



COMHAIRLE | CLARE  
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

# TUARASCÁIL MHÍOSÚIL ÓN PHRÍOMHFHEIDHMEANNACH

## MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Márta / March  
2023



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# FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

## CORPORATE SERVICES

### Freedom of Information & Data Protection

Previous years and 2023 to date – statistics to 1st March, 2023

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Freedom of Information Requests	152	176	119	23
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	3
Data Requests – Erasure Request	0	1	1	0
Data Access Requests – Third Party Access Requests e.g. Gardaí	20	27	27	3

### 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 February included:

- National award for Clare County Council workplace wellbeing initiatives
- Council welcomes €4.5 million allocation for Active Travel projects
- Over €2.1 million in funding for greenway projects
- Reminder to landowners to cut hedgerows to prevent road safety hazards
- Up to €50,000 available with Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant.

### 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 February, the Communications Office:

- Posted 28 times on Facebook, with total followers now 17,732.
- Posted 29 times on Twitter, with total followers now 7,966.
- Instagram followers are now 2,767.

(Statistics accurate as of 28/02/2023)

### Print and Graphic Design

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

### Register of Electors Modernisation Project

Following the commencement of the Electoral Reform Act 2022 and system upgrades, there has been a significant increase in members of the public accessing [www.checktheregister.ie](http://www.checktheregister.ie) to update their electoral details, including PPS number and Eircode. Ongoing media campaigns are planned in 2023, to continue awareness of these changes.

## Embedding a Culture of Workplace Wellbeing National Award

Clare County Council's commitment to workplace wellbeing has been recognised at the CIPD Ireland HR Awards 2023.

The local authority was named winner of the 'Embedding a culture of workplace wellbeing' award in the small/medium category on Friday (24th February) at the Round Room in the Mansion House, Dublin.

The award recognises organisations which place employee wellbeing centre stage and have embedded a strong culture of workplace wellbeing.

Clare County Council was shortlisted in the category along with the Department of Defence, the National Treasury Management Agency, Seetec Ireland and William Fry LLP.

The judges felt that Clare County Council "came across with the passion and excitement to deliver progressive wellbeing supports from induction to retirement. Aligned to corporate objectives, Clare County Council showed a high level of engagement and input from management, trade unions and staff. A long-term approach delivered consistent improvement, building a climate of inclusion, embracing technology, with access to resources."



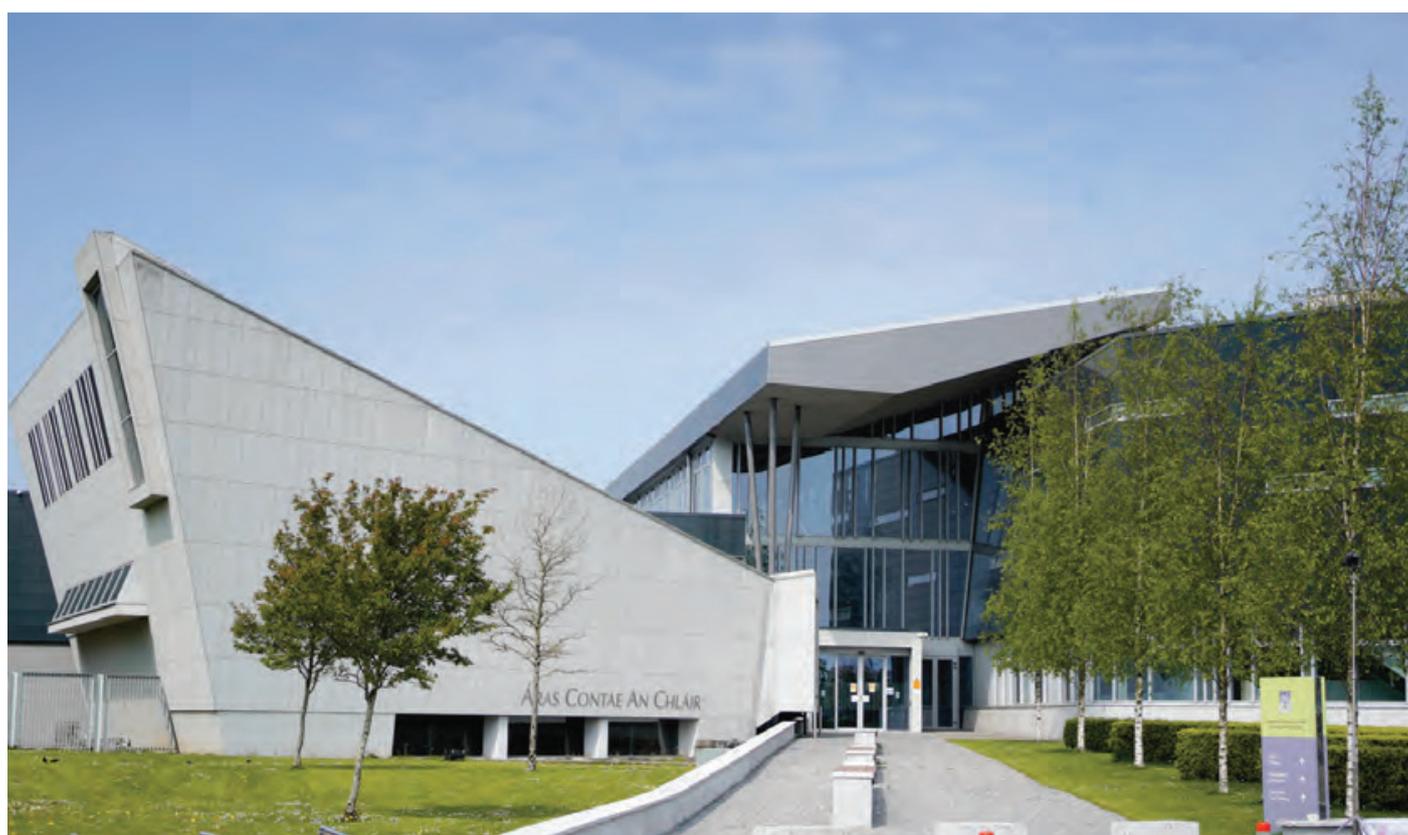
## FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

Work Area	Update
<b>Recruitment</b>	<p>The following recruitment competitions were progressed during February:</p> <p>Eligibility Exercises &amp; Desktop Shortlisting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technician Grade I (Eligibility)</li> <li>• Rural &amp; Community Development Officer (Desktop Shortlisting)</li> <li>• Biodiversity Officer (Eligibility Exercise)</li> <li>• Clerk of Works (Eligibility)</li> <li>• Executive Architect (Eligibility)</li> <li>• Beach Lifeguard &amp; Senior Beach Lifeguard (Eligibility)</li> <li>• Clerk of Works (Desktop Shortlisting)</li> </ul> <p>Interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plant Operator B</li> <li>• Beach Operatives (day 1 &amp; 2 of 3)</li> <li>• Recycling Assistant (Scariff)</li> <li>• Part Time Traffic Warden (Seasonal Employment)</li> <li>• Climate Action Officer</li> <li>• Temporary Technician Grade 1 (Civil, Architectural &amp; Building)</li> <li>• Retained Firefighter (Kilrush, Kilkee &amp; Shannon)</li> </ul> <p>The following competitions were advertised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duty Manager Active Ennis Leisure Complex, 2023</li> <li>• Branch Librarian Panel, 2023</li> <li>• Executive Engineer Panel, 2023</li> <li>• Executive Architectural Conservation Officer</li> <li>• Executive Architect</li> </ul>
<b>Learning and Development</b>	<p>Online Training programmes / Webinars / Information Sessions held in February include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade 3 &amp; Analogous Officer Training</li> <li>• Grade 6 &amp; Analogous Officer Training</li> <li>• Junior Achievement TY Mock Interviews St Flannan's</li> <li>• Mid-Career Financial Seminar</li> <li>• Pre-Retirement Seminar</li> <li>• Waste Management Legislation Update</li> <li>• Wellbeing &amp; Blended Working</li> </ul> <p>Essential Skillz online Courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cyber Security</li> <li>• Ergowize</li> <li>• GDPR</li> <li>• Health &amp; Safety Induction</li> <li>• Slips Trips &amp; Falls</li> <li>• Working in a Covid Era</li> </ul> <p>Health &amp; Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1-Day Line Manager Health &amp; Safety Training</li> <li>• Asbestos Awareness</li> <li>• Manual Handling</li> <li>• Prevention Management of Aggression &amp; Violence Training</li> <li>• Safe Pass</li> </ul>
<b>Unions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Human Resources Department engages with Unions on various matters.</li> </ul>

Procurement

The following Clare County Council tender competitions were published on eTenders in the period from 25th January 2023 to 27th February 2023 incl.

RFT Id	Tender Name	Publication Date	Response deadline
233560	Public Realm Enhancement & Traffic Calming - Bunratty, Co. Clare	24/02/2023	10/03/2023 12:00
233251	Public Lighting Consultancy Services	16/02/2023	16/03/2023 15:00
232853	Removal of ACM from sites in County Clare	10/02/2023	16/05/2023 12:00
232847	Disposal of Non-Hazardous ACM material	10/02/2023	17/03/2023 12:00
232821	Disposal of Hazardous ACM material	10/02/2023	17/03/2023 16:00
232484	Fit-Out of 2 Fire Service Vans	07/02/2023	24/02/2023 16:00
232482	Supply of 2 Fire Service Vans	07/02/2023	24/03/2023 16:00
232364	WFD Lake Sampling Programme - Clare County Council	03/02/2023	06/03/2023 12:00
232421	Supply of large van	03/02/2023	05/03/2023 17:00



# UKRAINIAN SERVICES DEVELOPMENT

## National Situation

A total of 76,500 temporary protection orders have been granted as of 6th March, 2023. This is up from 71,200 in January and there is a rolling 7-day average of 125. There are 59,700 people accommodated and 15,000 children have been enrolled in school.

The proportion of females arriving stands at 62% and the numbers of employments is 17,491: This number is increasing in line with the number of those arriving and as per the trend the people in employment are working in their local communities – contributing locally.

The Community Response Forum in Clare continues to meet on a bi-weekly basis with local meetings also being held.

## County Clare

The national figures show that County Clare is now hosting 4,352 Ukrainian beneficiaries – There is a slight month-on-month rise but no new multi-occupancy accommodation coming on-stream. The county ranks 6th nationally.

## ‘Offer a Home’

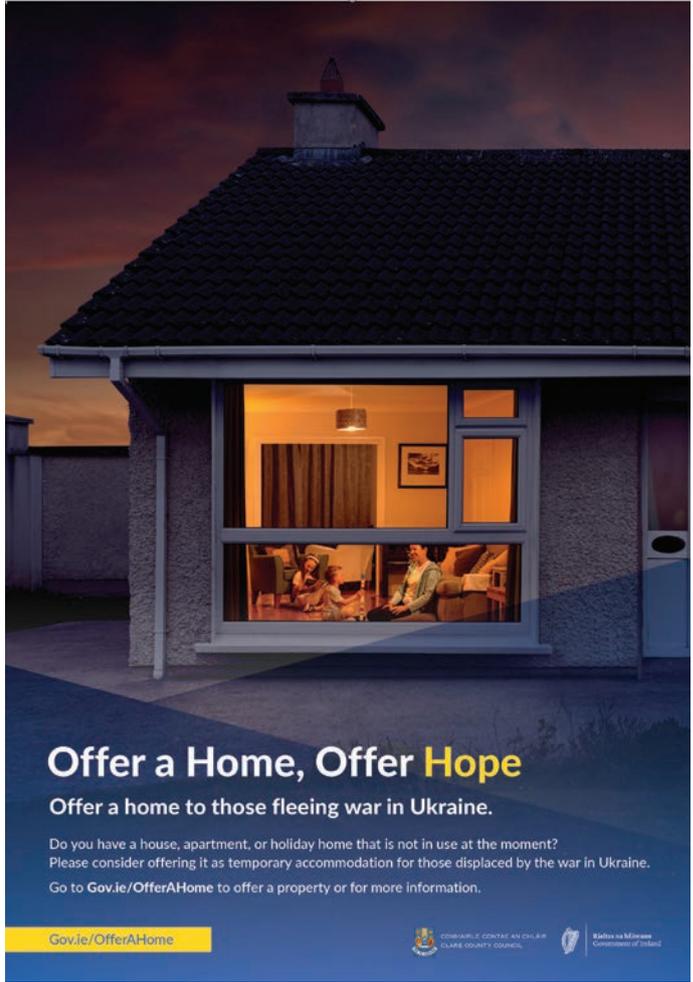
Clare County Council has received 88 offers of unoccupied homes under the ‘Offer a Home’ scheme since its launch in December 2022. All 88 homeowners have been contacted and 81 homes have been assessed so far with the remaining home assessments scheduled.

Of the homes that have been assessed 6 are not yet available and 14 have been withdrawn from the scheme as they were either unsuitable or the homeowner had a change in circumstances.

We have successfully matched 36 of the homes and have accommodated 128 people that 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, endeavour to match families to homes in areas they are living in and are integrated into. They may have children attending local schools, accessing adult education, or are working in the locality themselves.

Homeowners can register their unoccupied homes on the designated website: [www.offerahome.ie](http://www.offerahome.ie) or by contacting Clare County Council at [offerahome@clarecoco.ie](mailto:offerahome@clarecoco.ie).



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

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

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

CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL  
Clare County Council

Stair na Míreann  
Department of Ireland

## Accommodation in General

The team in Ukrainian Services Development have worked with our Fire Services (Building Control), Civil Defence and Housing Department to update the Emergency Accommodation Protocol in preparation for any unforeseen mass accommodation need in the county.

It is acknowledged that some accommodation providers are considering reverting to their mainstream activities, and it is prudent for Clare County Council to be in a position to respond at short notice: This protocol is focussed on a 24-72hr solution if no alternative solutions have been put in place by DCEDIY.

