the 3rd March at Ennis Fire Station. It encourages people to keep their basic personal and medical details in a common place, where, in cases of emergency, the attending service teams can easily access them. The information required is very basic but can be lifesaving. The following were in attendance: Cllr Johnny Flynn, Clare Civil Defence, Clare County Fire & Rescue Service, National Ambulance Service, Alzheimer’s Society and Age Friendly Ireland.



West Clare Jobs Fair

West Clare Jobs Fair was held on Wednesday, 1st March, at Kilrush Dighub to promote West Clare as a great place to work and highlight opportunities in various industries. Members of the Fire Brigade and Human Resources Department attended. Prior to the Jobs Fair, leaflet drops took place in Kilrush town advertising vacant posts in Kilrush Fire Station. Members of the public showed interest in applying for fire-fighter positions on the day.



Class B Fire Appliances

Clare County Fire & Rescue Service took delivery of 2 No. Second-hand Class B Fire Appliances purchased from the United Kingdom. Refurbishment works were carried out on the appliances in order that the appliances would be very similar in layout to other appliances in the fleet and to allow for interoperability of appliances between different stations. Both appliances are now operational at Scarriff and Kilrush Fire Stations.

A pre-delivery inspection of a new Class B Fire Appliance took place at the body builder’s facility in Carlow. It is intended that the new appliance will be based at Ennistymon Fire Station.

Fire & Building Control Section Main Activities	Feb 2023	March 2023 (Up to 20.03.2023)	Year to Date
Number of Emergency Calls Attended	90	49	234
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Received	5	1	12
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Granted	6	3	14
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Invalidated	0	2	2
Number of Disability Access Certificates Received	1	0	6
Number of Disability Access Certificates Granted	3	3	8
Number of Commencement Notices Received	27	18	77
Number of Dangerous Structures/Places Complaints	0	1	1

(Note: In the March Monthly Report, the Feb figures related to 1st to 27th February due to timing of report)

CLARE CIVIL DEFENCE

Operational Duties

Civil Defence provided medical cover for the following events:

- Run Clare Run 10 km Run in Quilty.
- Allianz National Hurling Match (Clare vs Galway and Clare vs Cork) in Cusack Park.
- Clare Ladies Football Minor Match (Clare vs Limerick) in Miltown.

Civil Defence also provided the following operational duties:

- Members assisted Clare County Council with stewarding and medical cover for St Patrick's Day Parades in Ennis and Shannon.
- Members provided transport for a senior citizen from their home in Ennis to a hospital appointment at the Medical Assessment Unit in Ennis.

Members' Training & Professional Development

- Civil Defence Drone Team conducted a night time training exercise.
- Civil Defence continue to upskill members on severe weather off road driving skills.
- Members participated in a large scale medical training exercise based on events covered by Civil Defence during the year.



ENVIRONMENT

Environmental Awareness

An Taisce Green Schools

Clare County Council supports and encourages active participation in the An Taisce operated Green Schools programme. Our Environmental Awareness Officer (EAO) carries out Green School assessments and makes recommendations to An Taisce on the awarding of a Green Flag. In February our EAO meet with 10 schools to undertake assessment visits.

Community engagement

Clare County Council Greener Clare team upon request delivers presentations and talks across Clare. This is great opportunity for raising awareness within communities to an already available audience that would not necessarily attend an environmental talk. Our EAO met with the Quin ICA to deliver a comprehensive talk with 15 people attendance.

Communication campaigns

The Environment Section used print and social media campaigns in March to promote positive message on: Green Waste, Invasive Alien Species, Household Waste Byelaws, National Tree Week, Sustainable Gardening Course, Climate Hero Community Challenge, Stop Food Waste Day, World Wetlands Day.

Access to Information on the Environment (AIE)

In February the Environment Section received 2 new AIE request, we made a final decision on 3 and we received 1 appeal notification from Office of the Commissioner for Environmental Information. The response to the AIE requests ensures that the Council comply with our requirements under the Access to Information on the Environment (AIE) Regulations.

Water Enforcement and Laboratory Scientific Services

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

Water Enforcement Scientific Team	March 2023	Jan-March 2023
Planning applications (Domestic)	30	82
Planning applications (Large Developments)	2	3
Planning applications (Forestry)	10	21
Planning applications (Agriculture)	1	1
Inspection of Section 4 licenced premises	0	1
Domestic Wastewater Treatment Plant Inspections (NIP Plan)	30	30
Pollution complaints received	11	42
Warning & advisory letters issued	0	0
Enforcement actions (S12 issued or number of 'active' cases)	0	0
Private Commercial Drinking Water Supplies	5	10
Private/Public Group Water Scheme supplies	16	30
Rivers	50	67
Public Group Water Scheme Supplies	10	18

Lakes Monitoring Tender

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

Gardening

March is often described as the month of many weathers and this past month lived up to this reputation.

The Gardening Team had to contend with an extended dry period, followed by a severe temperature drop, snow, ice, and in recent days, intense and prolonged rainfall.

These varied weather conditions pose difficulties and risks to young plants and flowers that the team must ensure are

protected, as any unexpected frosts or heavy rainfall can damage and kill fragile young plants.

Young summer plants are currently being transplanted and grown in polytunnels to ensure a strong crop of flowers for planting in public spaces from May onwards.

The Team was also busy in early March in preparation for St. Patrick's Day festivities, with spring flowers and hanging baskets installed in advance of the parade in Ennis Town

The Gardening Team continues to work in collaboration with Ennis Municipal District in the planning and preparation for the 'Communities in Bloom' competition, with extra special efforts being made to ensure all scheduled and enhanced planting programmes will be in place in advance of judging during the Summer.



Waste Management

Recycling Centres

The Tender for Waste Management Services was published on the 09th March 2023. The competition is being run through the Office of Government Procurement and includes for the provision of skips along with the collection and processing of various waste streams at all Clare County Council Operated Recycling Facilities. Closing date for submissions is 14th April, 2023.

Inagh Landfill Ballyduffbeg

Approx 300m of site boundary fencing was replaced during the month of March. This was due to old failing fence posts which have now been replaced. Site staff monitor boundary fencing on a regular basis to comply with the operating licence.

Waste Enforcement

Waste Facility Permit / Certificate of Registration Applications
Waste Enforcement team continued to assess WFPs and COR applications in March.

Staff Training

Members of the Waste Enforcement team attended a Solid Fuels Regulations workshop in Portlaoise on 1st March.

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

A total of 3 Notices have been issued under Section 14 of the Waste Management Act 1996 in March. The Waste Enforcement Team continue to pursue open fines and investigate new complaints for evidence.

Environmental Monitoring (Illegal Dumping/Litter)

The Waste Enforcement Team continued to respond to waste and litter related complaints in February. A total of 98 complaints relating to litter and waste were received in February. All of these are currently being investigated, followed up and appropriate enforcement action will be taken.

Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI)

The Environment Section have submitted our Annual RMCEI Plan for 2023 to the Environmental Protection Agency. This provides a summary of all resources, inspections, monitoring and sampling and enforcement actions to be taken by the Environment Section for the year ahead.

Lifeguards

Interviews were held in March for Lifeguards for the summer Season 2023. We will be holding inductions shortly and preparing rosters.

WATER SERVICES

Annual Service Plan

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

Future Delivery of Water Services

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

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

Water Services Operations

Water and Wastewater Operations

The following statistics provide an indication of the level of activity / work being carried out by the water and wastewater teams throughout the county from 24th February 2023 up to and including 19th March 2023. The figures do not however reflect the time invested by the teams which is required to resolve each complaint/issue.

- 28 Customer Complaints were dealt with and closed out
- 0 Emergency Work Order were received during the timeframe
- 188 Reactive Maintenance Work Orders were dealt with and closed out
- 2 Customer Asset Flooding Work Orders were received during the period
- 67 Service Requests (SR's) were raised for Field Requests and Follow On Work Orders for Reactive Maintenance work
- 18 Outage Notices were placed on the IW portal during the period. 15 unplanned works for burst water mains, leak repairs and bulk meter replacement. There were 2 communication notifications issued for leak detection and step testing works. There was 1 planned outage for a new water connection.

Water Operations

The following is a summary of the outages dealt with in January 2023 and February 2023.

