



COMHAIRLE | CLARE  
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

# CLARE COUNTY HERITAGE

## PLAN 2017-2023



# 2017

## PLACING HERITAGE AT THE HEART OF LIFE IN COUNTY CLARE



COMHAIRLE CONTAE AN CHLÁIR  
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL



An Chomhairle Oidhreacht  
The Heritage Council



Oidhreacht an Chláir  
Clare Heritage

# FOREWORD

County Clare has an exceptionally rich and diverse heritage and it is heritage that makes our county special. Clare has its own identity, one that is founded on community and landscape knitted together by a rich built, cultural and natural heritage. This is the 3rd County Clare Heritage Plan and illustrates the commitment by Clare County Council to the promotion and protection of the county's heritage.

This Heritage Plan sets out the vision and direction for heritage management for the next six years and represents an agreed way forward and the ongoing commitment to heritage by Clare County Council's executive and elected members.

Public participation in the plan-making process was essential to ensure that the new Heritage Plan reflects and responds to public concerns and aspirations, as well as complying with national and regional heritage strategies and guidelines.

The Heritage Plan has been informed by the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 complementing and giving effect to its goals and objectives for heritage across County Clare.

The Heritage Plan seeks to strengthen existing partnerships and forge new ones for Clare heritage and for the benefit of the people of our County. It sets the scene to engage further with communities and recognises the important role of heritage in the economic, social and cultural development of the county. Clare County Council recognises and nurtures community efforts to conserve and enhance our heritage and acknowledges the huge achievements to improve the quality of life for the citizens of the county.


The Clare County Heritage Plan 2017-2023 is focused on six key themes and under each theme there are a number of identified actions (44 actions in total) which will be implemented over the life time of the Plan.

The six themes are: Community, Training and Education, Sustainable Tourism, Biodiversity, Climate Change and Green Infrastructure Planning, Built Heritage and Cultural Heritage.

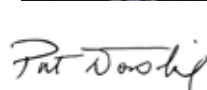
The importance of heritage to the people of Clare is demonstrated by the many active heritage groups and organisations in the county and their valuable input to the development of this plan. Active participation in the plan implementation is sought from community, government, professional bodies, non-governmental organisations, businesses, the farming sector and interested individuals. The continued support of the Heritage Council over many years has been instrumental in achieving all the actions undertaken to date and on behalf of Clare County Council we would like to thank them for their ongoing commitment and support.

As Chairman of Clare County Council and as Chief Executive we want to see the Heritage Services in the county grow. The plan will be supported and facilitated by Clare County Council in its implementation and we are committed to improving the quality of life for all those who reside in our culturally rich county. We welcome the challenges of this new plan and look forward to its implementation over the coming years, which will bring significant benefits for our shared heritage and in doing so to the quality of life for the people of County Clare and the generations to come.



  
Mr. Tom McNamara  
Mayor of Clare



  
Mr. Pat Dowling  
Clare Chief Executive

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

**Heritage is a common legacy belonging to all (European Commission, 2014) and it is an ongoing process of learning from and relating to the past in the present. Under the Heritage Act 1995, heritage is defined as landscape, seascapes, flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, monuments, archaeological objects, architectural heritage, heritage objects, geology, inland waterways, heritage gardens and parks and wrecks. Intangible cultural heritage elements such as genealogy, placenames, traditions, local history and oral history recordings are also included in the Clare County Heritage Plan 2017-2023.**

The Clare County Heritage Plan 2017-2023, building on the two previous Clare County Heritage Plans, aims to create awareness and understanding, leading to a greater appreciation, enjoyment and ownership of our natural, cultural, built and community heritage to optimise the opportunities that derive from the unique character of County Clare's heritage.

The Clare County Heritage Plan 2017-2023 sets out how Clare County Council, in association with other stakeholders will:

- identify, manage and conserve heritage for the benefit of all;
- collect and make available heritage information;
- raise awareness through education initiatives;
- acquire knowledge through surveys and research;
- inform public policy on heritage;
- support the strategic and integrated management of heritage at a local level.

The Plan sets out to create a better understanding and appreciation of our shared heritage and follows an evidence based approach.

Current and emerging government policy focuses on nurturing our cultural heritage and promoting town and village renewal, for which heritage is central. Revitalisation and enhancement of historic town and village centres and urban and rural landscape of the County are a key focus of the Clare County Heritage Plan 2017-2023. It is vital to commit to the expansion of heritage services at a local level, given the future dynamic and transformative role of the heritage sector.