In light of the above the team has been reaching out to accommodation providers across the county in an effort to get a better sense of the short-term plans of our accommodation providers. While Clare County Council does not have any contractual arrangements with providers our engagements have been positive with sufficient baseline information being offered.

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 pathways. We have taken a proactive approach on this and made suggestions to the DCEDIY in the areas we understand providers are pivoting back to their traditional business areas.

### **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 recognize their contribution to the emergency response. Full details can be found on <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/e626a-community-recognition-fund-2023/> County Clare was awarded a proportional amount of €2,925,549, the third highest in the country with Local Authorities being asked to coordinate the application process.

This project is being managed jointly by Ukrainian Services Development and Rural and Community Development in a partnership approach.

In addition to the workshop held in the Woodstock hotel on 29th November 2022 to raise awareness of the pending grant aid a further 14 briefing sessions were held during February: The expressions of interest are in the process of being assessed for submission to the Department of Rural and Community for approval.



# 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 is due to end on 31st March 2023. This will potentially lead to an increased number of private tenants receiving Notices to Quit as landlords continue to exit the rental market. 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.

- 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 are awaiting final details on the enhanced Defective Concrete Block Grant Scheme and expect this will have significant impact on our housing team
- We continue to work with Housing on Affordable Housing Scheme and are hopeful that we will be given the go ahead to plan for schemes in Ennis and Shannon. This will bring further additional workload and challenges to the team

However we are confident that the team in the Directorate 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](mailto:hat@clarecoco.ie)

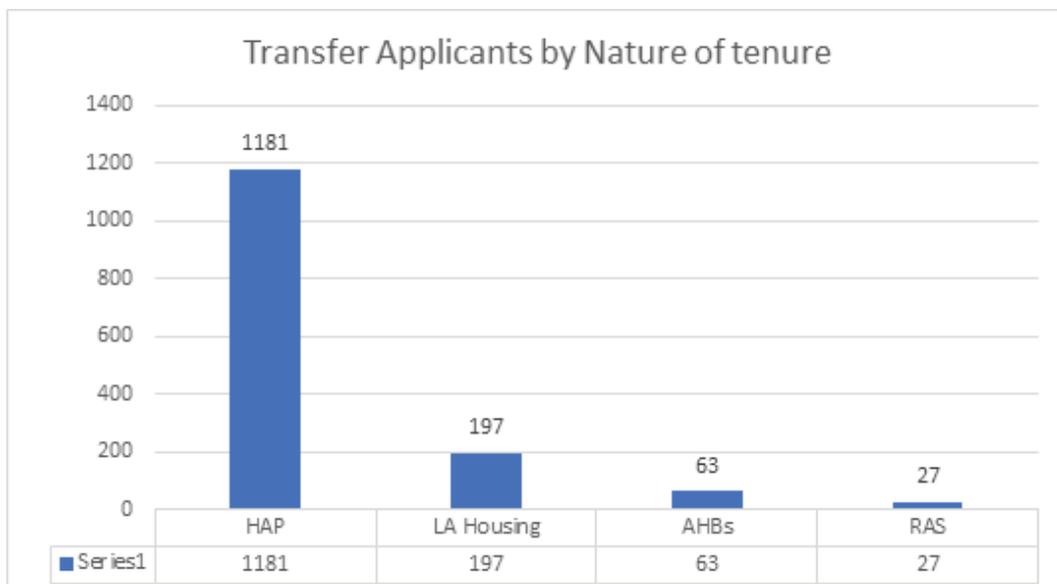
### Social Housing Demand

The total households on the council waiting list is currently 2,777 with 1,468 of these currently receiving support in form

of existing council housing, HAP, RAS or AHBS. The 2,777 households are comprised of 3,845 adults and 2,089 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 28/02/2023

Total Households on Waiting List	2777
Transfer Applicants (see below)	1468
Nett Need	1309



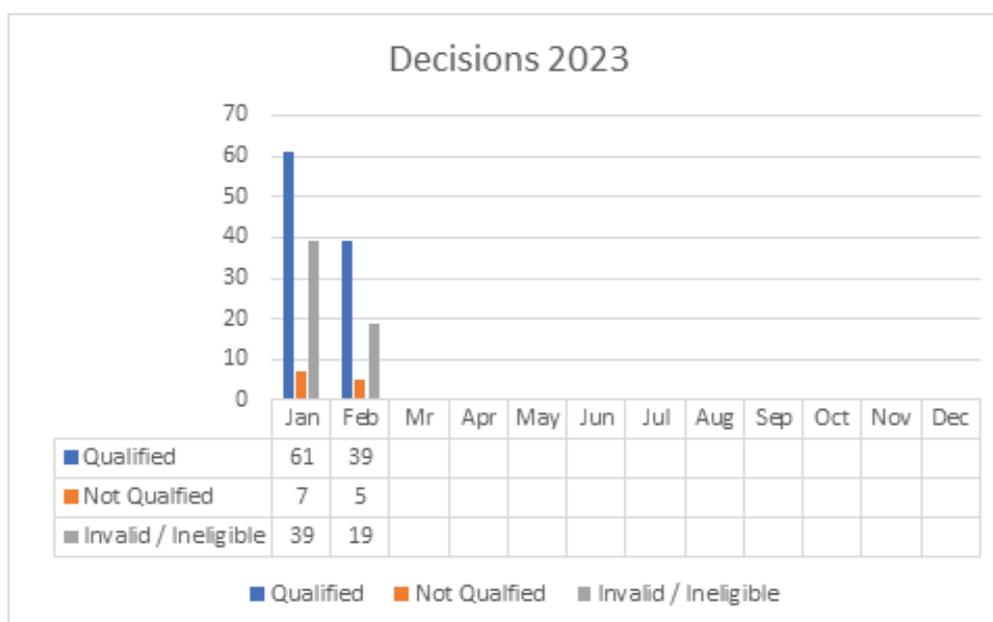
## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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

HOUSING AUTHORITY BEDS APPROVED				
FIRST AREA OF CHOICE	1 and 2 beds	3 beds	4 and 5 beds	Grand Total
ENNIS	897	183	78	1158
SHANNON	179	24	13	216
CLARECASTLE	125	26	11	162
INAGH/ENNISTYMON/LAHINCH	125	25	4	154
KILRUSH	101	30	8	139
FEAKLE/SCARIFF/WHITEGATE	108	20	3	131
MEELICK/PARTEEN/WESTBURY	73	36	11	120
MILTOWN MALBAY/MULLAGH/QUILTY	67	12	5	84
KILKEE/CROSS/CARRIGAHOLT	67	10	1	78
NEWMARKET-ON-FERGUS	55	14	5	74
COROFIN/RUAN	54	18	2	74
KILLALOE	56	12	2	70
LISDOONVARNA/BALLYVAUGHAN	45	10	3	58
SIXMILEBRIDGE	36	8	8	52
COORACLARE/DOONBEG	35	9	2	46
TULLA/KILKISHEN/BROADFORD	35	7	3	45
KILDYSART/BALLYNACALLY	22	4	2	28
CLONLARA	19	7	2	28
QUIN	17	6	1	24
KILMIHIL	11	5	2	18
KILMALEY	8	2		10
KILFENORA	7	1		8
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2142</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>2777</b>

### 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 22 additional households on list at end of February. In February we issued decisions on 44 applications with 39 qualified and 5 deemed not to qualify. In addition 17 applications were rejected, either for having submitted incomplete applications, or because they were deemed ineligible for assessment.



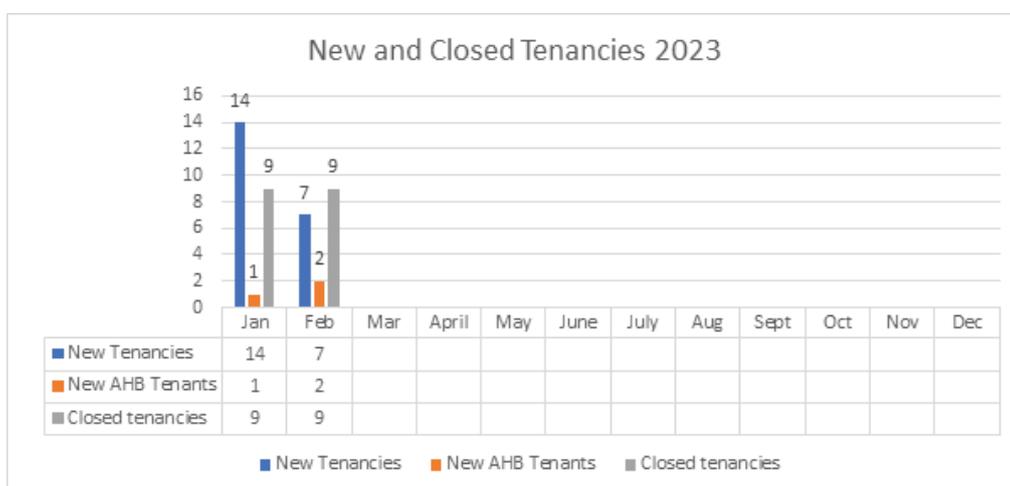
## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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

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

### Housing Allocations

The last of allocated tenants are moving into their new homes at Clós an Eidhneáin, Tulla Road, Ennis. This 8 unit development comprises 5 no three bedroomed two-storey houses and 3 no specially adapted two bedroomed bungalow type properties. A new AHB scheme has been advertised in Roslevan and nominations to the AHB are being finalised.



### Tenant Purchase Incremental Scheme

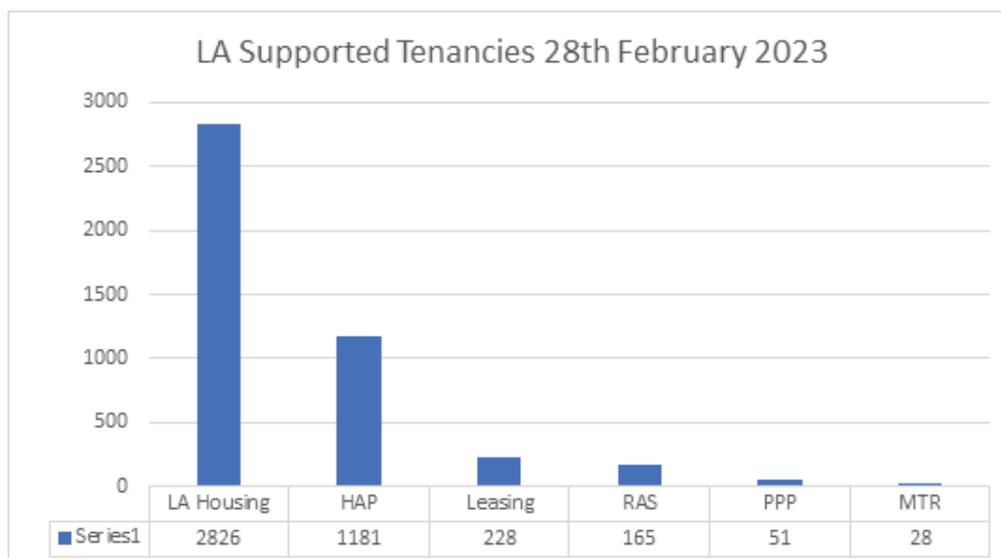
There remains significant interest in the LA Tenant Purchase Incremental Scheme. We currently have 12 open cases at various stages of the legal process which are expected to complete in 2023. During February we completed sale of 1 property

### Housing Tenancies

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

30th Jan 2023			
MD	Allocated	Occupied	Total
Ennis MD	9	1291	1300
Killaloe MD	1	359	360
Shannon MD	3	720	723
West Clare MD	3	980	983
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3350*</b>	<b>3366</b>

\*3,350 households comprises of 5,753 adults and 3,116 children. Total people 8,869, or 2.6 per household average.



### Vacancies

Vacant Stock	Ennis MD	West Clare MD	Shannon MD	Killaloe MD	Total
Traveller Accommodation	2	8	2	0	12
Derelict Properties	0	0	0	0	0
Projects	2	9	1	0	12
Casual Vacancies	25	15	3	4	47
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>71</b>

	1st to 20th Feb	Total year to date
ASB Complaints recd	45	70
Housing Inspections	64	150
Referrals to TSS	0	2
Tenancy Notifications/Warnings issued	8	15
Abandonment Notices issued	0	2
Keys collected from Casual Vacancies	8	19
TEO Call Outs	576	1,228

### Estate Management

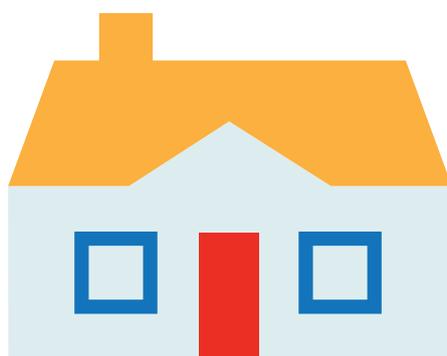
The Estate Management Team continue to undertake regular routine and response calls to tenants to manage and mitigate against complaints of antisocial behaviour as well as inspecting Local Authority tenancies and providing the necessary supports to tenants.