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

- 7th Feb. Bodyke Rd., Broadford and surrounding areas - Burst Water main
- 9th Feb. O'Callaghans Mills and surrounding areas – Burst water main
- 9th Feb. Clonlara Village and surrounding areas - Burst Water main
- 15th Feb. Doonaille Estate, O'Callaghans Mills – Burst water main
- 27th Feb. Liscullane, Kilgaboon, O'Callaghans Mills – Burst water main,

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

- 8th Feb. Hawthorns, Banner Ct. & Sycamore Dr., Ennis – Burst Watermain.
- 22nd Feb. Cluain Ros Luimneagh, Roslevan, Ennis – Burst Watermain
- Ongoing Meter Installations/Replacements for Non-Domestic Programme.

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

- 4th Feb. Cree Village and surrounds – Burst Water main.
- 9th Feb. Kilkee, Carrigaholt and surrounding areas - Doonaghboy Res cleaning
- 10th Feb. Carrigaholt and surrounding areas - Burst Water main
- 15th Feb. Cooraclare and surrounding areas - Burst Water main
- 16th Feb. Cooraclare and surrounding areas - Burst Water main
- 19th Feb. Doonbeg, Mountrivers, Kilrush and surrounding areas - Burst Water main
- 22nd Feb. Doonbeg, Mountrivers, Kilrush and surrounding areas – Pump failure Drumellihy
- 23rd Feb. Doonbeg, Mountrivers, Kilrush and surrounding areas – Pump failure Drumellihy
- Old Doolough WTP Network Flushing
- New Doolough WTP Network Flushing and Reservoir Cleaning
- Ongoing Meter Installations/Replacements for Non-Domestic Programme.

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

- 21st Feb. Lisdoonvarna and surrounding areas - Burst Water main
- 21st Feb. Belharbour and surrounding areas – Burst rising main
- Ongoing Meter Installations/Replacements for Non-Domestic Programme.

Major Outage **Shannon**:

- 9th Feb. Sixmilebridge/Clonlara Rd. and surrounding areas – Burst water main

Water Conservation

- Leak Detection Works – Mid Clare – Gort Rd., Clonroad, Ballybeg, Tulla Rd., and Barefield in Ennis DMA.
- Leak Detection Works – North Clare – Ennistymon.

- Leak Detection Shannon/East Clare. – Newmarket-on-Fergus, Sixmilebridge, Killaloe, O'Briensbridge and Scarriff ;, Shannon (various) and Shannon Ind. Est.
- Fix Operation – Various locations – Broadford, Castlquarter, O'Callaghan's Mills and Mountshannon.
- Larsens – Find crew – Kilmihil DMA
- SES - Find Crew – Quin DMA & Sixmilebridge DMA

Water and Wastewater Operations

The data set for the completion of the 2022 Annual Environmental Reports (AERs) was provided by Clare County Council to Uisce Éireann in January. This will allow Uisce Éireann to complete the AERs for 23 wastewater discharge licenced sites in Clare which will be submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by Q2 2023.

The EPA's "Office of Environmental Enforcement" carried out an inspection of Ennistymon's wastewater network in March 2023. Remedial actions are required by Uisce Éireann's on foot of the EPA's report.

Irish Water Capital programme

Kilrush Wastewater Treatment Plant

The new scheme will comprise of a new wastewater treatment plant near Skagh Point, a new rising main, additional storm storage and upgrade of the existing Francis St pumping station. Mechanical and electrical works continued.

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

Clarecastle Sewerage Scheme

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

Construction of the new pumping facility has been completed at Quay Road. On the 15th of March pumping of wastewater from Clarecastle to Clareabbey Wastewater Treatment Plant commenced. The routine discharge of raw sewage to the River Fergus at the Quay in Clarecastle has ceased.

Liscannor Wastewater Treatment Plant

The scheme now consists of a new wastewater treatment plant at Corcomroe, a pumping station adjacent to John P Holland Park, rising main, gravity sewer and connection to the existing outfall. Treatment of wastewater is continuing.

Ballyvaughan Wastewater Treatment Plant

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

Kilkee Wastewater Treatment Plant

A new wastewater treatment plant, pumping station and rising main are planned for Kilkee. It is planned to continue the use of the existing sea outfall at Intrinsic Bay. Design of the treatment

plant and pump station is ongoing. Preparation of the planning application documents is continuing.

Ennistymon and Lahinch Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

Work on selection of an exact site, pipeline route, detailed design, land acquisition and a planning application will commence in early 2023. Uisce Éireann has given approval for the appointment of Consultants to produce a marine model.

Newmarket on Fergus Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

It is proposed to construct additional treatment facilities at the treatment plant and a new 400mm diameter rising main which would outfall to the Rine River thereby ceasing discharge of treated effluent from the existing wastewater treatment plant to the Lough Gash turlough. The planning application was received by Clare County Council on 5th December, 2022 and a request for further information was received by Uisce Éireann the 7th February, 2023. Preparation of the further information submission is ongoing. Construction is anticipated to commence in 2024.

Kilfenora Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

Mechanical and electrical works continued at the WWTP and at the percolation area. Pre commissioning checks were undertaken. The overall scheme is due for completion in 2023.

Miltown Malbay Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

The upgrade project is now at the investment planning stage. This scheme is now in the Early Contractor Involvement programme. Uisce Éireann held a workshop on the 14th of March to discuss options. Uisce Éireann has given approval for the appointment of Consultants to produce a marine model.

Doonbeg Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

This scheme is in the Early Contractor Involvement programme. Uisce Éireann has given approval for the appointment of Consultants to produce a marine model.

Remedial Action Lists Water Treatment Plant Upgrades

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

1. **New Doolough Water Treatment Plant** – This plant is the regional treated water source for West Clare covering the large geographical area in the county. The project has modernised the treatment technology at the plant which will allow it to achieve the desired quality of output during events which cause high turbidity at the source. The main upgrade works are now complete and operational, and the testing of the plant has been

completed successfully. Resolution of snagging issues and production of the safety file is underway.

2. **Corofin Water Treatment Plant** – this plant provides water to the town of Corofin. The project will modernise the treatment processes on site which will enable production of water to the desired standard during high turbidity events in the source lake. Works to upgrade the water treatment plant are now completed with commissioning and testing at final report stage.
3. **Ballymacraven Water Treatment Plant** – this plant provides water to the North Clare Region, including Ennistymon, Lahinch, Lisdoonvarna, Doolin and Ballyvaughan. Phase 1 of this will modernise the water treatment processes at the plant with Phase 2 delivering the sludge handling line under a separate contract. Phase 1 Work has commenced with the construction of a new third water clarifier underway, with base poured and in place and wall pours complete. This upgrade is programmed to be complete by Q4 2023.

Rockmount Water Treatment Plant/Reservoir

These works involve the decommissioning of the existing water treatment tanks and installation of a new concrete storage reservoir and associated siteworks. The Rockmount area is supplied with treated water from the old Doolough Water Treatment plant and the existing Rockmount plant no longer operates. Construction and testing of the new reservoir has been successfully completed. Demolition and removal of the old tank is now finished with site landscaping works and snagging to be completed in the coming weeks.

Clareabbey Wastewater Treatment Plant Inlet & Storm Tank Upgrade Works

Work at this location includes the construction of a new inlet works and screens, and a new storm tank. All civil and mechanical and electrical works are complete with commissioning completed. The process proving period has been completed and the new works are now handed over to council operations staff.

Clonroadmore & Clareabbey Wastewater Treatment Plants

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

Ennis Drainage Area Plan

This project involves the gathering of all available data on the wastewater network in Ennis and surveying and monitoring of flows in the network. This information will be used to build a

hydraulic model of the network. The hydraulic model can be used to model future growth in the town and accurately identify where upsizing of pipework/pumping infrastructure might be required. It will also be used to identify where groundwater is infiltrating into the network adding unnecessary additional loading. It will allow Irish Water to have confidence in obtaining the best value for money on network improvement. The consultant is reviewing the available data and preparing a surveying contract for Ennis wastewater network. The initial stage workshop has been held and feedback from Council operations staff provided to the consultant.

Ballycannon and Elton Court Sewerage Pumping Station Upgrade

A project to upgrade the pumping facilities at Elton Court and to provide the required replacement infrastructure to allow the decommissioning of the existing Ballycannon wastewater treatment facility is underway. The construction of a new storm water holding tank and new wastewater pumping chamber on the existing pumping station site at Elton Court is underway, with civil works expected to be completed mid-April and mechanical and electrical works to follow. This will improve the capacity for pumping wastewater to the Limerick main drainage network. A new rising main from the existing Ballycannon plant to the Elton Court site and new pumping facilities at the Ballycannon treatment plant will then be constructed. When completed this will allow for the decommissioning and demolition of the Ballycannon WWTP. It is expected that the upgrade will be fully completed by Q1 2024.