Heritage makes a significant contribution in creating a sense of place, culture and in strengthening County Clare's unique identity. It is important in itself as a finite resource that cannot be replaced. It also plays a critical role in supporting and cultivating a vibrant community and voluntary sector, building social capital and in underpinning socio-economic development. Actively protecting, managing and promoting County Clare's heritage is of huge importance and in doing so, will accrue significant benefits for County Clare's heritage, for its people and visitors to the County.

Empirical studies show how heritage has been used successfully as an economic, social and cultural resource in urban regeneration, rural development, tourism and social inclusion. Heritage is seen as a means to economic recovery given its role in tourism and job creation. There is an increase in pressure for culture and heritage to perform and justify public spending in return for job creation, capital leverage and heritage tourism, rather than a focus on the inherent and intrinsic value of heritage in itself.

There is currently a revival in volunteering in Ireland and people taking an interest in their local heritage and in the conservation and enhancement of the local environment. Increasingly the focus is on our history and culture, finding our roots and sense of meaning and anchoring, which enhances our sense of place and belonging.

One effect of the recent economic downturn was that it opened up heritage to everyone, moving towards a more inclusive, multifaceted and democratic heritage management approach. Conservation work and projects were achieved, working in partnership with the local community with best practice advice from professionals. Collaborative work with communities and stakeholders has had a strong positive impact and a wide range of benefits for people and places in County Clare.

## 1.1 | THE CLARE COUNTY HERITAGE PLAN 2011-2017

Successful heritage initiatives completed under the previous Clare County Heritage Plan 2011-2017 include the development of the Shannon Town Green Infrastructure Plan and Design Guide and the Loop Head Heritage Trail. Clare County Council won the Irish Planning Institute National Planning Award in the category of Environment

and Sustainable Planning Award for the Shannon Green Infrastructure Plan in 2014. The Loophead Heritage Audit, Reading the Landscape training and Heritage Trail, database and ZCard production won gold at the World Sustainable Tourism Awards in 2015 on the basis of the Heritage Wild Atlantic Way projects in 2013 and 2014. For further details of the actions completed in the last Clare County Heritage Plan 2011-2017, see Appendix 2.

## 1.2 | FOCUS OF THE CLARE COUNTY HERITAGE PLAN 2017-2023

The Clare County Heritage Plan 2017-2023 is focused on six key themes and under each theme there are a number of identified actions which can be implemented over the life time of the Plan. The themes emerged from (1) current local and national policy, (2) communication with key stakeholders in the preparation of this Plan and (3) are in line with current Clare County Council practice.

### THE SIX THEMES ARE:

1. **COMMUNITY**
2. **TRAINING AND EDUCATION**
3. **SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**
4. **BIODIVERSITY, CLIMATE CHANGE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING**
5. **BUILT HERITAGE**
6. **CULTURAL HERITAGE**

The Plan provides a general background to the heritage of County Clare, providing statistical information on the County's heritage and outlines other relevant plans and strategies. It sets out how the plan actions will be achieved with defined timelines, finance, partners, monitoring and evaluation that are required for successful implementation.

There are two appendices, which list the submissions to the Plan as a result of public consultation and a list of achievements and publications under the previous Heritage Plan 2011-2017.

### 1.3 | COUNTY CLARE HERITAGE CONTEXT

County Clare has a rich and diverse heritage which is reflected in the wonderful urban and rural landscape of the county. The Burren in North Clare extends over 500 km<sup>2</sup> and is renowned for its unusual and varied flora and its vast archaeological, geological and historical heritage. It also has one of the most distinctive landscape regions in Ireland and is considered to be one of the best preserved agricultural landscapes in Europe.

Lough Derg is the third largest lake in Ireland at 118 km<sup>2</sup>, with an 80 km waterway corridor. The landscape diversity, cultural heritage and nature conservation value of the lake is of international significance. Lough Derg is a premier navigation channel in the heart of Ireland and is an excellent resource for recreation, sailing, boating, water sports and angling.

In central and south Clare and around Ennis, the karst limestone landscape has been eroded and smoothed by glaciers into natural parklands, where the River Fergus and its tributaries are of major importance. The unique landscape of mid and West Clare, Loop Head and the Shannon Estuary offer many heritage sites and opportunities for access and enjoyment of our heritage.