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

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

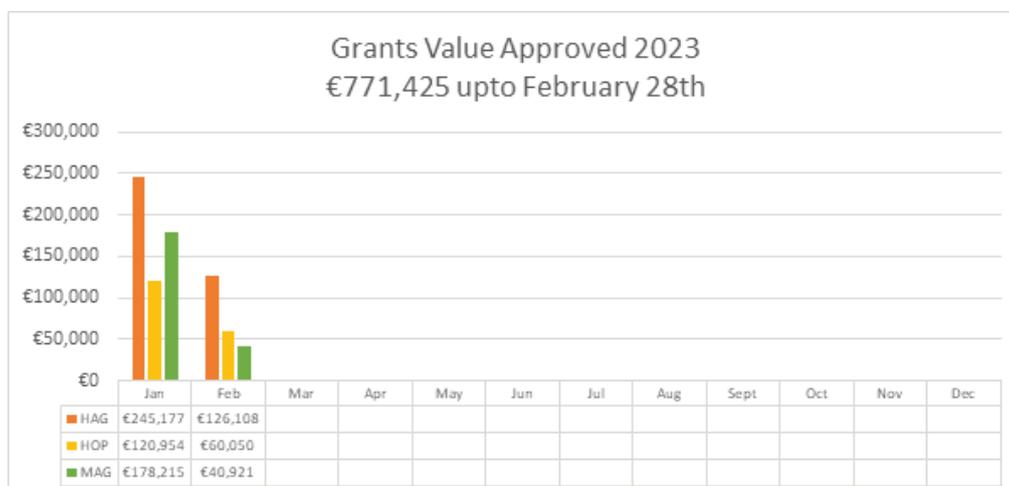
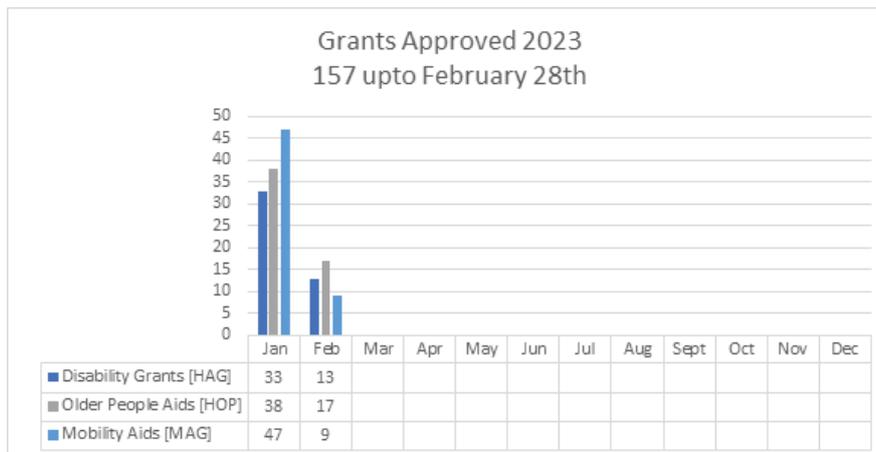
### Private Rented inspections

201 inspections carried out up to 24th February, 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](http://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 23/02/2023: There are currently 31 Loans Approved in principle and awaiting possible drawdown from applicants. This includes 2 new approvals in February 2023.

61 Applications Received to 31/12/2022 and 1 Application in 2023

31 Local Authority Home Loans Approved 2 in February 2023

5 Local Authority Home Loans Drawn Down in 2022

12 Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans Drawn Down in 2022

### 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 of eviction/Winter Eviction Ban (Residential Tenancies (Deferment of Termination dates of certain tenancies) Act 2022) is in place until the 31st of 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]

40 new clients presented to HAT during February 2023, with a further 211 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
- Discharge from Women Refuge services
- Release from Prison

## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

A number of these presentations availed of advice and prevention works and supports from the Social Care Team in HAT. As a result, they avoided entering a homeless situation due to early intervention by the team. Advice regarding legislation on NTQ's, support from the HAP Place-finder, allocations in advance of homelessness situations, and other supports offered by the team ensured many of these clients avoided 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.

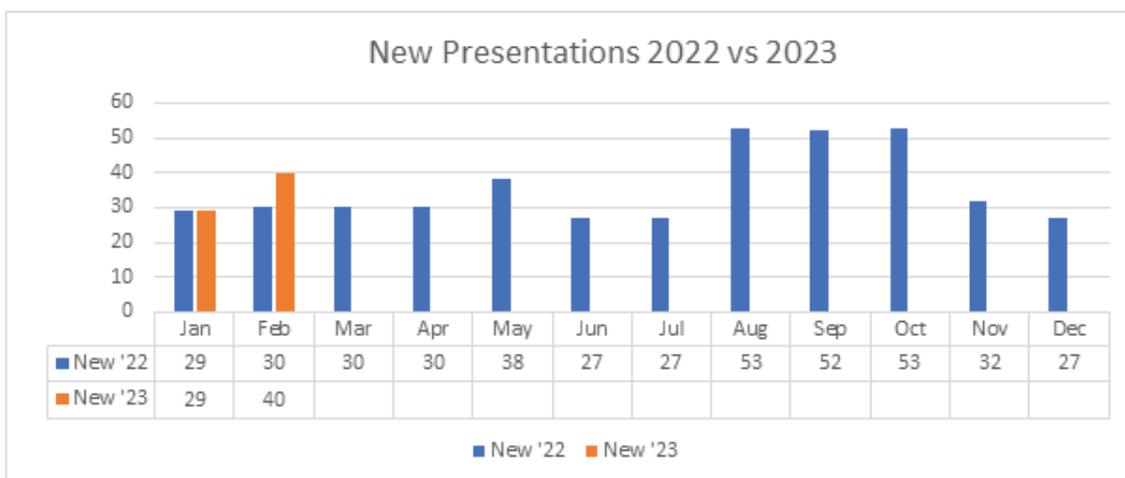
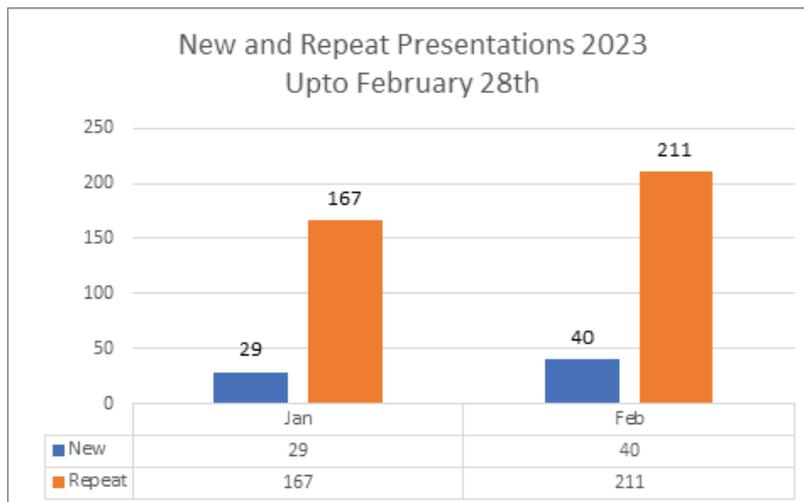
Clare Homeless Action team continues to engage with all necessary stakeholders, service providers and local supports in order to adopt a collaborative approach to the tackling of Homelessness.

### Exits from Homeless Services

Clare Homeless Action Team continues to focus on exits from homeless services and during the period 20/01/2023 to 16/02/2023, a total of 11 households exited Emergency Homeless Services.

- 2 household moved to AHB properties
- 1 household was HAP Accommodated
- 6 households were discharged due to breach of code of conduct
- 1 household self-discharged
- 1 household deceased rip

During this period, 4 further single adults and 2 families moved within our Emergency Accommodation to best support their identified needs.



**Emergency Accommodation Status as of 16th February 2023:**

	Families	Adults	Dependents	Providers
Laurel Lodge	0	11	0	1
Laurel Lodge Weather Initiative	0	4	0	
Cusack Lodge	5	8	11	1
Westbrook	0	13	0	1
Westbrook Weather Initiative	0	0	0	
Ashford Court	9	16	14	1
EA Families	2	2	4	2
EA Individuals	0	7	0	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>9</b>

**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 will be applying to the Department in early March for both

Ennis and 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 Housing Dept of Clare County Council have already provided observations and comments regarding the draft regulations as requested by the Department. Engagement by the Minister’s appointed Liaison Officer has commenced in January with all Housing Action Groups. The draft regulations are being considered by the Elected Members and as advised on the 24th February the Housing Dept have requested feedback from the Elected Members on 7th March in order to respond to the Department with their submissions by 14th March.

**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 180m<sup>3</sup> concrete pour was carried out in late January. Concrete works are ongoing to various upstands & beams but 90% of RC work is completed. Techcrete Concrete panels to façade of building commenced on 21st February last and are making good progress.

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 programme and projects at Scarriff and Clarecastle are now under construction following signing of contracts in February.



Scarriff contract, Clarecastle contract.

## 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.	Q3 2023	Q3 2024
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 being prepared and process underway to appoint contractor.	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. Procuring Design Team.	Q1 2023	Q2 2024
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>140</b>			
Bruachlan, Westbury (Cooperative Housing Ireland)	22	CALF - Property transfer complete, reapply for planning permission in due course when site assessment completed	Q2 2022	Q2 2025
Limerick Road, Ennis (Cluid Housing Assoc)	15	CALF Acquisition - Under construction	Q3 2022	Q2 2023
Limerick Road, Ennis (Inis Housing)	18	CALF Turnkey - construction in progress	Q1 2022	Q3 2023
Market Street, Ennis (Peter McVerry Trust)	14	CAS Turnkey - Department approval received	Q4 2022	Q1 2024
Cluain na Laoi, Kilkishen	16	CALF Turnkey - Department approved 6 units to be delivered in Q4 2023  10 units to be delivered in Q1 2024	Q1 2023 Q1 2023	Q1 2024 Q1 2024
Church Road, Tulla	2	CALF Turnkey (Part V) - under construction	Q1 2022	Q2 2023
Ballyminogue, Scarriff	4	CALF Turnkey	Q1 2023	Q2 2023
Dooneen Park, Kilrush	2	CAS Construction	Q4 2022	Q2 2023
Kincora Park, Ennis	1	CAS Construction	Q4 2022	Q2 2023
Ahsfield Close	6	CAS Construction	Q2 2023	Q2 2024
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>100</b>			
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>			

# CULTURAL SERVICES - LIBRARY, ARTS, MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

## Clare County Library

Kilmihil Library was awarded an Age Friendly Charter after staff completed the Age Friendly programme, 9 home deliveries were made this month.

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

1563 E-Books	3002 E-Audiobooks	760 E-Magazines
921 Online courses	2082 Press Reader	117 Transparent Languages

	New Followers	Total Followers	Posts Reach/ Impressions	Post Likes	Engagement
	72	6804	26500	744	2297
	5	2084	9660	110	382
	30	1795	6405	280	1300

Total number of live events	91
Total attendances at live events	992
Total number of outreach events	1
Total audiences at outreach events	10

## Marketing & social media

Clare Library marketing team are compiling a marketing strategy for the Library service.



IT classes in Lisdoonvarna Library



Making Valentine Cards in Kilkee Library

## Right to Read

Thug Aidan Courtney Maisitheoir, ceardlanna líníochta spráúil trí Ghaeilge do pháistí ó scoileanna náisiúnta agus do dhaltaí ó scoileanna dara leibhéal chun Seachtain na Gaeilge a chéiliúradh.

Bhí neart idirghníomhaíocht, caint agus comhrá agus spraoi sa cheardlanna dátheangach.

Bhí Aidan i Leabharlann Phoiblí Chill Dalua agus i Leabharlann Phoiblí Seán Lemass, An Sionna, Dé Máirt 28ú Feabhra

Clare Libraries spoke on Morning Focus on Clare FM about Digital Literacy and Smartphone Classes, having seen it mentioned on Clare Libraries' social media. Staff in branches reported a marked increase in queries about the classes (as a result of the media attention) from members of the public who heard the slot.

Local author Meadhbh Chambers shared her delightful picture book *Rosie the Daisy* with pre-schoolers and junior classes in three branch libraries in West Clare to celebrate Ireland Reads 2023. Ireland Reads day was celebrated on Saturday, 25th February 2023. It is a national initiative to get the whole country reading and is supported by public libraries and many organizations that promote literacy and the arts. *Rosie the Daisy's* message focuses on how important it is for little children to share their thoughts and feelings.

Storyteller Ruth Marshall visited Tulla and Kilkee libraries also to mark the Ireland Reads initiative, where she entertained local pre-school classes in both libraries with her repertoire of stories, activities, rhymes and song ideally suited to little library visitors.



Chess classes in Shannon Library.

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### Healthy Ireland

Eight Healthy Ireland at Your Library events took place this month. Events included an online chair yoga session and an in-branch Chair yoga class in Tulla Library with 10 participants, 2 Tai Chi classes, one in Newmarket-on-Fergus Library with 5 participants and one in Sixmilebridge Library with 9 participants. Feedback from all attendees was very positive and many enquired about the possibility of having more classes either in the Library or the local area.

Claire Flynn, from Mental Health Ireland, delivered a talk to 9 parents attending the “Parent & Baby” group in Ennistymon Library. In addition, Ennistymon Library hosted a Therapy with Play intervention workshop delivered by Play Therapist Dipankar Biswas to 13 Ukrainian people.

Killaloe Library hosted a Healthy eating themed Storytime followed by a Yoga workshop with Yoga teacher Kathy Anning for 22 junior infants and their teachers from a local Primary School. Darragh Howley, Performance Psychologist & Fitness Specialist shared his expertise with members of Kilmihil Active Retirement Group on the practical ways of supporting brain health and wellbeing through exercise and nutrition.

### Creative Ireland

The Clare Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023-2027 was adopted by the Council at February's Council Meeting. The vision for the new strategy is “to embed culture and creativity into the activities, sustainability and growth of communities”.

The official launch of the strategy was held in Dublin on 23rd February.



Ministers and Representatives of each county at CI Strategy launch.

Individuals and groups were invited to submit proposals for projects that involve creativity in the community for the annual Creative Clare Project Award scheme. A total of 59 applications were received, with proposals across a wide variety of genres and artforms including heritage, biodiversity, theatre, dance, film and visual art.

### Decade of Centenaries

The Decade of Centenaries Project Awards grant scheme for 2023 was advertised in February with a closing date of 10th March. Local commemorative and historical groups interested in marking events of the revolutionary period in Clare were invited to apply. Funding for the programme is provided by the Commemorations Unit of the Dept of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. 2023 is the final year of the Decade of Centenaries programme.