Asset Transfer

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

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

- **Report prepared / Pending/ Internal Query (5 assets)** – These consist of assets for which a report is being prepared or which need further investigation or information / approval from another council section to proceed.
- **National Special Projects Office (NSPO) (65 assets)**– This is a department within Irish Water dealing with special projects which includes facilitating the Asset Transfers from Local Authorities. The majority of assets in this category are folios under third party ownership but where long standing use and some evidence of previous land dealing is present. Irish Water are now advocating that property in long term operational possession but not in the Council

name be obtained by the adverse possession process. Circular L1 2022 has confirmed department support for this approach. All assets which have not yet transferred will be examined to see if they can be progressed using this method.

- **Property Registration Authority Ireland (0 assets)**–At present there are no assets submitted to the PRAI to be subdivided.
- **Outstanding assets to be reported on (24 assets)** – These are 3rd Party/Unregistered assets. To transfer these, detailed searches through historical Councils records are required in order to submit to Irish Water for their consideration on the best approach to proceed with. Many of the remaining assets have been examined and various routes being explored to close these out.

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

Rural Water Programme

The rehabilitation of 4.2km of mains on the Ballycar GWS Mains, funded under the 2019-2021 Multi Annual Rural Water Programme, is now complete and operational with old mains decommissioned in mid March. The resurfacing of the road has yet to be completed and this is programmed to be undertaken in late April / early May allowing for required temperatures to complete the recycling and surface dressing of the road in its entirety. All works are funded at 100% to facilitate the progression of the Taking in Charge of the scheme.

The Clohanes GWS is set to undertake the replacement of 600m of mains rehab on a section of the scheme which was subject to ongoing leakage and resultant outages. The ROL for the works has now been granted allowing for works to commence on the w/o 20th March. These works are funded at 100% with a view to progressing the Taking in Charge of the scheme in its entirety.

Although a contractor has been appointed to the works a start date is awaited for the community connection at Bartleystown which involves the extension of the existing mains by 70m to serve 2no additional dwellings.

The Clare Rural Water Programme still awaits the request for bid submissions from the Department for the 2022-2025 Multi Annual Rural Water Programme. This is now nearing 15months on from the commencement date of the programme. The significant delay is leading to frustration amongst GWS's wishing to seek funding and undertake necessary capital works under the programme.

The Leitrim Shyan GWS (Kilmihill – Cree) and the Castlecrine

No.2 GWS were successfully transferred to the Uisce Eireann public network on the 1st March. There is ongoing communications with a number of other GWS's wishing to advance a taking in charge applications.

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

Under the 'Grant for the Improvement of a Private Water Supply to a House' 13no applications have been received to date in 2023.

CLIMATE

Energy

Energy Management around the Local Authority is monitored on a continuous basis. Clare County Council has achieved the ISO50001 Energy Management Standard and is recertified for the next 3 years following an audit in November 2022. In the midst of high energy prices, it remains a priority of the council to improve on Energy Efficiency on a continual basis.

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

Energy Summary 2022:

- Energy Consumption for 2022 was 3% lower than 2021. This is a positive result given the return to offices for staff and increase in public lights infrastructure (250). The reduction in energy use equates to a financial saving of approximately €117,400

- Clare County Council is presently at 34% improvement in energy efficiency from a 2009 baseline and still on target to meet its 50% target by 2030.

Reduce your use Campaign

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

SEAI has chosen Clare County Council as a "mini case study" to demonstrate public sector improvements in energy performance.

REDUCE YOUR USE
COMHAIRLE CONTAE AN CHLAIR
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL

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

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

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

38 buildings ranging from heritage to modern

Heating and lighting

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

Control and scheduling

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

Facilities assessments

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

Clare County Council Building in Ennis with no lights on!

Energy Awareness Day, held quarterly

seai SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AUTHORITY

Riailtús na hÉireann Commissioners of Ireland

OPW

Optimising Power @ Work

Climate Action Plan

Evidence Base for Climate Action Plan

In line with Departmental guidelines, work is ongoing in relation to the establishing of baseline information with regard to the Local Authority and the County. Mitigation Assessments are complete at Tier 1 level for the County of Clare.

A Tier 3 emissions report for the Decarbonisation Zone is proceeding with an expected finish at the end of March 2023. Mitigation Assessments approximate the level and sectoral areas within which emissions are released to the atmosphere.

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

A Briefing on the Climate Action Plan was given to members of the Social Development SPC on March 7th. This provided an opportunity to outline the statutory need for a Climate Action Plan and provide an overview of the timeline involved.

Community Climate Action Programme

The Community Climate Action Programme will be rolled out over the coming months. A fund of €572,000 is proposed for County Clare. This programme arises out of the Climate Action Fund and is led by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications via the Local Authorities.

The overall objective of the Programme is to support and empower communities, in partnership with their Local Authority, to shape and build low carbon, sustainable communities in a coherent way to contribute to national climate and energy targets. The Programme aims to support small and large, rural and urban communities to take climate action. This programme supports direct engagement with communities to both promote and assist in the scale up of community climate action from the respective starting points of the communities. In that regard, Clare County Council is now recruiting for the role of Community Climate Action Officer.

In addition to providing funding opportunities for relevant community projects and initiatives, the Programme also aims to provide education and information to communities to help them develop projects.

ENNIS MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



Locals and visitors lined the parade route early, to secure a prime viewing spot and enjoy the pre-parade entertainment provided by Ennis Gospel Choir & Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann. There was a brilliant atmosphere at Áras Contae an Chláir, while over 1,700 parade participants joined their groups. Ennis Rugby celebrated their centenary, with a sea of red at the beginning of the parade, 3 generations of members marching together. They were led out by Mayor Cllr Clare Colleran Molloy, their own Jimmy O’Brien (Grand Marshall) and the other two Grand Marshalls PJ Purcell and Aisling Rynne in the horse drawn carriage. There was music, colour and huge representation from community groups and sporting organisations. Elected members of Ennis MD were out in force as well as local Oireachtas members to cheer the groups on.

The following groups were awarded prizes as follows:

Best Visual Spectacle (€250)	Clarecastle Show Society
Best Musical Entrant (€250)	Ennis Brass Band
Best Interpretation of Theme (€250)	Clare Immigrant Support Centre
Most Environmentally Aware Entrant (€250)	Bus Siúlóide Gaelscoil Mhíchíl Chíosóg
Overall Winner (€500)	Ennis National School

ENNIS MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



MD Works – Visual & Safety Enhancements

There were a number of remedial works carried out including the removal of a collapsed wall and illegal dumping on the laneway between Francis Street and Clon Road, making this popular route accessible to pedestrians again. Works were carried out to rebuild 'Crows bridge' at Doora on the

Quin Road after the bridge wall was struck by a vehicle. The Gort Ros Leaman Estate on the Tulla Road benefited from the installation of three ramps to assist with traffic calming. A ramp was also installed at the interface of the River walk and the Quin road, facilitating access for all cyclists and those with mobility issues.



UKRAINIAN SERVICES DEVELOPMENT

National Situation

A total of 77,300 temporary protection orders have been granted as of 10th March, 2023. With a rolling seven-day average of 116, down slightly on the previous report. There are 60,500 people accommodated and 15,100 children have been enrolled in school.

The trends are consistent with the proportion of females arriving standing at 62% and the numbers of employments being 17,818.

The Community Response Forum in Clare has continued to meet on a bi-weekly basis but a decision was taken at the last meeting (23/03/23) to put the meetings onto a monthly schedule. The location of multi-occupancy accommodation in the county remains broadly unchanged with services wrapped around those locations.

The members of the countywide forum have been working closely together over the last 12 months on this particular crisis (and previously through the Covid-19 crisis) and the response is steady. It makes sense now to let the member organisations and groups get on with their work and for the meetings to be held less frequently – noting that a meeting can be held at short notice should the need arise.