### 1.4 | COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL POLICY

The introduction of the Heritage Act in 1995 (presently under review) and the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), show the strong commitment to heritage by the government in the economic boom in the 1990s and there was an increase in funding annually until 2008. The recession resulted in a reduction in heritage grant aid to the Heritage Council and to the then Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Budget cuts affected national and local initiatives and introduced austerity measures. This resulted in a moratorium on recruitment, uncertainties around monetary and human resources and short-termism in approach.

The Clare Heritage Plan aims to work in collaboration with the many different public bodies, groups and individuals with responsibility and interest in County Clare's heritage. In addition, there are significant legislative provisions and policy frameworks relating to each heritage area which reflect change led by European Directives and Conventions.

**The context for the Clare County Heritage Plan 2017-2023 is set out in the following policy documents:**

- NATIONAL HERITAGE PLAN (2002),
- NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN, 2017-2021
- HERITAGE COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN 2012-2016
- DRAFT CULTURE 2025, A FRAMEWORK POLICY TO 2025 DRIVEN BY THE CREATIVE IRELAND PROGRAMME 2017-2022
- NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK – IRELAND 2040 OUR PLAN
- CREATING A GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE FOR IRELAND – ENHANCING NATURAL CAPITAL FOR HUMAN WELLBEING (2010)
- THE NATIONAL LANDSCAPE STRATEGY FOR IRELAND 2015-2025
- NATIONAL MITIGATION PLAN FOR CLIMATE CHANGE 2017

National government has set out a clear public policy direction for how the built, cultural and natural heritage resource should to be managed. Placing heritage at the heart of public policy and decision making is central to these initiatives. Realising our Rural Potential: Action Plan for Rural Development was launched in 2017 to support sustainable communities, making rural Ireland a better place in which to live and work by revitalising our towns and village centres through the implementation of initiatives such as the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, the Clár Scheme and RAPID Programme and other measures to support people to live in town centres. In response Clare County Council has established a Rural Development Directorate to focus efforts in this regard. Other key documents include the Framework for Town Centre Renewal, Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and the forthcoming Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, Southern Regional Assembly. In addition, marketing initiatives support rural tourism including the Wild Atlantic Way and Irelands Lakelands brand development, along with the enhanced promotion of our National Parks and Nature Reserves and other natural and built resources.

Future emphasis of this Plan is on communication of heritage; caring for our heritage assets (buildings, monuments and natural areas), increasing community engagement and activity for heritage and, supporting government policy and the local economy by ensuring that heritage is integrated into rural development, economic development, recreation and tourism.



Heritage represents an aspect of a wider cultural programme for County Clare, along with other sectors and entities such as tourism, the arts, museums, archives and libraries all of which play a significant role. The Clare County Heritage Plan 2017-2023 can act as a mechanism to support and monitor delivery of the wider cultural strategy for County Clare and allow a co-ordinated approach for opportunities that may arise (e.g. Wild Atlantic Way, Culture 2025) over the period of the Plan.

Utilising County Clare's valuable heritage resource to the fullest extent requires continuous and active management that is adequately resourced and which is delivered consistently by all. Only then can County Clare reap the benefits of its rich heritage assets for the betterment of everyone. In this regard it is important that there is support and adequate resource provision for the implementation of the Clare County Heritage Plan 2017-2023, Clare Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2023 and the forthcoming Clare Culture and Creativity Strategy.

## 1.5 | A VISION FOR COUNTY CLARE

The Clare County Council Corporate Vision is:

***A county that has maximised its unique characteristics, strengths, location and connectivity to become Ireland's centre of culture, tourism, heritage and the preferred international destination for sustainable investment and innovation. A county in which citizens, visitors and all stakeholders are empowered and supported by public bodies under the leadership of a professional, responsive and progressive local government system.***

The Clare County Heritage Plan 2017-2023 emulates the Clare County Council Corporate Vision for County Clare. Heritage and Culture is at the heart of life in County Clare, where the stakeholders work in partnership with all to understand, experience and enjoy all aspects of our heritage under the leadership of a professional, responsive and progressive local government.





## 2.0 HERITAGE PLAN KEY THEMES AND ASSOCIATED ACTIONS

### 2.1 | COMMUNITY THEME

**Promote heritage as a resource to contribute to quality of life and the cultural and economic development of County Clare.**

County Clare's unique sense of place has evolved over thousands of years from human interaction with the landscape, a process that is continually evolving, moulded by political and social trends and influences from other cultures.