### Local Studies

The Local Studies Centre continues to add transcriptions from the Dunboynes News Cuttings 1824-1878 to the Clare Library website. Details of births, marriages and deaths of Clare people are recorded. The cuttings were compiled by Lord Dunboyne Theobald Fitz-Walter Butler. An article on Destitution in Co Clare 1843-44 from the 10th report of the Poor Law Commissioners has also been added to [www.clarelibrary.ie](http://www.clarelibrary.ie)

### Clare Archives

The Barrett collection continues to be catalogued and processed. Chief Executive orders from Human Resources, Environment and Council Minute Books have been bound and sent to Archives for permanent preservation. A journal dating from 1891 has been donated to the archives. The journal documents the journey of a Clareman, Patrick Garry, from Australia to Southampton in 1891. It gives a fascinating account of the experiences of such a journey at that time. The journal once digitised and correctly preserved will be exhibited in Clare Museum.

Each month the archives' service continues to deal with queries from the public wishing to view the material from the Archives'

collections. Queries relating to Board of Health Records, Our Lady's Hospital Collection and Registers of Electors have been requested by researchers.

Records Management queries relating to the LGMA Retention Schedule by various sections in terms of appraisal of records for retention or destruction are very frequent. The staff library system will be updated in order that the system can be supported. It will now be cloud hosted by the system's supplier Access IT. The scanning project is continuing. A review of materials scanned has been performed and a number of items from Rates and Valuations have been identified to be scanned. Data is being inputted into the Digital Repository of Ireland's system to allow a new digital collection to be added to the repository each month. The Clare Grand Jury Records will be available on line at the end of February at [Digital Repository of Ireland | Digital Repository Ireland \(dri.ie\)](https://www.dri.ie)

### Clare Arts Office

Three artists began "Artists in Schools" Scheme residencies in primary schools in Ennistymon, Tuamgraney and Miltown Malbay with a further residency starting in Ennistymon Vocational School. Further residencies were completed in Gaelscoil Kilrush, Doonaha NS and Kilbaha NS working with 42 children. The "KeyStone" commission with Coláiste Muire, Ennis and Scoil Mhuire, Ennistymon continued. Four "Embrace" Arts & Disability residencies began with 30 individuals taking part through the National Learning Network, Brothers of Charity – Shannon Outreach and Fergus Park, Ennis and Avonlea, Ennis. Hospital radio continued twice a week in St. Joseph's Hospital, Ennis whilst arts activities took place in Raheen Hospital. Clare Youth Theatre continued to meet in glór and Kilkee and they attended a performance of KING in glór.

The Arts Office received 93 applications for Arts Assistance under the CLAGS Scheme and were assessed. The Arts Officer conducted 2 Arts in Clare slots on Clare FM in February. The Arts Office assisted Screen Ireland in pitching for a British TV Series for Kilkee and assisted with locations sought for a House Renovation TV Series that filmed in West Clare for 2 days. A call

for extras to audition for an upcoming TV production in Killaloe was also promoted.

A webinar on Socially Engaged Arts Practice took place in conjunction with Visual Artists Ireland.

A series of 4 webinars for musicians on Online Marketing; Gigging Outside Ireland; Management & Approaching the Media took place in conjunction with First Music Contact. Eleven Clare musicians attended a specific session by FMC for music professionals in the county. The launch of the River Residency exhibition in Ormston House, Limerick, took place. Evaluation of the Arts Office involvement with Arts and Disability Research with co-partners in Mayo and Galway City Arts Offices was completed. The Clare Arts Office Newsletter was issued.

Cultúrlann Sweeney, Kilkee, showed two Irish films, An Cailin Ciuin and Lyra and had one community hire this month. Four youth theatre workshops also took place. The number of people attending events was 193 in February. A total of 4 exhibitions took place in Ennis, Scariff and Kilkee, 2 were launched by the Arts Officer. Facebook groups had a combined membership of 4,404 an increase of 1.3% on January 2023. Facebook and Instagram pages had a following of 5,287, an increase of 2.7% on January 2023 and a reach of 11,014 in the last month, an increase of 30% on January 2023.

Facebook profile has 2,804 friends. Clare Arts Office has 4,765 Twitter followers across two accounts currently.

### Clare Museum

The very popular LCETB course 'Reading Your Local Landscape' commenced in Clare Museum on 28th February and will run until the end of June. The course will examine objects belonging to the Museum's collection as part of the educational curriculum. This course is funded through the Creative Ireland programme in collaboration with the LCETB. A UL intern has started a work placement in Clare Museum with an interest in the area of social history and working on the Georgina Frost collection.

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## KILLALOE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

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### Rural Regeneration Development Fund – Scariff Regeneration Plan

Progress continues on this Category 2 project. Killaloe MD welcomed the approval in February of the Part VIII proposal for the proposed development comprising the refurbishment of the former Supermacs and Merriman Tavern buildings and their change of use to Digital Hub (Office) and Enterprise Centre/Community Spac and construction of a public car park on the adjacent green field site and connection to existing on-site services. Planning consent for these elements are

a significant requirement to enable an application for Capital funding under any subsequent RRDF funding be sought.

The overall project also includes proposed public realm improvements to Market Square and in that regard, surveying work eg undertaking levels, survey existing service layouts of the existing square are near conclusion. This will enable plans for any future design of the Market Square be further developed and considered.

**Projects/Meetings/Correspondence**

During the Month of February, the Killaloe MD team assisted with meeting held with Killaloe Tidy Towns; Eir regarding relocation of infrastructure at Drumandoora to finalise road enhancements; Coillte regarding licenced felling operations in Cloontra and haulage route impacts; Ongoing liaison with PMO regarding Killaloe Bypass construction progress and haulage route impacts; On site meeting with Environment and Water Safety regarding ORIS funded works and 2023 Blue Flag operations at Ballycuggeran.

Killaloe MD submitted applications for the Community Recognition fund at Flagmount, Bodyke and Killaloe and provided assistance to a number of other community groups.

On site meeting held with Gael Force Events to discuss a proposal for Mountshannon to host Open Water Lake Swimming in 2023 <https://gaelforceevents.com/en/gaelforce-great-lake-swim-mountshannon> The MD are working with stakeholders to ensure the event is undertaken successfully and maximize the sustainable economic benefit to the area.

**Road works**

**2023 Low-Cost Safety scheme** – Landowner engagement commencement at Cloonamirran and Cranagher

**2023 Schedule of Municipal District works plan draft preparation** – Road Improvement / Surface dressing / Drainage.

**Reduce Your Use**

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

**Active Travel**

**Drumandoora** – Fully complete, including road markings and signage.



**Clarisford** – 60% complete – Substantial completion on southern section between Clarisford and Bypass crossing. Drainage works complete at northern end adjacent to secondary school.



**Tulla** – Works on pedestrian crossings and footpath upgrades to re-commencing in March 2023.

*Note: No new project fund allocations have been announced for 2023*

**IPB/GMA:**

Footpath works completed at Feakle by Killaloe MD crews, and at O'Reilly Park – Tulla.

Footpaths works ongoing in Crossroads & Thomas Street – Killaloe.



# RURAL DEVELOPMENT

## Joint Policing Committee



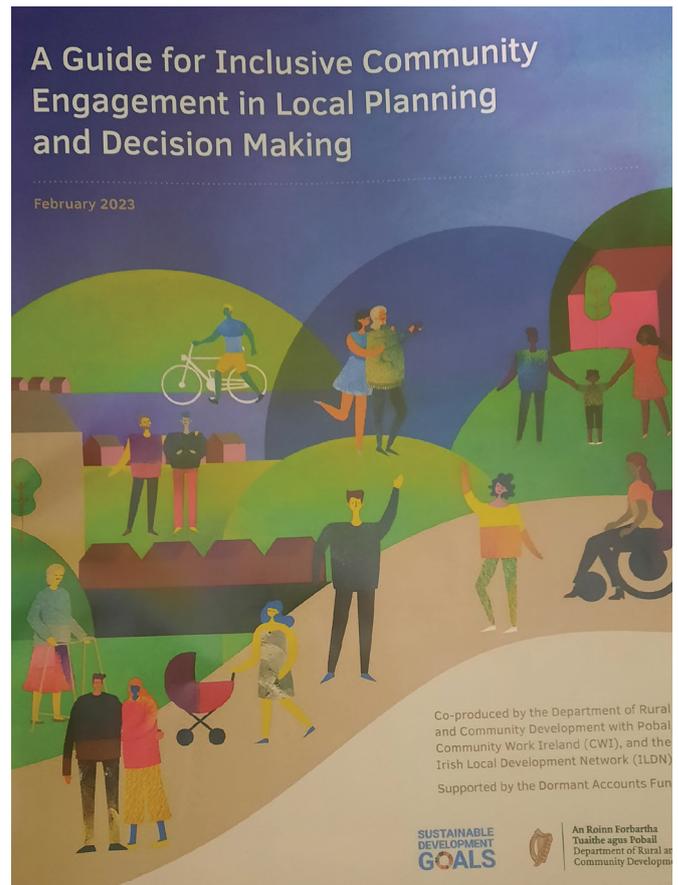
The Clare Joint Policing Committee meeting was held in the Council Chamber on 16th February 2023. JPC members from the Council, Gardai, Community, Oireachtas, and elected Members attended an in-person meeting in the Council Chamber, along with members of the media. Chief Supt. Colm O'Sullivan presented a comparison of crime statistics from 2021 to 2022, noting that some of the figures had increased due to an increase in activity since Covid eg. The sale & supply of drugs, Domestic violence, fraud, driving under the influence and driving with no insurance.



The Gardaí's presentation was welcomed by JPC members and generated a lot of discussion and questions from JPC Members. In addition, JPC members were given a presentation by Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Cormac Falvey, Clare Fire Department on Major Emergency Management of Weather Events.

## Workshop on Inclusive Community Engagement

On Thursday, 24th February, the Department of Rural and Community Affairs held a workshop on "A Guide for Inclusive Community Engagement in Local Planning and Decision Making". This document was launched on 2nd February of this year by Minister Joe O'Brien.



The workshop took place in Treacy's Oakwood Arms Shannon and was facilitated by Ann Irwin, Joint National Co-ordinator of Community Works Ireland. The event, which was hosted by Clare Local Community Development Committee, was attended by Clare and Tipperary Local Community Development Committee members and LCDC support staff.

Ann Irwin gave an informative presentation on the guide which is designed to support the local consultation and engagement process with a focus on how to engage the most marginalised groups and the organisations that represent them. Ann outlined the key principles that should be used during community engagement detailing the merits of same in decision making and how to put the principles into everyday use by presenting the engagement process in three core phases: planning, implementation and review of the process.

Sarah Ferrigan of Clare PPN was invited to give a presentation on Clare’s pilot engagement project, the focus of which is to target marginalised groups in the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) Consultation process. This is one of four Pilot projects selected for funding in the country with 3 others identified in Fingal, Galway City and Wicklow. These pilot projects will help identify key learnings from engagement and consultation on the LECP in Clare and the other three pilot locations to ensure that engagement in local planning and decision making is both meaningful and effective. The timing of the workshop is beneficial as all Local Community Development Committees are preparing their Local Economic and Community plans for the next six years and will be extensively involved in public consultation.

The shared findings of the four community engagement pilot programmes will be collated later in the year and the guidance document will be updated to reflect the findings and recommendations from the pilots, including Clare. Thereafter, document will be republished and made available to all organisations involved in community engagement.



Members of Clare and Tipperary Local Community Development Committees and support staff together with Workshop Facilitator Ann Irwin, Community Works Ireland



## West Clare Jobs Fair

Following on from the success of the Clare Jobs fair held in the Ennis Digital Hub in November the West Clare Jobs fair was hosted in the new DigiClare Digital Hub in Kilrush on Wednesday, 1st March, 2023. The overall objective of the jobs fair was to help promote west Clare as a great place to work either remotely, hybrid or onsite.

The Digital and Broadband Dept in partnership with Clare Local Development Company, Dept of Social Protection, Employability Clare and Grow Remote organised this event to highlight the regions employment and training opportunities in Retail, Hospitality, Healthcare, Manufacturing, Information Technology, Public service, Maritime and Engineering.



Transition year students from Kilrush School with presenters at the West Clare Jobs Fair.



Clare County Council Staff with their stand at West Clare Jobs Fair.



Patrick Cusack from Microsoft addressing teachers and students at the Kilrush Hub at the West Clare Jobs Fair.

The fair was attended by 24 employers from the West Clare region including our own Clare Co Council recruitment section with over 300 persons attending the event seeking information on training and employment opportunities.

The event also hosted the secondary school students from Kilrush Secondary School with approximately 90 students attending. Representatives from Microsoft, Dell Technologies, Clare Co Council and Kilrush Credit Union presented to them on career and development opportunities in their locality and how to access same.

The DigiClare team also took the opportunity to promote the DigiHub facilities locally as a place to work remotely, locate your business or use the facilities for one's business requirements.

Feedback on the event from all who attended was extremely positive.

## GEOfood at the Clare Expo

The Geopark organised a fantastic representation of GEOfood at the Burren Extravaganza and Clare Expo on Feb 19th in the Falls Hotel and Spa. There was a GEOfood counter giving information about the brand, and there were six GEOfood producers in attendance showcasing and sampling the delicious locally sourced and produced food that's on offer in the Geopark. These included: **Flaggy Shore Oysters, Linnalla Premium Irish Ice-cream, Burren Premium Beef, Burren Beetroot Chutney, Aillwee Burren Gold Cheese, St. Tola Goats Cheese.** The GEOfood brand continues to grow in the Geopark and will be showcased at several more events throughout 2023. Get those tastebuds ready!



## WEST CLARE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT- KILRUSH LEA

In recent weeks our crews have been concentrating 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.

- **Drainage at Ahey Bridge, Mullagh**



- **Drainage at Ross, Loop Head**



- **Drainage at Clondegad**



- **Cutting overhanging branches R483**

## WEST CLARE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT- KILRUSH LEA

- Cutting overhanging branches at a regional road junction.



At this time of year our crews also attend to routine maintenance works like sign cleaning.



- Cleaning speed limit signs at Inch (before/after)



We also repaired a culvert at Cloonakilla, near Kilrush.