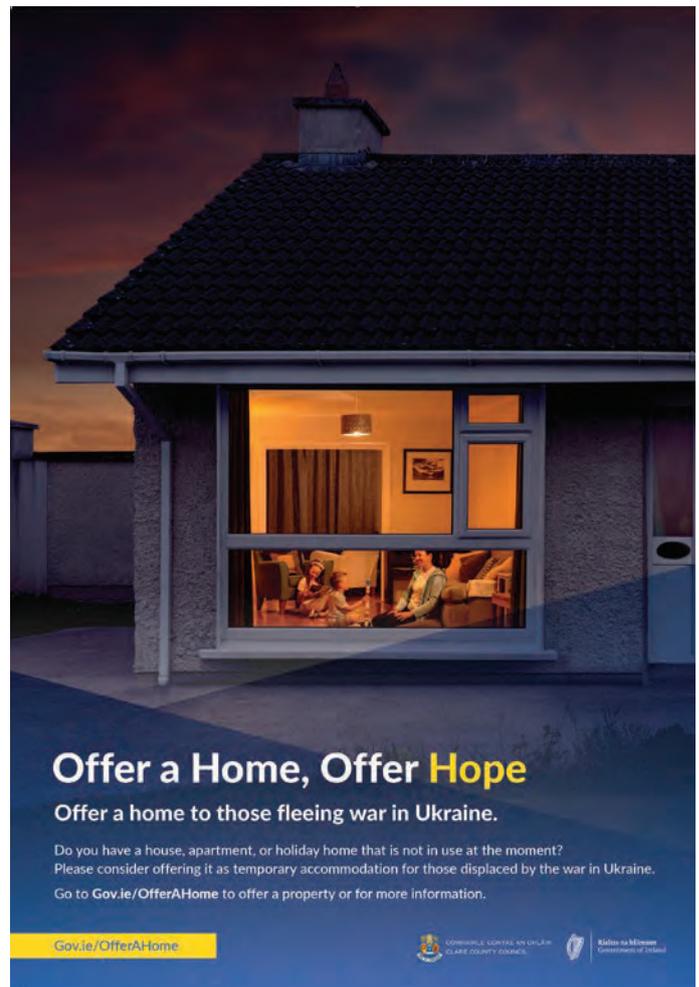
There were several local meetings held during February and into March in relation to the Community Recognition Fund 2023. It is our intention to re-engage with local meetings after the Easter break.

County Clare

The national figures show that County Clare is now hosting 4,374 Ukrainian beneficiaries – There is a slight month-on-month rise but no new multi-occupancy accommodation coming on-stream. The county ranks 6th nationally.

We are aware of some contracts of multi-occupancy accommodation ending in the coming weeks. While the Department of Children and Integration (DCEDIY) has the lead in the provision of such accommodation we have taken the opportunity to engage with accommodation providers to identify alternative local solutions and have passed the relevant information back to DCEDIY.

It is our objective to be of assistance by providing local insights while ensuring that the people who have been living in the county for the last 12 months continue to live here where they are integrating with services and the daily lives of our communities.



Offer a Home

Clare County Council has received 97 offers of unoccupied homes under the 'Offer a Home' scheme since its launch in December 2022. All 97 homeowners have been contacted and 91 homes have been assessed so far with the remaining home assessments scheduled.

Of the homes that have been assessed 7 are not yet available and 19 have been withdrawn from the scheme as they were either unsuitable or the homeowner had a change in circumstances. We have successfully matched 42 of the homes and have accommodated 151 people who were living in hotel or multi-unit accommodation in the locality.

The homes are mainly located along the West Coast with few properties being offered in the larger urban centres such as Ennis and Shannon. However, there is still a large interest in the scheme and homes are continually being pledged. James Connaughton, our Relationship Manager supported by Oisín O'Donnell, endeavours to match families to homes in the areas they are already living and integrated.

Many of the families have children attending local schools and many of the adults are accessing adult education courses or are working in the locality themselves. Homeowners can register their unoccupied homes on the designated website: www.offerahome.ie or by contacting Clare County Council at offerahome@clarecoco.ie.

Box File Share

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

This sharing platform will be managed in-house and will enable all forum members share and access up-to-date information on services, projects, events, workshops, etc that are taking place in the community. This project is being supported through our ICT Department with the assistance of our Freedom of Information Officer.

Short-term Emergency Temporary Accommodation

The Ukrainian Services Development Team are finalising a Short-term Temporary Accommodation Plan in the event of a hotel or multi-unit accommodation becoming unusable or in the event of any unforeseen change in circumstance.

We are aware that contracts in large accommodation centres may, in some instances, be coming to an end and while the onward provision of accommodation lies with the Department of Children & Integration, we recognise the importance of being prepared to assist should a short-term need (up to 72 hrs.) arise locally.

We have been assisted in this project by our Fire Services Department, Civil Defence and Housing. Community facilities have been identified and contacted to ask for their assistance in the event that we have a short-term requirement – this generosity and good will in our communities is always appreciated and is to be lauded.

Over the last few weeks, the team has been engaging with accommodation providers who have various accommodation solutions in place but which has not been in use. Understanding the options available in this space allows us to pass practical 'move-on' solutions to DCEDIY in the event that other accommodation comes to an end.

The thinking behind this is to keep those already in the county – i.e. those working locally, with children in school, communities providing wrap-around – with a view to supporting integration.

Community Recognition Funding 2023

On 25th January, 2023, the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) announced the launch of the 'Community Recognition Fund 2023' targeted at projects in communities hosting Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection and/or International Protection applicants: To recognise their contribution to the emergency response. Full details can be found on www.gov.ie.

Following an intensive few weeks of engagement to raise awareness of the scheme and the tight turnaround times, we received 224 expressions of interest to the value of €12.6m towards projects worth €16.7m.

130 projects were submitted to the Department as part of the Clare County Council expression under the scheme and within the funding threshold of €2.9m available to Clare. There were 84 projects proposed under the equipment element of the grant (Stream 1) and 46 projects submitted under Stream 2.

If there is any further opportunity to submit projects we will revert to the applications list. We recognise that there will be communities, groups and clubs who are disappointed that their project was not put forward in the primary list and we acknowledge that many of these other projects are also worthy of funding.

The level of interest in this fund could not have been predicted but it highlights the level of response and activation across all communities in Clare. The level of interest also highlights the importance of continued resourcing and the need for sector specific funding to meet the diverse need.

Local authorities were asked to submit expressions of interest to the DRCD by 15th March, 2023. 60% of the funding must be drawn down by Clare County Council by October 2023.



PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGIC PROJECTS

Roche Masterplan

Clare County Council continues to work with Roche Ltd on the development of a Masterplan for the Roche site in Clarecastle. The appointed consultants are currently completing a traffic management assessment around the site with potential end-use under consideration.

TOWN CENTRE FIRST / CROÍ CONÁITHE

Sixmilebridge Masterplan

Following on from the last Town Team meeting held on Tuesday, 14th March, the Town Team for Sixmilebridge has been formalised. The Town Team will act as a steering group in the ongoing development of the Town Centre First Masterplan for Sixmilebridge whilst also leading out on the delivery of key proposals and actions that that will be set out in the Masterplan, with the ongoing support of Clare County Council.

With the Draft Masterplan going on public display from Friday 31st March until Friday 21st April, it is anticipated that the Integrated Design Team, Allies and Morrison will meet with internal stakeholders of Clare County Council on Wednesday 05th April and Sixmilebridge Town Team on Tuesday 18th April, to present the strategy.

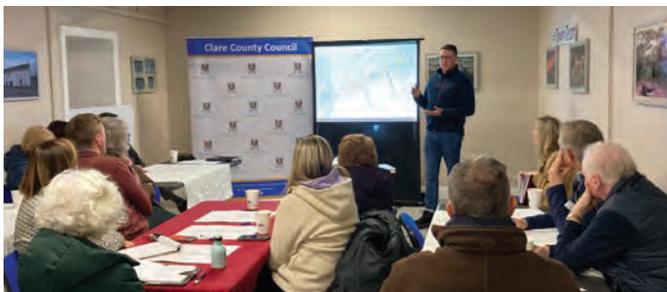
Shannon Town Centre Masterplan

The Town Centre First team, in collaboration with the Shannon Municipal District, is engaged in ongoing discussions with land owners and key stakeholders as part of the implementation of the Shannon Town Centre Masterplan and funding streams are being identified to enable delivery of a number of projects, including the One Shannon Hub, Public Realm improvements and a new Main Street.

Lisdoonvarna Vision

Lisdoonvarna has been selected as one of the five town centre regeneration projects nationally selected under the Reimagine Hometown Architect Initiative, with a focus on setting out a visionary blueprint for Lisdoonvarna. The design team is being led by Pritzker Prize-winning architect and Lisdoonvarna native Shelley McNamara of Grafton Architects, together with Common Knowledge and ACT Studio. The IAF's Reimagine programme, with its focus on placemaking, further enhances the Town Centre First approach and the work of local groups towards making their towns attractive places to live, work and visit.

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



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



Part VIII Planning Application

The Part VIII Planning Consent Application is being prepared with respect to the renovation and refurbishment of a property solution and for the installation of specialist maritime infrastructure to facilitate the development of the maritime training centre in Kilrush. The preparation of drawings, planning and environmental reports together with acquiring the appropriate letters of consent to bring the proposal to application stage are all currently underway. It is anticipated that consent will be sought in the coming weeks. The Elected Members will be briefed on the project ahead of the planning consent process and the public/stakeholders will also have an opportunity to make submissions on the proposal once advertised.

The Project Delivery Team are currently dealing with outstanding issues associated with the property solution for the training centre and at this point the specific site details are commercially sensitive. Following negotiations with property owners, the Elected Members will be fully briefed on the property solutions identified.

Advisory Board of Clare MEZ DAC

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

Separately, Clare County Council has engaged in discussions with ESB at a local and national level with a view to becoming a Project Partner Clare MEZ DAC. ESB, given their ambition to establish Green Atlantic at Moneypoint, together with two Floating Offshore Wind Farms off the County Clare coastline can play a very significant role in providing expertise, advice and guidance to the establishment of the Kilrush Maritime Training Centre.

The Project Delivery Team attended the recent meeting of the Mid-West Renewable Energy Training and Education Cluster where a presentation was given by Frank Emil Moen of Energy Innovation- Norway. 'Energy Innovation' is an innovation, research, education, and consultancy centre of excellence in the offshore wind sector. Energy Innovation has been instrumental in the establishment of the Norwegian Offshore Wind innovation cluster with more than 360 member companies. Energy Innovation is developing a franchise for Global Wind

Organisation training and wind tech education centres around the world. The first of these centres has just opened in New York with their booking system is now live for courses - Course calendar | Energy Innovation (energyinnovationglobal.com).

Some 75km south of Stavanger at Edgersund Energy Hub, Energy Innovation is a centre for education & certification, green tech development and digitisation, designed specifically for the needs of the wind energy industry. The Project Delivery Team have made direct contact with the CEO Frank Emil Moen whom has also expressed an interest in the Kilrush Maritime Training Centre and the Project Delivery Team has requested a direct meeting with Energy Innovation over the coming weeks to investigate possible partnerships that might be possible.

Following on from an introduction facilitated by Councillor Ian Lynch, the Project Delivery Team has established contact with Loic Guyon the French Consulate General with respect to re-establishing the twinning of Kilrush with the Breton town of Plouzané. The European Institute of Marine Studies is based in Plouzané together with the R&D hub that they have established. The Project Team will further liaise with the French Consulate to establish potential linkages between the Institute of Marine Studies and the Maritime Training Centre together with potential sources of funding which may be available through the Twinning instrument with respect to the Kilrush MTC.

Funding

Clare County Council have commenced negotiations with respect to the purchase of the two property solutions associated with the project. The RRDF funding allocation (€3.5 million) for Kilrush Maritime Training Centre has provided for the purchase of these property solutions. The Council are also exploring other potential sources of funding to close the remaining significant funding gap as identified through the Business Plan and associated Financial Analysis. This is critical in realising the project in a timely manner. The Enterprise Ireland Funding allocation of €1.75 million includes a schedule with respect to the allocation of capital funds towards the purchase of infrastructure required as part of the training centre. An update as to the status of the project was provided to the REDF panel on 23rd February, 2023. The panel will require a full presentation and update on how the project will progress at its next meeting.



Wind turbine generator boarding ladder will be replicated on the quay wall

FORWARD PLANNING

Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029

At a Special Council meeting on the 9th March 2023, the Elected Members of Clare County Council agreed by resolution to make the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029. This represented the final considerations of the Elected Members in what has been a lengthy and challenging two and a half year plan-making process, and is one of the most important functions of the Elected Members in setting out the overall vision for the proper planning and sustainable development of the functional area of Clare County Council for the next six years. The Plan sets out the planning policy framework including the land-use zoning for all settlements within the County (with the exception of Shannon which will be subject of a new Local Area Plan to commence soon).

The plan-making process commenced in September 2020 during the Covid – 19 Pandemic which was a time of profound change for everyone, facing new and unforeseeable challenges. By adapting social and work practises and a shift to virtual mediums of communication, the approach to public, stakeholder and Elected Member engagement became the norm through the virtual world of Zoom, Teams, social media and the Council’s County Development Plan webpage which became essential mediums to reach out to all sectors and communities. Engagement in this way with young people in particular, through secondary and primary school projects designed by the Forward Planning Team, was welcomed by schools, the Elected Members and commended by the Office of the Planning Regulator as an innovative and effective approach to reaching out to young people and facilitating their participation in the process. The approach towards maximising engagement, which is central to the plan-making process, is reflected in the almost 1,400 written submissions received during the public consultation stages, the numerous workshops held with the Elected Members to facilitate participation and input in key policy making and the on-going communication with national and regional policy and infrastructure providers, all being essential to delivering a robust County Development Plan that will serve the County and its communities for the next six years.

Key themes of the Plan are an increased need to identify opportunities where County Clare can deliver on climate change targets, improved public transport, high quality public realm developments, as well as improved blue and green amenity spaces. The sustainable growth of the County’s towns and villages and strengthening of rural communities is also a particular focus of the Plan, as well as the physical, economic and social development of the County having regard to the national and European environmental legislative requirements.



The Plan consists of 10 volumes, which include:

- Volume 1 – Written Statement
- Volume 2 – Strategic Maps
- Volume 3a – Ennis Municipal District Written Statement and Settlement Maps
- Volume 3b – Shannon Municipal District Written Statement and Maps
- Volume 3c – Killaloe Municipal District Written Statements and Settlement Maps
- Volume 3d – West Clare Municipal District Written Statements and Settlement Maps
- Volume 4 – Record of Protected Structures

- Volume 5 – Clare Renewable Energy Strategy
- Volume 6 – Clare Wind Energy Strategy
- Volume 7 – Clare Retail Strategy
- Volume 8 – Clare Housing Strategy
- Volume 9 – Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary (SIFP)
- Volume 10 – Natura Impact Report (Appropriate Assessment)
- Volume 10a – Environmental Report (Strategic Environmental Assessment)
- Volume 10b – SEA Non-Technical Summary
- Volume 10c – SEA Statement
- Volume 10c – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

The Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 will come into effect on 20th April, 2023. An interim version of the Plan is currently in preparation and will be available on the Council's website prior to it coming into effect.



Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT)

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

Clare County Council is responsible for preparing maps that show the zoned lands which fall within the scope of the RZLT and to consider submissions that are received during the consultation process and to make any resultant changes to the zoning that may arise. In this regard, a Draft Map, prepared by the Forward Planning Team was placed on public display from 1st November 2022 to 1st January 2023. During this time, a significant number of enquiries were made from landowners and the public and a total of 63 submissions were received. All submissions have been published on the Council website.

The Forward Planning Team are currently in the process of assessing and making a determination on all the submissions received. The Council is required to notify those who made submissions requesting their lands to be removed from the scope of the RZLT, of its decision, by 1st April 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 May 2023.

Flexible Outdoor Structures

Clare County Council has received funding under the Outdoor Public Space Scheme as promoted by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. This funding stream asks us to reimagine how we use our outdoor public spaces and proposes a series of flexible outdoor structures which can be erected in outdoor locations during one-off events. The structures are designed to animate the streetscape, and will have incorporated lighting to create a presence in the street at night. Alan Meredith Studio Ltd have been appointed to fabricate the structures. A prototype of the structures was delivered and erected at the Áras Contae an Chláir in early March. An inspection was conducted by the project team and the fabrication of the remaining structures will commence in April. The fabrication process will conclude in mid-2023.



Right: Prototype of the Flexible Outdoor Structures at Áras Contae an Chláir.

The Manchester Martyrs' Monument

The Manchester Martyrs' Monument in Kilrush was recently restored by Clare County Council with grant aid from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage under the Historic Structures Fund and with the support of Cllr. Ian Lynch. The project was managed by the Planning section of Clare County Council with input from Kilrush & District Historical Society and Kilrush Town Team. The restoration of the monument is now complete. Clare County Council have commissioned Kilkee Forge to fabricate interpretative signage to raise awareness of this highly significant cultural monument. The interpretative signage was installed in March and will be a valuable addition to the heritage-led tourism offering in Kilrush.



Interpretation signage installed at the Manchester Martyrs' Monument.

HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY

Heritage Council funding for the implementation of the Clare Heritage Plan

The Heritage Council have funded three projects as part of the Clare Heritage Plan supports as follows:

1. The preparation and public consultation of the Clare Heritage Plan 2023-2029
2. The impact of Climate Change and the risks from sea level rise to heritage sites at Loophead Decarbonisation Zone.
3. Clare Community Archaeological Scheme.