## WEST CLARE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

The weather in February has thankfully been uneventful thereby allowing crews time to plan and prepare for the upcoming Roadworks Programme. The 2023 budget allocations have been announced by the relevant funding authorities which will inform the Schedule of Municipal District Works.

The team provided input to the applications for funding under the Community Recognition Fund and we are hopeful funding will be available from this scheme to progress capital projects.

**Ennis Road, Miltown Malbay** – Works progressing on the new footpath on Ennis Road, Miltown Malbay under the Active Travel Programme.



**Fisher Street, Doolin** – Resurfacing works on Fisher Street Doolin ahead of the busy tourist season which commences in March.



## SPORTS &amp; RECREATION



February activity is consistent across the facility with gym usage exceeding pre-Covid usage figures. This is very positive for Active Ennis and we continue to promote and welcome new and returning customers to the leisure centre. As we begin March, we will shortly be entering into grass cutting season which begins in itself a significant workload increase for the caretakers. Demand for the outdoor facilities is at peak with soccer, rugby and GAA all seeking access to pitches. To that end we remind customers that the following pitches are available to book on [www.activeennis.ie](http://www.activeennis.ie) –

- 1 All weather and 3 grass pitches at John O’Sullivan Park, Lees Road
- Grass pitch at Tim Smythe Park
- All weather pitch at Gordon Drive
- Grass pitch at Glenina
- Grass pitch at Coote Park
- 1 All weather and 2 grass pitches at Kilrush Sports Complex

## Active Ennis Leisure Complex January 2023

For this month we have collated some data on usage of the facility for your information.

- The schools’ swimming program is continuing during this term with 18 schools bringing children to lessons weekly
- Term two of the swim lesson programme is also booked out following the successful completion of term one in February.

- Active Ennis is gearing up for hosting a return swim gala after a nearly 4 year hiatus due to Covid. The event brings the Munster Swimming Clubs together with over 250 swimmers competing over a day and a half in different events.

## Active Ennis Lees Road / Tim Smythe Park

Pitch usage is at capacity with during the week between 6pm to 9pm due to the many sports and clubs availing of the facility. There were 448 hours booked catering for 14,632 attendees at the time of this report for February. In particular there is sustained demand for the grass pitches at weekends by clubs and weekdays by schools. The Athletics clubs are beginning their training in preparation for the summer championships.

## Gordon Drive, Cloughleigh, Ennis

There has been a significant increase in the usage of this 5-a-side all-weather pitch with 48 hours booked catering for 579 attendees as of the 22nd February. This is likely due to the visibility of all facilities on [www.activeennis.ie](http://www.activeennis.ie)

*Facilities are open and available for booking via the website [www.activeennis.ie](http://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](mailto:info@activeennis.ie)*



Clare Sports Partnership moved into new offices in the Clare Education Centre, Government Buildings, Kilrush Road during February. This move had provided us with the opportunity to position us well for any expansion in staff and programmes in the coming years.

Hereunder are examples of some of the activities and information on programmes supported by Clare Local Sports Partnership during February as well as:

- The Partnership having achieved a Bronze award under the Xcessible programme are commencing the process to attain an Xcessible Silver Award. Xcessible is a resourced pathway to help an LSP achieve excellence into the area of inclusion and support them through the process of developing and increasing their capacity to support people with disabilities within the sport and physical activity environments.
- We are continuing to support **Older Adult** groups in active participation in sport/activity with 20 groups (430 individuals) partaking in indoor and outdoor activities.
- **Clare Comets Basketball** have set up an inclusive session on Saturday's for 25 children with a disabilities.
- 50 **Primary Schools** registered with CLSP for the new academic year 22/23 for parprogrammes such as:
  - o Playground markings
  - o SportsHall athletics
  - o Active Storytime
  - o Basketball taster sessions
- **Post-primary Schools** programmes we are offering to TYs this term include:
  - o Get Going Get Rowing (St. Caimins Secondary school, Shannon & Scariff Community College)
  - o Sportshall athletics (St. John Bosco, Kildysart)
  - o Tug of War schools' competition hopefully running in April/May
  - o Badminton (pilot programme in conjunction with Badminton Ireland beginning in Ennis Community College 23/02/2023)
- We continue to promote Women in Sport with 24 ladies are entering the final stage of our Leadership Programme. We have completed the 8 of the 11 workshops so far with attendance in the 80% for this online course.
- The annual **Club Development** survey was launched during the week of the 20/02/23. The survey has been sent to 161 sports clubs across Clare. It asks questions around the clubs needs for supports, for governance, volunteer support and grant aid. This will help guide our club development plan for the year.



# PLANNING & 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 market demand assessment is being finalised by early March and will be reviewed with the IDA in the context of proposed end-users of the site.

## TOWN CENTRE FIRST / CROÍ CONÁITHE

A Town Centre First national network meeting was held in Westmeath on 22nd February. To date, 14 Town Regeneration Officers (TROs) have been appointed across 26 counties. It is anticipated that all TROs will be appointed by the end of March.

### Sixmilebridge Masterplan

The Town Centre First team is continuing to engage with stakeholders in Sixmilebridge as part of the preparation work for a Draft Town Centre First Masterplan. Arising from the Expressions of Interest received from the public consultation event carried out last November, a 'Town Team' workshop information evening was held at the Bridge Complex in Sixmilebridge on Wednesday, 15th February. In total, 25 people attended. The workshop commenced with a presentation followed by a question-and-answer session. An interim Chairperson was also appointed. The evening concluded with several stakeholders putting their names forward to become a member of the Sixmilebridge Town Team. The next meeting is due to take place on Tuesday, 7th March, where it is anticipated that a Town Team will be formed. This team will act as a steering group and community liaison on behalf of the consultants and local authority, feeding into the ongoing development of the masterplan. Work on the Draft Masterplan continues by the design team Allies & Morrison. It is anticipated that a Draft Masterplan will be on public display and public consultation from Friday, 31st March, until Friday, 21st April.

### 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, including Shannon Chamber, as part of the implementation of the Shannon Town Centre Masterplan. The One Shannon Hub is ready to progress to Design Stage and funding streams are being identified to enable delivery of a number of projects identified with the Shannon Town Centre Masterplan.



Some attendees on the night of 15/02/23 in Sixmilebridge.



Clare County Council at the launch of the Shannon Chamber Strategic Plan.

## FORWARD PLANNING



### Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029

The Chief Executive's Report on the 170 submissions received following the public consultation on the Proposed Amendments on the Draft Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 was issued on 30th January, 2023, to the Elected Members for their consideration. The report sets out a summary of each submission and the Chief Executive's response and recommendation for each.

The Elected Members have commenced their consideration

of the Proposed Amendments to the Draft Plan and the Chief Executive's Report on the submissions received. A series of informal workshops have been held during February with the Elected Members to facilitate the consideration of the Chief Executive's Report. The Elected Members have until early March to consider the Chief Executive's Report. A special Council meeting is scheduled for March for Elected Members to conclude their considerations and by resolution make the new County Development Plan, with or without proposed amendments for the period 2023-2029.

### Public realm works at Parliament Street, Ennistymon

The Forward Planning team were successful in securing funding under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2022 to undertake public realm enhancement works at Parliament Street, Ennistymon. This follows on from the Ennistymon Enhancement Plan, where Parliament Street was identified as an area with high potential to contribute positively to the streetscape of Ennistymon town centre. This planned project proposes to enhance the public realm offering at Parliament Street to make it a more pedestrian friendly, age-friendly, and accessible street. The brief development stage is underway and tenders will be sought for consultancy services in the second quarter of 2023.



Proposed public realm project at Parliament St, Ennistymon. Image extracted from the Ennistymon Enhancement Plan.

## RZLT Timeline for maps

Draft Map		Supplemental Map for lands additional to Draft Map		Final Map * (see note)		Annual (draft) Map ** (see note)	
Only map land in-scope by:	1 October 2022	Only map land in-scope by:	1 April 2023			Only map land in-scope by:	1 January each year commencing 2024
Public display	1 November 2022 – 1 January 2023	Public display	1 May 2023 – 1 June 2023	Publish	1 December 2023	Public display	1 February – 1 April
Put submissions online	11 January 2023	Put submissions online	11 June 2023	Tax in effect by	February 2024	Put submissions online	11 April
Refer to Consultees including Irish Water/TII	Not later than 21 January 2023	Refer to Consultees including Irish Water/TII	Not later than 21 June 2023			Refer to Consultees including Irish Water/TII	Not later than 21 April
Local Authority to notify owner of determination	Not later than 1 April 2023	Local Authority to notify owner of determination	Not later than 1 August 2023			Local Authority to notify owner of determination	Not later than 1 July
Appeal of determination to An Bord Pleanála (ABP)	Not later than 1 May 2023	Appeal of determination to An Bord Pleanála (ABP)	Not later than 1 September 2023			Appeal of determination to An Bord Pleanála (ABP)	Not later than 1 August

### 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 next step is to consider the submissions received. This is

ongoing, the Forward Planning Team are currently in the process of assessing and making a determination on all submissions. The Council is required 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.

### Project at Cappa Village, Kilrush

The Forward Planning team was successful in securing funding to deliver works at Cappa Village under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2022. The project arises from the Cappa Enhancement Strategy which identified key sites to sustainably develop the village while preserving its maritime character and scale. The funding provides for a new connection to be made from an existing recreational amenity to the adjoining coastal walk. This will further usage and increase connectivity with adjoining residential areas while opening up views to the Shannon Estuary. Universal design and inclusivity underpin the proposal, which will open up a valuable recreational amenity



Proposed public realm project at Cappa village. Image extracted from the Cappa Enhancement Plan.

to all who wish to use it. The proposed amphitheatre seeks to create a social space in the village which can accommodate day-to-day, as well as special outdoor events. The brief development stage is underway and a site visit was undertaken by the project team in February. Tenders will be sought for consultancy services in the second quarter of 2023.

### Corofin Enhancement Strategy

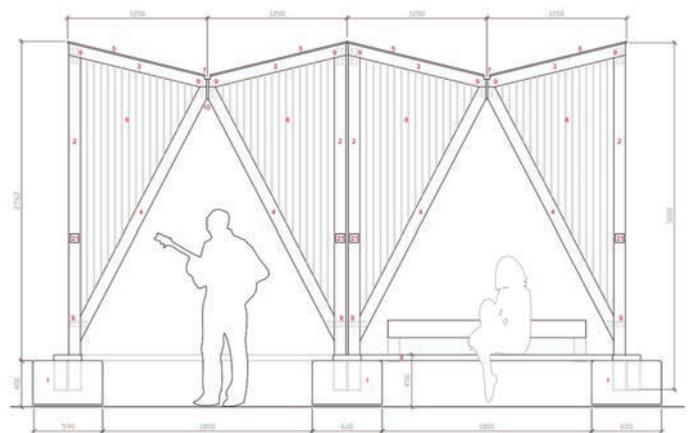
Clare County Council and National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) are working in partnership to prepare an Enhancement Strategy for the village of Corofin. A multi-disciplinary design team led by Hall McKnight Architects have been appointed to prepare the plan. The design team have issued the public consultation report to the steering group and they have adapted the design proposals based on the feedback from the second



stage of consultation. The design team are now progressing the proposals to statutory permissions stage, and this work will continue in March.

### 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. Alan Meredith Studio Ltd have been appointed to fabricate the structures and the fabrication process is underway. The fabrication process will conclude in mid-2023.



## HERITAGE

### NPWS Local Biodiversity Action Fund 2023

Fourteen applications have been submitted for the NPWS Local Biodiversity Action Fund 2023. Several applications are building on work that has been underway over several years by Clare County Council, others are new initiatives and six applications are supporting partner organisations in their efforts to raise awareness and conservative biodiversity in the county.

The applications made are as follows:

- Clare Wetland Field Survey 2023
- A pilot project on the evaluation of the impacts of Climate Change on coastal biodiversity at Loophead, County Clare
- Ennis Circuitscape study (Bat species)
- Barn Owl Conservation measures
- Survey to detail the distribution and extent of invasive alien plant species (IAPS) along selected regional and local primary roads in West Clare MD
- Killaloe MD Annual Invasive Alien Species Treatment
- Shannon MD Tree Survey and Management
- Shannon MD Giant Hogweed control on the Errinagh Canal and Blackwater River
- Irish Whale Dolphin Group, 30 years of Knowledge of the Shannon Dolphins Celebrating and anniversary
- Survey of the distribution and abundance of the rare and

characteristic flowering plants of the Burren

- The Hare's Corner – Communications Package
- The Cratloe Gateway Biodiversity Project with Shannon Municipal District as part of the implementation of the Cratloe Biodiversity Action Plan
- Monitoring the Quagga mussel (*Dreissena rostriformis bugensis*) invasion in the Shannon: informing spread, ecology, impact and management
- Ardnaculla Summer School Biodiversity Programme.

### Clare Irish Community Archival Network (iCAN)

Three new community groups have joined the Clare Irish Community Archival Network (iCAN) and website: <https://clare-heritage.org/> Training is being undertaken for the new iCAN groups from Boston, Clonlara and Tulla.

### Clare Creative Ireland Heritage projects 2023

Clare Creative Ireland 2023 proposed heritage projects include the following:

- Continuation of survey and launch of the Clare Cillíní Survey
- Reading Your Local Landscape course to be held in Ennis
- Barn Owl publication for children, libraries, and schools
- Song and wellness education initiative with the Clare Education Centre

- Ennis Gardening Festival and Gardening for Biodiversity course
- Video on Roadside Hedgerow Management.

### Reading Your Local Landscape

Sixteen new students have now signed up for the 10th Reading Your Local Landscape course, which will be held in the Clare Museum, Ennis, and the course will then run each Tuesday from March to June.

### Dromore Stables Lesser Horseshoe Bat Roost Conservation Works

The Heritage Council is planning works to the Dromore Stables Bat Roost, one of the largest known lesser horseshoe bat maternity roosts in Ireland.



Anna Meehan, Catherine Casey, Lorcan Scott, from the Heritage Council and Congella McGuire at Dromore Stables discussing the stables building conservation works at Dromore.