Clare Creative Ireland funding for Heritage

Clare Creative Ireland have allocated funding for two Heritage projects.

1. The 10th Reading the Local Landscape course which is underway at present at the County Museum in Ennis where there are 16 participants undertaking the course.
2. The continuation of the second year of the Cillíní survey in Clare. It is planned that this survey will be completed and launched on the Clare Community Archival Network website (iCAN) this year.

Clare iCAN

An initial training session took place in Ennis with the three new Clare Community Archival Network (iCAN) groups, Kilkeedy, Clonlara and Tulla with Clare County Council Heritage Officer, the project co-ordinator Lorna Elms and IT trainer Hassan Dabbagh. The three new Clare Community Archival Network (iCAN) groups received initial iCAN core training on how to set up their individual websites, add material, photographs, text and manage their community websites.

Sustainable Gardening Course

The Heritage Officer in collaboration with the Environment Awareness Officer and the Healthy County Coordinator are able to support a Sustainable Gardening Course for the public to be held in Miltown Malbay. This one-day course covers gardening topics including; organic gardening, pollinator planting, veg growing, mini pond building, pruning, cuttings and much more.

Black Poplars in Clarecastle

Sapling material was collected by Bernard Carey, a forester from East Clare, from two very old trees in Clarecastle with assistance from NPWS, Clare County Council and the local community. Bernard is now attempting to grow a plantation of the rare Black Poplars from both Clare and elsewhere and wishes to establish a Black Poplar abortorium, so as to conserve this species in Ireland. He is looking for a site in Clare to grow the Black Poplar saplings and to propagate stock from the few

known trees remaining in the country.

Right: Eric Shaw, Clarecastle community group, forester Bernard Carey and Congella McGuire when the saplings from the Black Poplar trees were collected.



DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

The table below shows the number of planning applications processed during the month of March 2023 (figures to March 20th incl), together with the year to date figures.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS	March 2023 (to 20/3/2023)	Year to date 2023
No. of planning applications received	85	210
No. of Planning Decisions made	35	173
No. of decisions notified by An Bord Pleanála	2	4
No. of pre-planning enquiries received	18	56
No. of Section 5 applications	4	18
No. of Section 97 Exemption Cert applications (in respect of Part V of the Planning & Dev Act 2000)	1	10
Submissions received regarding Compliance	19	65

TAKING IN CHARGE OF HOUSING ESTATES

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



a Business, Finance, Digital Marketing, Export Development and Brexit. In March over 20 mentoring applications have been assigned. Through our March Business Advice clinics, a further 26 businesses were met.

- Training: LEO Clare continued to see strong demand for online training support offering during March as our new programme for 2023 began. Along with our specialised Local Enterprise Week events LEO Clare held a total of 25 training programmes in March. The main topics of interest to County Clare enterprises were Start Your Own Business Programmes, Digital Marketing Programmes, Management Development Programmes, Cyber Security and Human Resource Workshops.

Local Enterprise Week 2023

Local Enterprise Office Clare hosted seventeen events through Local Enterprise Week 2023 (March 6th -10th) with 370 participants taking part.

Events included Supporting Businesses in the challenge of recruitment, Identifying the Importance of Digital to Business and a female focused event on International Women’s Day centered around Pitching to Win. LEO Clare Business advisors also visited hubs and area offices during the week to provide one to one business advice clinics.

National Enterprise Awards 2023

Wild Irish Seaweeds took the top prize of €3,000 and will now represent Local Enterprise Office Clare the 23rd National Enterprise Awards in Dublin on the 1st June. The County Awards took place as the closing event of Local Enterprise Week with awards presented by Cathaoirleach Tony O’ Brien.

The business produces seaweed products for the following industries: Food Ingredients, Cosmetic, Nutraceuticals, Retail, Food Service, Horticulture, and Agriculture. They have ranges of seaweed products for all these sectors exporting Organic Seaweed to 18 different countries.

Other winners at the Clare Final of the National Enterprise Awards held at the Old Ground Hotel, Ennis included:

- McConnell Woollen Mills, Killaloe – Best Export Award
- Palm Free Irish Soap, Tuamgraney – One to Watch Award
- INDIGO, Shannon – Best Productivity Award
- IFF Plastics, Cree – Best Sustainability/ Green Award.

PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

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

	March 2023	2023 to date
New complaints received	14	19
New files opened	7	10
Files closed	3	8
Warning Letters issued	10	25
Enforcement Notice issued	9	12
Legal	0	0

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

- The Trading Online Voucher Scheme, which provides grant support to small businesses to develop an ecommerce website, has continued to see strong interest. In March, a further application was approved bring the year total to eight. Three grants were drawn down in March.
- Mentoring: LEO Clare has continued with a strong requirement for all of our Mentoring Options including mentoring in Starting



L-R: Cllr Tony O’Brien, Cathaoirleach. Clare County Council, Gerard & Eileen Talty, Wild Irish Seaweeds, and Padraic McElwee, Head of Enterprise, LEO Clare.

Student Enterprise Awards

Local Enterprise Office Clare have announced that teenage entrepreneurs from St. Joseph’s School, Spanish Point and CBS Ennistymon will represent Clare at this year’s Student Enterprise Programme National Finals on Friday, 5th May. The Finals make a return to Croke Park for the first time since 2019. The students in the junior and intermediate categories all took part in the Clare Final on 8th March 2023, which was held at the West County Hotel, Ennis. The senior competition is rescheduled to a later date.



L-R: Junior Winner (West Clare Cookbook, St Joseph’s Spanish Point), Padraic McElwee, Head of Enterprise, LEO Clare, Intermediate Winner (The Upcycling Company, CBS Ennistymon) and Cathaoirleach Tony O’Brien, Clare County Council.

Deed of Right of Way / Wayleave signed	0	0	6
Deed of Rectification / Variation signed	0	1	10
Allotment Agreements signed	1	39	39

Grazing of Lands 2023

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

Shannon Allotments

Works were recently completed on reducing the height of the trees along the boundary in order to improve levels of sunlight on the overall site. With the assistance of the Design Office team and the Shannon MD staff, a few loads of topsoil were delivered to site, which is greatly appreciated by the allotment holders.

Casual Trading

A total of five casual trading licences for events were issued in March. These included the Kilrush Horse Fair days.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Property Transactions and Conveyancing

The Table below shows the number of property transactions completed by Property Management Unit in March 2023 (up to 20th March), 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	March 2023	Year to date 2023	Full year 2022
Lease / Sub Lease of Property / Building	1	1	4
Licence to use property / building	0	2	13
Grazing Agreement for Lands	0	13	22
Deed of Transfer signed	2	4	19
Contract for Sale signed	0	1	2

DERELICT SITES

To date in 2023, a further eleven new 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.

We are also seeing the outcome of sales agreed in 2022, with planning applications for refurbishment increasing and some works commencing on individual properties. We are also advising owners of residential properties of the grant that is available for refurbishing vacant and derelict properties to residential use



– see further information below. With time and effort, working with owners, financial institutions and other departments, there are definitely options for positive re-development and re-vitalisation of many such derelict sites.

Since Christmas 2022, works are progressing well on the refurbishment of three properties at Harmony Row in an Architectural Conservation area in the centre of Ennis.

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



Derelict Sites	March 2023	Year to date 2023	Full Year 2022
No. of new files opened	0	10	69
No. of Section 8(2) Notices issued – Intention to enter site on Derelict Sites Register	2	9	33
No. of Section 8(7) Notices issued – Entry of site onto Derelict Sites Register	1	8	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	2	3	21
No. of Notices served to Compulsorily Purchase (CPO) (see note below)	0	3	6
No of Vesting Orders signed	0	0	4

Compulsory acquisition of Derelict sites (CPO)

Of the six CPOs 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.

A further three CPO’s were advertised in the Clare Champion on 24th February and submissions can be made on them within one month. The proposed acquisitions by CPO are at the following locations:

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

VACANT HOMES REFURBISHMENT GRANT

Following the workshops and walk in clinics held during the month of February, the number of applications for the Vacant Homes Refurbishment Grant has continued to increase. The objective is to ensure that the approach of the Council is consistent and gives opportunities and information to owners of vacant and derelict properties, while also ensuring that the powers under the Derelict Sites Act are applied to the property, if no positive engagement can be achieved.

Grants Scheme for Vacant and Derelict Properties

The grants scheme is primarily for first time buyers who will use the property as their principal place of residence. Full details of

the scheme, eligibility criteria and frequently asked questions is available on gov.ie - Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund Scheme (www.gov.ie). The contact email address for further information and guidance on the grants scheme is vacanthomes@clarecoco.ie

We have been advised by the Department that the scheme is likely to be extended to some houses built after 1993 and that it may be available to a greater group of people than the original scheme. Details of this are awaited and as soon as we have the information of any revisions to the scheme, we will communicate this through normal media channels.

The following table shows the status of the applications received to date. Of the total of 76 applications received to date, 33 were received in 2022 and 43 to date this year. Of the applications received to date, 62% relate to rural locations and 38% relate to properties located in towns and villages. Based on the applications received, there is a potential investment of €2.5 million in refurbishment of vacant and derelict properties to be returned to economic use as permanent homes,

It has been necessary to seek additional information on a large number of the applications made before the technical inspections can be carried out.

At a national level, the Housing Agency is providing support and has set up a dedicated freephone 1800 number and email (info@housingagency.ie) for members of the public to contact them on general queries on the schemes. Where the caller (or email) has a specific query the Housing Agency staff will take their details and forward the query to the Council’s Vacant Homes officer, who will then contact the caller.

SHANNON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Shannon MD celebrates St Patrick’s Day

The theme this year was inclusivity and was a celebration of diversity. Hundreds of spectators lined the streets to cheer on the various community groups and marchers. The inclement weather conditions did not dampen the spirit which was a showcase of local pride and heritage. The MD Team provided pedestrian/traffic safety barriers with promotional signage and worked with the Organisers and the Gardai to ensure a great day was had by all.



Redevelopment of Ballycasey Park Amenity Area

Work is progressing at pace at the Ballycasey Park Amenity Area which is being funded under Active Travel. When completed the project will provide improved access from various locations i.e Bothar Már, Báthar na Lúachra and the Ballycasey housing estates to this enhanced public amenity. The scheme includes the construction of approximately 5,000m² of new footpaths, the installation of 3,300m of new kerbing and 1,000m² of new paved areas among other measures. New public lighting and street furniture will also be installed in various parts of this amenity area.

Recent photos showing the newly constructed footpaths and pedestrian infrastructure at the Active Travel Project, Ballycasey Park Shannon.



Car-parking

Shannon MD is currently constructing new footpaths, kerbing and car parking spaces at Moy Park, Shannon. This will ensure much-needed adequate parking is now available at this location and will be of benefit to residents and visitors alike.



Ballymurtagh works

The Municipal District is carrying out accommodation works at St Helens Park, Ballymurtagh Shannon. These works included cutting back ditches and improving areas around the entrance (mounds).



Bus stop infrastructure

New bus stop infrastructure is under construction on the R471, opposite the Shopping Centre in Shannon town. This essential roadside facility will provide shelter from the climate for the users of the service and in particular, the elderly and vulnerable in Shannon and its environs. The bus shelter will incorporate a disability access drop kerb design.



SHANNON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Illaunamanagh Graveyard

Shannon MD has completed accommodation works in advance of the erection of a new sculpture, which is being created by Michael McTigue Headstones. The sculpture is due to be installed in the extension to the Illaunmanagh graveyard, Shannon over the Easter.



Launch of Shannon Chamber's Strategic Plan 2023-2026

Anne Griffin, A/Senior Executive Officer, and Linda Earlie, A/Town Regeneration Officer, attended the launch of Shannon Chamber's Strategic Plan 2023-2026 in Dromoland. The Plan contains six key objectives which include growing the economy and connectivity in Shannon and its environs.



Various footpath works

New footpaths are being installed in addition to paving at Aidan Park in Shannon (outside Joe's shop). Improvement/Reconstruction works are underway to the retaining wall also at Aidan Park, Shannon. A disability access ramp in compliance with Part M is also being installed as part of the works.



Works at Aidan Park.



Foyle Park footpath improvement works.



Carragh Park footpath improvement works.



Footpath improvement works at Keelgrove, Ardnacrusha have been carried out.



Grass cutting contract underway.

Other works underway

The municipal district has been preparing roads in the Sixmilebridge, Clonlara, Rineanna North and the Ballycar North area for the 2023 municipal district road works programme. This pre-surface dressing works involved drainage works and repairs to the existing road surface. The roads in the Sixmilebridge area included in this program are the L-7112 and the L-7114. The road in the Clonlara area included in this program is the L-7044. The road in the Ballycar North area included in this program is the L-30321. The road in the Rineanna North area included in this program is the L-7182.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Clare Rural Development Strategy 2030 – Realising Clare's Rural Potential: Our Life, Our Home



Chief Executive and Chair of the Clare Rural Development Forum, Pat Dowling; Cathaoirleach, Cllr Tony O'Brien; Bernadette Haugh, SEO, Rural & Community; and Leonard Cleary, Director of Rural Development and West Clare Municipal District.

A renewed development strategy for rural Clare aims to unlock potential across a wide range of areas to improve the lives of people living and working in Clare's rural communities.

The Renewed Clare Rural Development Strategy 2030, entitled "Realising Clare's Rural Potential: Our Life, Our Home", was officially launched on March 10th, 2023, and was adopted by Clare County Council at its March meeting.

The Renewed Strategy is based on a review of the implementation of the first Clare Rural Development Strategy by the members of the Clare Rural Development Forum. The first strategy, which was adopted in 2017, aimed to establish Clare as one of the best places in Ireland to live, work, and invest. The Renewed Strategy reiterates this commitment and recommends a renewal of the objectives and targets of the strategy to allow the Clare Rural Development Forum to lead out the delivery of additional actions to 2030, underpinning the successful implementation of the original strategy.

The Clare Rural Development Forum consists of community and voluntary groups, local development bodies, public representatives, and key state agencies and is chaired by Clare County Council Chief Executive, Pat Dowling.



Cathaoirleach, Cllr Tony O'Brien, and Pat Dowling, Chief Executive and Chair of the Clare Rural Development Forum, together with Forum Members, staff and other invited guests.

In Co. Clare we were ahead of the curve when we launched the original Strategy in 2017 and established our own vision for rural Clare. Through the foresight of the Chief Executive supported by the Elected Members this resulted in the establishment of a Rural Development Directorate within the Council – the first of its kind in the country – the appointment of a Director of Rural Development, the convening of a Rural Development Forum and a Strategic Policy Committee to oversee this work in collaboration with the other sectoral

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

interests to ensure a strong policy focus on rural development into the future. Clare County Council remains one of the only local authorities in Ireland to establish a Rural Development Directorate managed by a dedicated Director of Service.

Consequently, when the Government Launched their 2nd National Rural Policy – “Our Rural Future” on 29th March, 2021, Co. Clare was already well placed to take advantage of the opportunities and targeted funding set out in National policy which is supported by 150 commitments across Government, to address the challenges facing communities and deliver new opportunities for people living in rural areas across Ireland. The review of the Clare Rural Development Strategy commenced in 2021 to align the national vision for a thriving Rural Ireland with our local Strategy.

“Our Rural Future” video: <https://youtu.be/nOF8jxRRJMo>

Improving the lives of those living and working in Clare’s rural communities is a priority for the Clare Rural Development Forum. There is huge untapped potential in rural Clare for both jobs and tourism, where there are strong communities with ideas and ambitions for their futures. The aim of this Renewed Strategy is to further unlock that potential.

Having assessed how Covid-19 has affected the implementation and delivery of the plan, it was felt that a revised implementation period to 2030 is required to maximise the full potential of the strategy. The new timeline allows the strategy to align itself with the upcoming Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2028 and link in with other local policies, strategies, and objectives over the lifetime of the plan.

The Renewed Strategy focuses its aims on ten Renewed Strategic Objectives, which include social enterprises, multi-service centres and digital broadband, co-operating communities under the umbrella of the Municipal Districts, managing the environment and transitioning to a low-carbon economy, and a range of infrastructure.

The Renewed Clare Rural Development Strategy 2030 is an ambitious plan to unlock the full potential of rural Clare and

improve the lives of its residents. With its ten Renewed Strategic Objectives, the strategy is designed to drive economic growth, improve social services, protect the environment, and enhance the overall quality of life in the region.

Further information on the Strategy is available on the following link:

<https://www.clarecoco.ie/services/community/publications/clare-rural-development-strategy-2030>

The Rural & Community Development Officers was a pilot initiative in Clare rolled out by the Chief Executive with the support of the Elected Members and co-funded by the Department of Rural & Community Development. Four community development workers assigned across the four municipal districts have provided a critical support system to Community groups which has enabled them to flourish.