## CONSERVATION AND BUILT HERITAGE

### Built Heritage Investment Scheme

The 2023 Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) was announced on 16th November 2022 and closed on 27th January 2023. The deadline for applications to be returned to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for the BHIS was 10th February and 10 projects were recommended for funding by the Council, valued at €96,000. It is anticipated that announcement of successful applications will be made in March/April.

### Historic Structures Fund

The 2023 Historic Structures Fund (HSF) was announced on 16th November 2022 and the closing date for applications was 27th January 2023. The deadline for applications to be returned

to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for the HSF was 10th February and five projects were forwarded to the Department. It is anticipated that the announcement of successful applications will be made in April.

### Community Monuments Fund

The 2023 Community Monuments Fund (CMF) was announced on 21st November 2022 and closed on 31st January 2023. The deadline for applications to be returned to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for the Community Monuments Fund was 14th February and nine projects were submitted for funding by the Council. It is anticipated that announcement of successful applications will be made in April.

## DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT – PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The table below shows the number of planning applications processed during the month of February 2023.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS	February 2023	Year to date 2023
No. of planning applications received	70	125
No. of planning decisions made	73	138
No. of decisions notified by An Bord Pleanála	1	2
No. of pre-planning enquiries received	20	38
No. of Section 5 applications	8	14
No. of Section 97 Exemption Cert applications (in respect of Part V of the Planning & Dev Act 2000)	6	9
Submissions received regarding Compliance	26	44

## PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

The table below provides a summary of Enforcement activity for 2023 as a whole and for the month of February 2023.

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

## LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

- The **Trading Online Voucher Scheme**, which provides grant support to small businesses to develop an ecommerce website, has continued to see strong interest. In February, three applications have been approved while two grants were drawn down.
- **Mentoring:** LEO Clare began 2023 with a continued strong requirement for all of our Mentoring Options including mentoring in Starting a Business, Finance, Digital Marketing, Export Development and Brexit. In February 22 mentoring applications have been assigned.
- **Training:** LEO Clare continued to see strong demand for online training support offering during February as our new programme for 2023 began. The main topics of interest to Clare enterprises were Start Your Own Business Programmes, Primary Course in Food Safety, Food Starter Programmes, and the commencement of a Management Development Programme for Female Entrepreneurs.

nationwide, supported by Enterprise Ireland and the local authorities, takes place from the 6th-10th March this year across the country.

While there are hundreds of events taking place nationally during the week, including 5 spotlight events that are available for free online, there are plenty of events in Clare open to all. These events will focus on 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.

### Cliffs Of Moher and Retail Expo

The inaugural Cliffs of Moher and Clare Retail Expo took place over 2 days on February 19th and 20th at the Cliffs of Moher and the Falls Hotel Ennistymon. With over 30 local food and craft businesses exhibiting over the weekend to both the public and over 50 local and national buyers.

### Local Enterprise Week 2023



Small businesses and budding entrepreneurs will have the opportunity to sample 23 events aimed at helping them to start or grow their business as part of this year’s Local Enterprise Week in Clare. The initiative of the Local Enterprise Offices

The Local Enterprise Office supported the events organisation and supported many of the businesses preparation for the event through our broad range of supports including mentoring, upskilling and other practical supports. Initial feedback from the businesses who showcased is positive with many making sales on the day to the public and securing new contracts with buyers who attended on the Monday.



### February Evaluation Committee Meeting

The Local Enterprise Office Evaluation and Approvals Committee (EVAC) held their first evaluation meeting of 2023 in February. Two Business Expansion and one Priming Grant project totalling €82,706 was approved for funding.

### Promoting economic ties with Philadelphia, USA

LEO Clare have a long standing arrangement with Littus, a market entry facilitator located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Littus are an enabler for Clare businesses seeking to explore business opportunities in the US. To date the majority of engagement for Clare businesses has been via video call given the restrictions of Covid-19. This month we finally got the opportunity to travel to Philadelphia.

Ivan Tuohy, Great Visitor Experiences, joined the Cathaoirleach, Cllr Tony O’Brien, Director of Service, Liam Conneally, and Head of Enterprise, Padraic McElwee on the trip.



The primary aim of the trip was to explore market opportunities for Great Visitor Experiences but also, equally important, explore potential opportunities to develop trade links between Clare and various locations in Pennsylvania. Further updates will be provided in later Management Reports.

## PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

### Property Transactions and Conveyancing

The Table below shows the number of property transactions completed by Property Management Unit in February 2023, together with the totals for 2023 to date and the full year 2022.

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

Transaction type	February 2023	Year to date 2023	Full year 2022
Lease / Sub Lease of Property / Building	0	0	4
Licence to use property / building	2	2	13
Grazing Agreement for Lands	13	13	22
Deed of Transfer signed	2	2	19
Contract for Sale / acquisition signed	0	1	2
Deed of Right of Way / Wayleave signed	0	0	6
Deed of Rectification / Variation signed	0	1	10
Allotment Agreements signed	38	38	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

The renewal of the agreements for the Shannon allotments for the year 2023 has been completed. It has been possible, with improved management of the allotments, to allocate a few vacant allotments to those on the waiting list. A meeting with the Allotment Association took place at the end of January to review governance, maintenance and operational issues. 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.

### Acquisition of Inagh Garda Station

The Council has is currently drawing up a lease agreement with the amalgamated Inagh and Inis Housing Association so that they can move in to the recently acquired former Inagh Garda Station. This is a further example of moving to acquire vacant buildings and work with local groups to find a use for them. Such collaborations are key to local community development.

## DERELICT SITES

Following a very busy year in 2022, when a total of 69 new derelict site files were opened, to date in 2023, a further 7 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. 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. However, with time and effort, working with owners, financial institutions and other departments, there are definitely options for positive redevelopment and revitalisation of many such derelict sites.

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

Derelict Sites	February 2023	Year to date 2023	Full year 2022
No. of new files opened	5	10	69
No. of Section 8(2) Notices issued – Intention to enter site on Derelict Sites Register	3	7	33
No. of Section 8(7) Notices issued – Entry of site onto Derelict Sites Register	5	7	22
No. of Section 11 Notices issued – Measures required to render the site non-derelict	0	0	0
No. of files closed / property removed from Derelict Sites Register	0	0	21
No. of Notices served to Compulsorily Purchase (CPO) (see note below)	3	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 had been initiated in two more properties but this is now 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 CPOs have been 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, County Clare.

## VACANT HOMES

During the month of February, workshops were held with each of the Municipal Districts where information on the challenges and the opportunities for both derelict sites and vacant properties were outlined. The new team in the Property Management Unit of the Economic Development Directorate was established in January to focus our efforts on reducing levels of vacancy and dereliction in towns, villages and rural areas. 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, which was introduced in July 2022 is for the refurbishment of vacant and derelict properties, 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 <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/c2183-croi-conaithe-towns-fund/> The contact email address for further information and guidance on the grants scheme is [vacanthomes@clarecoco.ie](mailto:vacanthomes@clarecoco.ie)

The following table shows the status of the applications received to date. Of the total applications of 55 received to date, 33 were received in 2022 and 22 to date this year. Of the total applications received to date, 62% relate to rural locations and 38% relate to properties located in towns and villages.

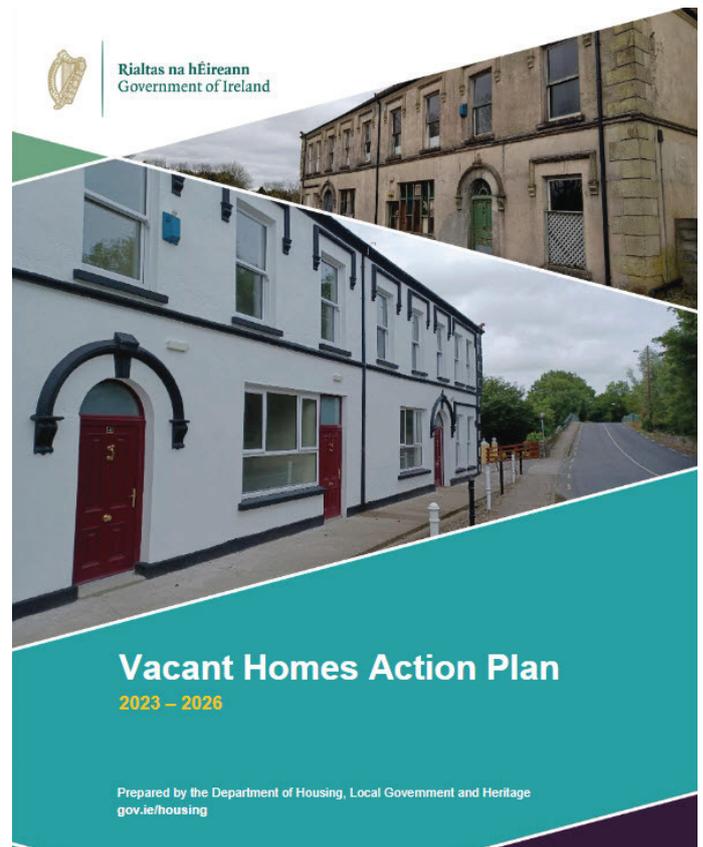
Number of Applications	February	Overall Totals
Applications received	8	55
Applications being processed, further information requested etc	8	44
Applications Granted	3	7
Applications refused or withdrawn	3	4

During the month of February the Team has conducted 10 walk-in information clinics for members of the public to have a private appointment in relation to their particular circumstances and property. This has been very well received and the engagement to date has been very positive. The Clinics provided an opportunity to give information and advice in relation to eligibility, what documentation to submit and how the grants scheme works. These clinics have been timed to coincide with the national campaign on the grants scheme and had been recommended by the elected members.

At the end of January, the Department of Housing, Local

Government and Heritage commenced a six-week advertising campaign on the grants scheme for those who own or wish to buy a vacant home with a view to converting it into a principal primary residence. The first phase of the campaign will focus on the recently expanded Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant, which is one of the key pillars of the Vacant Homes Action Plan 2023-2026. The second phase will focus on all the supports and schemes available, which will be documented on a new web page, [gov.ie/vacancy](http://gov.ie/vacancy) campaigns page. These supports include the Repair and Leasing Scheme, the planning exemption for the conversion of commercial premises into residential units and the Buy and Renew Scheme.

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 number 1800 number and email ([info@housingagency.ie](mailto:info@housingagency.ie)) for members of the public to contact them on general queries on the scheme. 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.

## TAKING IN CHARGE OF HOUSING ESTATES

The following Housing Estates were taken in charge following resolution passed at the Shannon MD meeting held on 17th January, 2023:

- Cluainín Shannon
- Dun Rí Phase 1, Bunratty
- Ard Ratha, Sixmilebridge, Stage 2

These three estates were on the register of unfinished estates and through collaboration between the Planning Department and all the relevant stakeholders, these estates have been completed to taking in charge standard.



### Design and Supervision of Remedial Works 2023

**Moinín, Kilkee:** Remedial works are currently being carried out, including repairs to roads, footpaths, storm water network, freshwater network, foul water network and other general items within the estate. The value of the tender works is €136,000. This estate comprises of twenty-eight houses. The works are currently on target with a completion date anticipated by the end of March 2023.

**Cul Daire, Lissycasey:** Remedial works have commenced to the roads, footpaths, freshwater networks, and other general items within the estate. The value of these works is €17,500. This estate comprises of twenty-six houses. All works are currently on target to be completed by the end of March 2023.

## SHANNON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

### Summary of works

Cratloe Tidy Towns met with staff from Shannon MD to discuss the various projects identified in their 'Cratloe Biodiversity Action Plan 2022-2027' and explore potential funding options that will assist in delivery.



L-r: Tom Golden, Ann Breen, (both Cratloe Tidy Towns) and Anne Griffin, A/SEO.

Shannon MD is commencing preparatory works to assist and support the KPMG Women's Irish Open in Dromoland commencing in late August. It promises to be a truly memorable occasion with a new specific community event being planned for Newmarket on Fergus, with music and family entertainment. Improvement works were recently carried out to a section of the walking/jogging route alongside Shannon Estuary which commences near Illaunmanagh Shannon Crematorium. The Park run is held here on a weekly basis every Saturday morning.



New bus shelter and associated works, Aidan Park, Shannon.



New bus shelter and associated works opposite the Skycourt Centre Shannon. New bus shelter and associated works opposite the Spring Hotel In Ballycasey Shannon.



General maintenance, removal of overgrown brush, removal of waste material, and repairs to stormwater manholes at Tullyvarraga Shannon.



Works are progressing well on the Active Travel project in the Ballycasey Park Shannon. The works include new footpaths, paved areas, new public lights, and new street furniture.

# PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

## TRANSPORTATION

### Roadworks Programme and Operations

The preparation of the 2023 Schedule of Municipal District Works (Annual Roadworks Programme) is underway and will be presented 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 section is working with all agencies to enhance the public transport provision across the county. The Transportation Department within Clare County Council have liaised with Limerick City & County Council, Bus Éireann, the National Transport Authority (NTA) and their consultants Jarrett Walker & Associates (JWA) and Systra. The draft Bus Connects plan has now gone to public consultation as of Wednesday, 22nd February 2023. The public consultation on the draft new network will run for 6 weeks until 7th April 2023. A major outcome in this regard will be more public bus routes with much greater frequency between settlements in southeast Clare including Ardnacrusha and Parteen and Limerick as part of Limerick Bus Connects.

#### Active Travel

Funding for the Active Travel programme for 2023 was announced by the Minister for Transport in early February 2023. €4.5million 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:

- Public consultation phase due to commence for the €1.8million Tulla Road Cycle Scheme.
- Construction works nearing completion at St. Flannans National School in Inagh under 'Safe Routes To School' programme.
- Construction works ongoing in Ennis town (including Ballybeg), Tulla, Spanish Point, Miltown Malbay, Clarisford (Killaloe) & Ballycasey Close (Shannon).
- Public lighting installation ongoing in Ballybeg (Ennis).

- 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 being advanced for Clonmoney National School in consultation with An Taisce under 'Safe Routes To School' programme.
- Preliminary design completed with landowner engagement continuing for schemes in Roslevan and Meelick.
- Option Selection phase being advanced for cycling schemes at Limerick Road (incl. St. Flannans Drive) and Lahinch Road as part of development of the cycling network within Ennis.

### 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 & 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: Enevero (Formerly SEE Airtricity) dedicated call centre at 0818-372772
- Local Authority Identification – via Local Authority's website or contact number. <https://www.clarecoco.ie/services/roads-and-transport/road-maintenance-issues/report-a-broken-streetlight/>

### Winter Maintenance

The winter maintenance team implement the Winter Maintenance plan from 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. Approximately 700km of the road network is included in

the Winter Maintenance Plan. Given the scale of the resources involved in delivering this winter service plan, it is not possible to provide this service to all parts of the road network and it may not be possible to ensure that all routes are kept free of ice or snow at all times on the treated routes in the plan.

## 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><b>TII HD 15 Sites</b></p>	<p><b>For the N85:</b> 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> <p><b>For the N68:</b> Derrycrossaun junction is now completed.</p>
<p><b>TII HD 17 Sites</b></p>	<p><b>For the N68:</b> 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><b>For the N67:</b> Topographical surveys of junctions N67/L1022, N67/50222/, N67/L50221 &amp; 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.</p> <p>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>
<p><b>Special Speed Limits</b></p>	<p>CCC are 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.</p>

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Other Projects 2023:

Project	Progress Update
<b>Low Cost Safety Schemes 2023</b>	<p>The funding application for Low Cost Safety schemes for 2023 was submitted to the Department of Transport in November 2022. Funding of €530,000 has been granted for 2023 for the following projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Junction of the R473 and L-82503-0 in Tiermaclane</li> <li>• Ardnacrusha</li> <li>• O'Connors Cross</li> <li>• Sixmilebridge Shannon Road</li> <li>• Carmody St / Parnell St</li> <li>• Summer Hill</li> <li>• Ballkeel South Kilfenora Junction R476 &amp; L-5084-0</li> <li>• Ballkeel North Kilfenora Junction R476 &amp; L-5092-0</li> <li>• R462 North of Tulla</li> <li>• R352 Junction Sightlines - Cloonamirran L4036</li> <li>• Tennis Club - Benson Box Factory, Killaloe L3084</li> <li>• Inch Bridge</li> <li>• Kilnaboy Corofin Junction R476 &amp; L-5250-30</li> <li>• Cloughleigh Road</li> <li>• Cooraclare</li> <li>• Connolly</li> <li>• R352 Junction Sightlines - Cranagher L4060</li> </ul>
<b>EuroVelo 1</b>	The project is substantially completed. All the signage has now been installed.
<b>Liaison with NTA regarding bus stops</b>	Construction works are completed. Bus Stops are being considered at Manus Cross Clarecastle on the R458, Ballyea Cross on the N85 & Kilnaboy on the R476 regional road.
<b>Liaison with NTA regarding bus shelters</b>	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.
<b>Road Schedule &amp; Queries</b>	Search requests from the public and Municipal Districts regarding the road schedule are being carried out on an ongoing basis. Updates to the roads schedule is carried out as updates are being received.
<b>Cycle and traffic counts</b>	Ongoing monitoring at various locations.
<b>Planning Reports</b>	Planning reports are being provided for the Planning Department on a continuous basis.
<b>Clare County Cycle Network</b>	<p>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.</p> <p>The draft cycling strategy is being developed in conjunction with the NTA and their consultants AECOM.</p>
<b>Latoon Cycling Infrastructure</b>	Procurement process has commenced however it has been paused pending the outcome of a Planning Application lodged by Irish Water, the outcome of which may have a direct impact on the project.
<b>Climate Adaptation</b>	The funding application for 2023 Climate Adaptation Grants has been announced.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

### 'Malbay Track and Trail'

The Road Design Office are assisting 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.

### 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:

- AA Screening: Tender Documents issue for 2023 Bridge Projects.
- Clonboy Bridge: Works Complete. Snagging ongoing.
- Magherabaun Bridge: Contractor on site.



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

## General Design Office

### Ballyallia Lake Amenity Park Scheme

At the design stage, and as part of the Ballyallia Lake Amenity Park Scheme, refurbishment and extension of the old lifeguard hut is being proposed with the intention of providing much needed facilities to include a covered changing area, showers, lockers, toilets (universal) along with covered cycle parking.



### Fanore Beach Public Toilet Refurbishment

Construction work is progressing on the refurbishment of the public toilet building located at Fanore beach. The project will provide more cubicle space within the Male & Female toilets and a Separate Part M compliant WC. Works are due to be completed by 17th March 2023.



## Health and Safety

The Health & Safety Teams programme of work as detailed in the Annual Safety Report for 2021 was successfully completed by December 2022.

The Health & Safety Team are currently compiling all the data for the Annual Safety Report 2022, where it will set out the programme of work for the upcoming year and set Top Level H&S Objectives in order to ensure continuous improvement in the Occupational Health & Safety for the Local Authority.

The annual review by the Safety Management Committee is scheduled for March where subject to approval the programme of work, Top Level H&S Objectives and updates to the Occupational Health & Safety management System will be issued to all staff for implementation in early 2023.

### Drumgeely Neighbourhood Centre

The Part VIII application for the refurbishment of Drumgeely Neighbourhood Centre was approved at the February Council meeting. Works are now ongoing for the preparation of Tender documents.

### 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 the 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 the updated position relating to works done and progress made on the major capital projects being managed by the PMO during February.

**Doolin Pier Visitor Services Building** – Clare County Council re-engaged with the appointed Consultants in February 2023, having paused the design process previously to allow the necessary time and space for surveying, monitoring and consideration of some of the more significant environmental requirements impacting the proposed development. This follows Cross Directorate meetings held in recent months and the recent AA assessment screening exercise. Lands contiguous to the proposed building footprint are currently being reviewed to assess suitability with a view to incorporation into the overall design and subsequent submission to An Bord Pleanála for planning approval at the earliest possible juncture.

**Ennis Public Realm Regeneration (Project B)** – We continue to await final approval from the Departments URDF team to progress to the next stage of the process, further to submission of additional information and clarifications which they requested following their URDF visit to Ennis in November 2022 and subsequent online meetings. In parallel, the Design team has been appointed by Irish Water to progress the rehabilitation of foul sewers at Ennis 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. A briefing to update on the current status and next steps was presented to the Ennis MD Cllrs at their February Meeting.

**Ennistymon Inner Relief Road and Bridge Crossing (Blake's Corner)** – The Judicial Review litigation is ongoing. The next Court date is scheduled for March 6th 2023, the outcome of which will inform our next course of action.

**Killaloe Bridge and By-Pass** – Works continue to progress at pace for this significant infrastructural project and €15m funding was allocated in the recently announced TII Programme for 2023.

Piling works for the Eastern (Tipperary) side of the river crossing have been completed and the 1st RC pour has been completed for the Eastern bridge abutment. Preparation of temporary works to facilitate the installation of the pile capping to the Eastern bridge pier has commenced.

On the Western (Clare) side of the river the piling works are also being progressed by the piling sub-contractor PJ Edwards Ltd. The excavation and replacement of unsuitable material from the site compound towards the Clare side of the river crossing at Clarisford is substantially complete and the stream culverts and mammal pass installation have been completed for this section. This work will facilitate access to the bridge location

for larger plant including the piling activities and bridge construction.

Piling works for the new Kilmastulla River bridge crossing on the R494 has been completed by Sisk's other piling subcontractor, Terradrive Piling & Foundations Ltd. Formworks are now progressing in anticipation of concrete pours of the bridge abutments expected to be completed in the coming weeks. Long term traffic management arrangements are still in place to facilitate the construction of the R494 with site clearance and enabling works progressing. Works to the foul sewer line have also commenced at the Roolagh area towards the junction with the R496.

Utility service diversions are also being carried out on the R494 and utility investigations are progressing elsewhere via slit trench identification and ongoing coordination with the relevant providers.

The construction of the Killaloe Bypass section is progressing with some storm culvert installation and earthworks operations now commenced. There is a large volume of material to be excavated from this section of the project which will be mass hauled to areas requiring build-up of fill to road formation layer on the Killaloe Bypass section and on the R494.

Other works include remaining site clearance, archaeological monitoring, ecological monitoring & property pre-condition surveys. The few outstanding Land Acquisitions are currently being progressed, mostly by agreement with others via the Arbitration process, with the next one scheduled to be heard in late March 2023.

**Kilkee Flood Relief Scheme** – Both the Council and the OPW have issued comments on the fluvial and pluvial option costings and the Multi Criteria Analysis (MCA). Our Technical Advisors, JBA are formalising responses to both. Any agreed adjustments to the MCA and costings will be brought forward to the Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA). The preferred fluvial/pluvial option will be advised by the above process, following which, drawings and documents will be prepared for public presentation. It is anticipated that a Public Consultation Day (PCD) will be run at some stage in April 2023. Details of the PCD will be advertised through the various media outlets in advance. Preparation of the associated Options Report is ongoing. In addition, JBA have issued a Fisheries Report for CCC/OPW review. Consultation with Irish Water is ongoing in respect of the proposed new Waste Water Treatment Plant for Kilkee and the associated interfaces with the Flood Relief Scheme. Further information is available on the Project Website [www.kilkeefrs.ie](http://www.kilkeefrs.ie)

**Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF)** – RPS Consulting Engineers are currently progressing the detailed design stage of the road scheme. Survey information

has been considered from the site investigation works completed by Priority Geotechnical Ltd late last year.

The issues raised in the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit are also being reviewed in the final detailed design which will assist with the land-take requirements, preparation of the scheme drawings and specifications for a competitive Tender process for the works in Q2 2023.

A progress meeting was held with RPS on the 1st of February 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 Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage regarding the proposed delivery of this LIHAF scheme. Moreover, cross directorate meetings are continuing with the Housing & Planning Departments of the Council regarding the optimum design and composition of the housing element of the scheme.

**Lough Donnell Culvert Repair works** – Detailed design continues. In tandem, we are engaging with the NPWS and Inland Fisheries regarding their requirements. We plan to procure and appoint a contractor in Q2 of 2023 to carry out these important works.

**N19 Shannon Airport Access Road** – The Phase 3 (Design and Environmental Evaluation) stage is currently ongoing. Phase 3 is expected to take up to mid-2023 to complete culminating with an application by Clare County Council to An Bord Pleanála for the Project accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

Significant progress has been made in terms of construction methodologies & sequencing, junction design development, active travel measures, access strategies and scheme land-take requirements. The Project Team continue to engage with the relevant project stakeholders such as TII Road Safety Section, TII Structures, the NTA, the Gardai, Inland Fisheries, Irish Water, Shannon Airport and Shannon Commercial Properties with the view of putting the emerging design to public consultation and display in the coming weeks.

In advance of the next public consultation, it is intended to brief the Shannon MD Cllrs on the current status of the project at their next meeting on March 10th 2023.

Further information and associated literature on the project can be accessed via the scheme website [www.shannonaccess.ie](http://www.shannonaccess.ie)

**N85 Kilnamona Road Improvement Scheme** – Disappointingly, the expected funding required to appoint Consultants was not provided for in the initial 2023 funding allocation announced by TII in the last 2 weeks. We have queried the position with them

and await their response which we hope will be more positive.

**Quin Flood Relief Scheme** – Favourable weather conditions experienced during recent weeks have allowed for the archaeological works to be completed earlier than programmed. No associated risks to the scheme were highlighted during the assessment. The Archaeological Impact Assessment report will be issued to the Council in the coming weeks. Enabling works and compound establishment will commence then in March with a view to carrying out the more substantive construction works at the earliest juncture.

**Remediation of sites containing ACM** – The design is now at an advanced stage, and it is envisaged that tender documents will be issued in coming weeks in respect of the appointment of operators for the acceptance and processing of Asbestos Containing Materials to be extracted from the subject sites in West Clare. Tender documents for the works contract involving the excavation, screening and transport of the ACM material are also well progressed. Prior Information Notices have been issued to the market in February 2023 to facilitate earlier engagement with appropriate operators with a view to streamlining the procurement process. Clare County Council and our Technical Advisors, FTCo had a very constructive meeting with the EPA in February 2023 to brief them as to present status and present the proposed remediation methodology. This was a very beneficial meeting and paves the way to proceed through procurement and construction. 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** – Scheme Consultant RPS have issued updated draft flood inundation maps following their ongoing breach/overtopping analysis of the various coastal event scenarios. The updated draft maps are currently under CCC/OPW review.

The consultant has also issued updated embankment drawings/designs addressing initial comments from the Council and the OPW. The feasibility report on the Nature-Based Solutions for Catchment Management is currently being revised by RPS following review comments issued by the Council and the OPW. RPS ecologists are attending site regularly to address the multiple environmental surveys required under the scheme.

Coordination between the FRS and N19 Shannon Airport Access Road design teams is ongoing to address interface between the schemes. Further information on the scheme is available on [www.shanntownandenvironsfrs.com](http://www.shanntownandenvironsfrs.com)

**Springfield, Clonlara FRS** – Members will be aware from previous reports that works on site are due to recommence in March when weather conditions improve. Outstanding works include the installation of the two permanent pumps, associated pipework, trash screen for the pump sump, landscaping, drainage channels and fencing.

**West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 1: Kilrush to Kilkee)** – The Topographical Surveyor has been appointed and surveying will commence at the earliest juncture. In tandem, landowner meetings and ecological surveys are ongoing. Consultation meetings with the NPWS and IFA have also occurred during the month of February.

**West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 2: Ennis to Ennistymon)** – “Public Consultation 2” is ongoing presently with public displays and questionnaires available in the Corofin and Ennistymon Libraries as well as in the Foyer of Council HQ. In person consultation took place at the end of February in Ennistymon, Ennis and Corofin. When the consultation period concludes in early March, Clare County Council will review all feedback received and use it to inform 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’ will be carried out in mid-March. Following recommendation, Clare County Council will set about appointing the successful tenderer and commence Public Consultation for the ‘Route Option Selection’ phase.