A key aspect of this renewed Strategy is our continued focus on helping communities to help themselves. By clicking on the following link you will view a small sample of the transformational projects being delivered across the County which features Community representatives from Clooney, Kilfenora, O’Briensbridge, Clare Walks and Ennis Men’s Shed. The Rural & Community Development Officers have been instrumental in providing mentoring, knowledge, expertise and support to enable our rural communities to deliver projects of scale for their communities.

“Our Rural Communities” Video: <https://vimeo.com/809708905>



Rural Development Staff and Secretariat to the Clare Rural Development Forum with Cathaoirleach, Clr Tony O’Brien.

Clare ‘Tourism Together’ Networking Event, 2nd March 2023 and launch of www.visitclare.ie



The Tourism Advisory Forum and Clare County Council’s Tourism Department recognise that 2023 will be another challenging year for tourism, and that a collective effort is required to mitigate against all upcoming challenges.

The Clare ‘Tourism Together’ Networking event was organised, which underlined the shared commitment to further developing the tourism economy. The common theme of conversation at the Clare ‘Tourism Together’ Networking Event 2023 centred around new ways that the industry in Clare can work together to promote the county. It was noted that Clare’s reliance on the tourism economy is particularly acute in comparison to many other parts of the country and it is vital therefore, that a collaborative approach to how we market the county at home and abroad is taken.

Key tourism industry personnel in County Clare attended the website launch, which formed part of a networking event focusing on challenges and opportunities for the local sector in 2023, including marketing the county, accommodation capacity and sustainable tourism. Motivational speakers included Pól O’Conghaile (Irish Independent Travel Editor) and Bobby Kerr (Irish Entrepreneur & Businessman).

During the Tourism Together Networking Event, colleagues from

across the Clare County Council Tourism Sites were well represented and met with new potential business partners. Colette Costello, Csilla Trungel, Melanie Lennon and Geraldine Enright were there on the night.

During this event, the Cathaoirleach of Clare, Councillor Tony O’Brien officially launched the new Tourism website www.VisitClare.ie. The full development of this new website is an initiative of Clare County Council and is the most comprehensive ever website dedicated to showcasing everything Ireland’s Banner County has to offer domestic and international visitors. The site features key information on tourism attractions and activities in the towns and villages across Clare, information on local accommodation providers, dining, events and festivals taking place throughout the county. There is also a key focus on the heritage and culture of the county and how visitors can learn more about Clare’s rich past and traditions.

Also part of the evening’s itinerary was a showcase of the Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark – GEOFood produce. The local GEOfood brand launched in 2022 is part of a local food network and a global food network that actively promote and support the UN Sustainable Development Goals, strengthening local livelihoods by employing local people, using local services.



New Visit Clare Brandbook and Promotional Collateral



New Visit Clare Brandbook

Subsequent to the launch of www.visitclare.ie there is now a dedicated new Brandbook for promoting Visit Clare - <https://visitclare.filecamp.com/s/d/Xi5zdFc1GWeae4wt> These brand guidelines have elements to assist with the application of the Visit Clare Brand and apply to the logo, typeface, colours and additional elements which combine to create a unique and powerful representation of the brand. In all instances, please adhere to the guidelines to ensure consistency of use for all brand elements.

New Share Clare Marketing Collateral

All Tourism interests in the county have been encourage potential visitors near and far that Clare is amazing. There is an updated resource bank now available on the new Visit Clare website www.visitclare.ie/share

New 'Share Clare' Collateral

<p>Free Photo Bank and Resources</p>	<p>Free 'Snackable' Posts for your Social Media</p>	<p>New TALL Promotional Brochures to Share with Visitors</p>
<p>New Web Icon for you to link to the Clare website</p>	<p>New Tent Cards Promoting Clare Website</p>	

Promotional Activities to drive traffic to the New Website



As part of the efforts to drive traffic to the brand new Clare Tourism website www.visitclare.ie there will be a number of key marketing promotions rolled out across the County targeting local, domestic and international visitors.

To start with, there has been a partnership with Clare GAA to promote the new website in Cusack Park, and this was initiated on social media on the weekend of the 12th March with an initial 20,000 views across social media platforms along with announcements at matches to visit the new website. Sponsorship signage to VisitClare.ie will be a permanent fixture in Cusack Park.

Also as part of our commitment to promote County Clare, to both international and domestic visitors, Visit Clare was the lead sponsor for the Clare Rose Selection 2023 in both the lead up and at the key event on the 12th March 2023.



Clare Rose Selection evening, 12th March, Inn at Dromoland, sponsored by Visit Clare.

The evening was a great success, hosted by Ollie Turner and officially opened by Cathaoirleach Cllr Tony O'Brien.

Aisling O Connor, Feakle native selected as the 2023 Clare Rose of Tralee, in front of a large crowd at the Inn At Dromoland.

Aisling will represent County Clare on the Rose Tour and at the Rose of Tralee, broadcasting live from Tralee this August.



Tourism Plan for Lisdoonvarna

Fáilte Ireland will fund the development of a Tourism Plan for Lisdoonvarna, which will integrate into the overall Masterplan which is currently being scoped out and developed on a cross-directorate basis between the Town Centre First Office, Rural Development and Tourism.



Ambassadors Training Module Launch

A new training module aimed at promoting the culture, heritage and the environment of the Burren is set to be rolled out to tourist guides, coach drivers and staff of tourism related business. The Irish Tour Operators Association (ITOA) through the support of Chairperson Des Annett are the first to embrace the module and roll it out to members. The Ambassadors Training Module for the UNESCO Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark encourages participants to become knowledgeable ambassadors and custodians during their journey to and interactions with visitors to the Burren and County Clare in general.



Jointly funded by Clare County Council, the Cliffs of Moher Experience and Fáilte Ireland under its Burren & Cliffs of Moher Destination and Experience Development Plan (DEDP), the programme features five separate modules focusing on UNESCO Global Geoparks, The Burren, the Cliffs of Moher, the Burren Ecotourism Network and Leave No Trace, which promotes responsible outdoor recreation.

Clare Retail Expo

Artisan food and crafts suppliers from across County Clare received a unique opportunity to meet with potential new consumers and retail buyers in an event hosted at the Cliffs of Moher and the Falls Hotel in Ennistymon on Sunday and Monday last.



Supported by the Clare Local Enterprise Office, Clare County Council and the Burren & Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark, the inaugural Cliffs of Moher and Clare Retail Expo was attended by more than 3,000 people and featured 24 local craft suppliers and 50 quality local, regional and national trade buyers from all over Ireland. The event highlights the benefits to the Clare economy with 45 Co. high quality food and craft suppliers stocked throughout the site from all over the county.



WEST CLARE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT- KILRUSH LEA

- Our crews continue to work on getting roads on the 2023 Schedule of Municipal District Works (Roadworks Programme) prepared for remediation and resurfacing. A lot of time has been spent on drainage works, surface preparation works and hedge cutting/boundary preparation.



Works on the final stages of the Malbay Track & Trail walk are nearing completion with the section in the Council yard completed and temporary fencing installed initially.

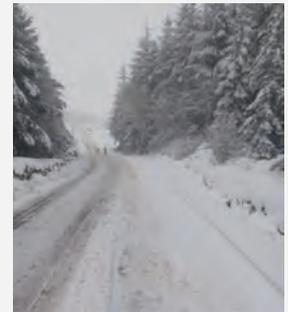
- Manchester Martyrs Information Board installed by MD outdoor crew following on from recent works carried out on the monument in Kilrush.



- Drainage works ongoing throughout the MD including in Drumellihy and Ross.



- The North Clare crews have commenced preparing roads for the 2023 roadworks programme. Work are ongoing on the drainage works in each area. The crews were extremely busy during the recent cold spell which brought plenty of snow to North Clare.



- Works also took place at Doolin pier to get ready for the commencement of the ferries. New temporary offices and toilets were installed to cater for staff and visitors for the season ahead.



- The Inagh Safe Route to Schools project was also completed.



- New bike racks were installed at Ballyvaughan Pier.

SPORTS & RECREATION

It was business as usual for March at Active Ennis/Kilrush. We are gearing up for the Community Games qualifiers and finals over the coming weeks.



Facilities are open and available for booking via the website www.activeennis.ie All clubs and patrons are requested to leave facilities as they find them.

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

Ennistymon LEA

March brought challenging road conditions to North Clare which necessitated the crews attending and assisting many incidents over the two days.