**Other Greenway Proposals** – Over €2.1m was recently allocated to the Greenway projects in Clare under the 2023 TII Greenway Programme which was very welcome news indeed. As well as the abovementioned, 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 as well as the Athlone to Galway Greenway, a small part of which, is included in County Clare .

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## FIRE & BUILDING CONTROL SECTION

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### Recent Training Courses

The following brigade training courses were held during February:

- Abrasive Wheel Training delivered to personnel in all 7 Stations including Brigade Maintenance personnel.
- Emergency Services Driving Standard Theory and prometric online testing.
- 2 personnel commenced their practical Emergency Services Driving Standard Training.
- Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) briefing sessions took place at Scarriff, Killaloe, Kilrush and Kilkee Fire Stations.

### Fire Station Projects

McKenna Consulting Engineers were appointed as Professional Consulting Engineers to oversee the construction of a new 2 Bay Shed at Kilrush Fire Station and yard upgrade works subject to funding approval from the National Directorate for Fire & Emergency Management.

### Fire Service Personnel

Recruitment campaigns for Fire Fighters are continuing around the county.

### Home Fire Safety Checks

Clare County Fire & Rescue Service are rolling out a Home Fire Safety Checks Campaign which is being made available to older people and persons living alone in isolated areas. In order to avail of this service, we are advising that people call 065-6846302 or email [firesafety@clarecoco.ie](mailto:firesafety@clarecoco.ie) to register their interest. Firefighters from the local Fire Brigade will call to homes, provide fire safety advice and install smoke detectors where required.



## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Fire & Building Control Section Main Activities	Jan 2023	Feb 2023 (Up to 27.02.2023)	Year to Date
Number of Emergency Calls Attended	95	88	183
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Received	6	4	10
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Granted	5	5	10
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Invalidated	0	0	0
Number of Disability Access Certificates Received	5	1	6
Number of Disability Access Certificates Granted	2	3	5
Number of Commencement Notices Received	32	23	55
Number of Dangerous Structures/Places Complaints	0	0	0

(Note: In the February Monthly Report, the Jan figures related to 1st to 27th January 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 Lees Road, Ennis.
- Mens Munster League Hurling Match.
- Clare Ladies Football Match.

Civil Defence also provided the following operational duties:

- Members participated in a search for a missing person in the Quin area. Clare Civil Defence were tasked by An Garda Síochána to conduct a search in a large area of forest and open land.

### Members' Training & Professional Development

- Volunteer Equipment Management System (VEMS) training took place in Roscrea for Civil Defence Officers.
- Swiftwater Rescue Instructors recertification.
- Cardiac First Responder Instructor recertification.
- Members of the Boat Team conducted night training on the River Fergus, Ennis.
- Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) from Clare, Wicklow, Limerick and Tipperary Civil Defence Units took part in up skilling as part of their Pre Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC) Guidelines. Training was provided by Clare Civil Defence Tutors at the Clare Civil Defence Headquarters.



## 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 3 schools to undertake assessment meetings

#### 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 meet with the Ballynacally ICA to deliver a comprehensive talk with 10 people attendance.

#### Communication campaigns

The Environment Section used print and social media campaigns in February to promote positive message on: Love This Place Leave No Trace, Dog owner responsibility, Clean Air, My Waste Choose to Reuse, CLDC Invasive Specie Training, An Taisce Neat Streets Conference and Worlds Wetlands Day.

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

In February the Environment Section received 3 new AIE request, we made a final decision on 1 and another has been sent to the Office of the Commissioner for Environmental Information. The response to the AIE requests ensure 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	February 2023	Jan/February 2023
Planning applications (Domestic)	30	55
Planning applications (Large Developments)	1	1
Planning applications (Forestry)	6	11

Planning applications (Agriculture)	0	0
Inspection of Section 4 licenced premises	1	1
Domestic Wastewater Treatment Plant Inspections (NIP Plan)	0	0
Pollution complaints received	15	35
Warning & advisory letters issued	0	0
Enforcement actions (S12 issued or number of 'active' cases)	0	0
Private Commercial Drinking Water Supplies	0	0
Private Group Water Scheme supplies	8	14
Public Group Water Scheme Supplies	10	18

#### Lakes Monitoring Tender

The lakes sampling tender was prepared in February for advertising on e-Tenders. The contractor will be sampling 19 lakes in County Clare as is required by the Water Framework Directive.

#### Historic landfills

Clare County Council have made an application for funding to the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications to continue progress on the Historic Landfill programme. This will entail continued sampling and an application to An Bord Pleanála where required.

### Gardening

As can be witnessed throughout the County during February, Spring is finally arriving and with it the Gardening Team has begun preparations for National Tree Week which will take place shortly. Clare County Council works in conjunction with the Tree Council of Ireland and Coillte to provide young trees and saplings to community groups through Clare for planting in green spaces.

During February, the Garden Team undertook the replanting of a number of flower beds at the Civil Defence Headquarters,

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## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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Quin Road, Ennis. Again, these works placed a strong emphasis on introducing hardy perennial and pollinator friendly plant species, in line with the Council's ongoing commitment to the National Pollinator Action Plan.

Seasonal work continues at the Gardening Depot, with final preparations taking place before hanging baskets and spring bedding flowers are planted in advance of St. Patrick's Day. All hedgecutting and similar maintenance work will temporarily cease at the end of February until September in accordance with the Habitats Directive to ensure that bird nesting habitat within Council owned properties are protected and preserved.

### Waste Management

#### Doora Landfill

The Environment Section continue to support the Mens Shed Group on a regular basis. This month will see compost processed from Garden waste at Inagh Recycling Centre, provided to the Mens Shed group to help with their ongoing gardening projects and improvement works to the site. This is in preparation for an inspection by tidy towns in the coming months.

#### EPA Compliance

Groundwater, Surface Water and Leachate monitoring continue as per licence requirements at the Inagh, Doora and Lisdeen Facilities. There is regular communication with the EPA to help ensure full compliance at these locations. There were no recorded incidents to report in February.

#### Recycling Centres

New Speed Ramps have been installed at Ennis and Scariff Recycling Centres to help increase safety for pedestrians at the sites.

### Waste Enforcement

#### Waste Facility Permit / Certificate of Registration Applications

A total of 3 Waste Facility Permit (WFP) Review Applications have been received in February. These are currently being

assessed, site inspections have been carried out and a decision will be made whether to grant or refuse.

#### Riverbank clean-up, Clarecastle

The riverbank clean-up in Clarecastle took place on the 25th February. The Environment Section supported the clean and assisted with transfer of the waste removed during the clean-up to the Central Waste Management Facility in Inagh.

#### Staff Training

Training on changes to the Waste Management Act 1996, as amended and the Litter Pollution Act 1997, as amended has been arranged in-house for the Waste Enforcement team. This training will address the changes introduced under the Circular Economy and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2022.

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

A total of 2 Notices were issued under Section 14 of the Waste Management Act 1996 in February. We also issued 2 litter fines in February. A total of 2 litter fines were paid in February.

#### Environmental Monitoring (Illegal Dumping/Litter)

The Waste Enforcement Team continued to respond to waste and litter related complaints in February. A total of 105 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 return for 2022 to the Environmental Protection Agency. This provides a summary of all resources, inspections, monitoring and sampling and enforcement actions undertaken by the Council and it is required to be submitted in February each year.

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## WATER SERVICES

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### Annual Service Plan

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

#### Future Delivery of Water Services.

The WRC published a framework document on 24th June 2022 for the future delivery of water services for consideration by the relevant parties. This framework document will assist in ensuring a stable operational environment is maintained as the water sector completes the transition to a national water services authority.

This framework document has now informed the new master agreement which will replace the existing Service Level Agreement. This new agreement is expected to be signed in the coming months by each local authority chief executive. The agreement will allow for 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 20th January 2023 up to and including 23rd February 2023. The figures do not however reflect the time invested by the teams which is required to resolve each complaint/issue.

- 37 Customer Complaints were dealt with and closed out
- 1 Emergency Work Order was received during the timeframe
- 327 Reactive Maintenance Work Orders were dealt with and closed out
- 1 Customer Asset Flooding Work Order was received during the period
- 106 Service Requests (SRs) were raised for Field Requests and Follow On Work Orders for Reactive Maintenance work
- 36 Outage Notices were placed on the IW portal during the period. 31 unplanned works for burst water mains, water outages, pump failure, leak repair and step testing. There were 3 communication notifications issued for leak detection works, reservoir cleaning and upgrade works. 2 planned outages for pump replacement and reservoir cleaning.

#### 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, Kilgaboan, 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 the end of February.

The EPA's "Office of Environmental Enforcement" carried out an inspection at Miltown Malbay wastewater treatment plant in February 2023. Concerns were raised over Uisce Éireann's lack of progress to construct an access road to the plant which is creating performance and maintenance difficulties. The plant currently sits on private lands.

### 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. At the WWTP site, the control panel was installed in the administration building. Ducting was completed. Some footpaths, gravel areas and hand railings were completed around the tanks. Mechanical and electrical works are ongoing. At Frances Street Pump Station site, pipework from the storm tank to the pump station was constructed and manholes were installed.

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

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

#### Clarecastle Sewerage Scheme

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

Construction of the new pumping facility is nearing completion at Quay Road. The pumps, valves and meters were installed. The new control panel has been installed.

#### 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, and it is anticipated that Uisce Éireann will lodge the planning application during March.

#### 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. It is anticipated that in March Uisce Éireann will appoint 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 the 5th of December 2022 and a request for further information was received by Uisce Éireann the 7th of February 2023. Subject to all statutory consents and a tender process, it is anticipated that a Contractor will be appointed during 2023. Construction is anticipated to commence in early 2024.

#### Kilfenora Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

Construction is continuing at the WWTP site.

Pipework and ducting are mostly complete. Mechanical and electrical works are ongoing. Preparatory work for the boundary security fencing was 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.

Uisce Éireann will hold the next workshop on the 14th of March to discuss potential options. It is anticipated that in March Uisce Éireann will appoint Consultants to produce a marine model.

#### Doonbeg Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

This scheme is in the Early Contractor Involvement programme and EPS are the design/build Contractor. It is anticipated that in March Uisce Éireann will appoint 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 largest 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 commencing. 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 have 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 will be completed during March 2023.

### Clonroadmore & Clareabbey Wastewater Treatment Plants

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

### Ennis Drainage Area Plan

This project involves the gathering of all available data on the wastewater network in Ennis and surveying and monitoring of flows in the network. This information will be used to build a hydraulic model of the network. The hydraulic model can be used to model future growth in the town and accurately identify where upsizing of pipework/pumping infrastructure might be required. It will also be used to identify where groundwater is infiltrating into the network adding unnecessary additional loading. It will allow Irish Water to have confidence in obtaining the best value for money on network improvement. The consultant is reviewing the available data and preparing a surveying contract for Ennis wastewater network. The 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 continues. 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, 67 of these assets have been determined to be duplicate, non-operational assets or assets which Irish Water will not accept. Of the remaining 317 assets, 220 have now been fully transferred to Irish Water.

The 97 assets remaining to be transferred are divided into the following four categories:

- **Report prepared / Pending/ Internal Query (4 assets)** – These consist of assets for which a report is being prepared or which need further investigation or information / approval from another council section to proceed.
- **National Special Projects Office (NSPO) (67 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.

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## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

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

### Rural Water Programme

Under the 2019-2021 Multi Annual Rural Water Programme the

Ballycar GWS mains rehab is nearing completion with the 4.2km of mains now installed and brought into operation on 20th February following successful testing. Accommodation works remain to be completed with the recycling and surface dressing of the road to completed in early summer once temperatures allow.

A contractor has been appointed in January for the replacement of 650m of defective mains as part of Clohanes GWS. This contractor is due to commence works shortly. A start date is dependent on the community connection at Bartleystown which involves the extension of the existing mains by 70m to serve 2no additional dwellings.

An invitation from the Department for bid submissions for the 2022-2025 Multi Annual Rural Water Programme is still pending. This programme was set to commence 12months ago.

The Leitrim Shyan GWS was submitted for Taking in Charge by Uisce Eireann on the 15th February following the completion of the necessary transfer of lands and upgrade works. Under the 'Grant for the Improvement of a Private Water Supply to a House' 9no applications have been received to date in 2023.

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

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## CLIMATE

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### Energy

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

### Reduce your use Campaign

Clare County Council is partaking in the reduce your use campaign in association with the SEAI. This initiative is focussing 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.

### Climate Action Plan

Briefings on the Climate Action Plan were given to Cllrs at Municipal District level over the last number of months.

Briefings were held with:

- Ennis MD on 14th December, 2022.

- Shannon MD and West Clare MD 17th January, 2023.
- Killaloe MD 7th February, 2023.

These provided an opportunity to outline the statutory need for a Climate Action Plan and provide an overview of the timeline involved.

Work is ongoing in relation to the establishing of baseline information with regard to the Local Authority and the county.

### 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

#### ROAD WORKS PROGRAMME

Ennis MD staff have been preparing roads for the 2023 'Road Works Programme' including the opening of drainage channels and preparation of road edges. Required hedge-cutting was carried out on various roads throughout the district, in advance of the bird nesting season.

#### PARKING TICKET MACHINES

MD staff completed the installation of bases for new parking meters throughout the town. The new solar powered machines will facilitate contactless payments.

#### FUNDING SCHEME – COMMUNITY RECOGNITION FUND

Potential projects within the district which fitted the criteria for the scheme were selected and applications submitted with the support of various community groups in the MD. Ennis MD put forward 11 projects for potential funding.

#### LOW-COST SAFETY SCHEME

Ennis MD completed junction improvement works at Cranagher on the Tulla Road. The works involved the setting back of an existing wall at either side of the junction in order to improve visibility for motorists. Careful negotiation with the landowner was required in order to deliver a scheme which was acceptable to all parties. The project will increase the safety of all road users at this junction.