There are many opportunities to engage and support local communities and heritage groups that would like to develop heritage projects which are educational, conservation orientated or heritage tourism led. Communities consistently engage with projects relating to access and interpretation of heritage sites, heritage and wildlife audits, historic graveyards, placenames, oral history, folklore, genealogy and conservation of built heritage, including works to conserve medieval churches.

During National Heritage Week local communities organise a wide variety of events throughout County Clare. Many are free events and the programme highlights the abundance of invaluable work carried out by local communities to both conserve and promote our natural, built and cultural heritage.

Heritage Week continues to grow every year in the community and the number of events has doubled in six years from 50 events in 2011 to 102 events in 2017, reflecting the vibrant local community spirit throughout the County.

Many groups have developed excellent skills and knowledge in undertaking heritage projects, which can be shared with other communities. Appropriate heritage advice and consents for heritage projects are needed to support community activity. A key aspect of the Plan is to support communities in undertaking heritage projects and citizen science surveys.

Tidy Towns groups are a powerful community force vital in presenting County Clare as a clean and green destination. An example of their key role is in the enthusiastic adoption of the Pollinator Plan and Award. This scheme aims to encourage Tidy Towns groups to implement pollinator friendly actions, such as planting with wildflower seed for bees or allowing grass margins to grow wild and set seed in their towns and villages as part of the Tidy Towns competition. Other community undertakings include citizen science projects, local history and oral history recording, heritage and biodiversity audits and surveys.

Community led village design statements, town centre health checks and public realm planning are recognised as progressive tools that offer a systematic basis for information gathering and planning. Public realm plans seek to enable villages and towns to fulfil their socio-economic and tourism potential, enhance 'sense of civic pride' and 'sense of place' while ensuring long-term vitality, viability and vibrancy. Ennis is one of eight pilot towns participating in the Heritage Council Town Centre Health Check programme 2016-2017.

Following on from the recent Heritage Towns Initiative piloted by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, heritage led regeneration planning (including the town centre health checks and public realm plans) will benefit planning for the historic core of our towns. This will allow for a co-ordinated approach to the management of County Clare's historic built environment.

## COMMUNITY ACTIONS

- 2.1.1** Clare County Council will investigate the possibility of re-establishing a Heritage Forum during the course of this Heritage Plan.
- 2.1.2** Undertake further studies of local heritage in towns, villages and rural areas while exploring opportunities to develop their heritage potential;
- 2.1.3** Work with community groups, Tidy Towns groups and others to develop:
  - projects to revitalise and enhance historic town and village centres which provide for conservation, restoration, renewal and redevelopment of historic buildings, streetscapes and green infrastructure, including upgrade of shop fronts and promotion of area enhancement to a high standard of civic design,
  - heritage project planning and communication,
  - local heritage audits and local biodiversity plans;
- 2.1.4** Undertake town centre health checks and public realm plans;
- 2.1.5** Continue to provide the framework for co-ordinating, organising and promoting an extensive programme of Community Heritage Week events in County Clare;
- 2.1.6** Encourage further community heritage action, initiative and support these projects with a small scale heritage grant scheme;
- 2.1.7** Support the annual programme of events and activities of Clare Archaeological and Historical Societies, Cuimhneamh an Chláir, Clare Roots, the County Clare Heritage & Genealogy Centre, among other heritage based voluntary organisations in the County;
- 2.1.8** Create opportunities to involve youth, active age, marginalised and socially disadvantaged groups in heritage projects.



## 2.2 | TRAINING AND EDUCATION THEME

### Provide training on built, natural and cultural heritage.

Common understanding and awareness leads to a greater appreciation of local heritage. Organisations such as the Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark, Burrenbeo, Clare Library, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and Clare Local Development Company, organise courses on many aspects of heritage. These and other organisations need support to promote training and education in heritage management and conservation.

The digital age allows people to communicate ideas and disseminate information over the internet and

social media to reach new and wider audiences. The Heritage Map Viewer, Clare County Council, County Library, National Monuments websites and National Biodiversity Data Centre record systems, among others, allow for greater exchange of information.

A proven and effective approach to heritage training is *Reading the Landscape*. The aim of the 'Reading the Landscape' training course is to enable participants to identify, examine and record the heritage features in their own local area through their own dedicated fieldwork. Instruction is provided on landscape, environment, heritage resource recognition and assessment, delivered through class based lectures and workshops and an introduction to practical field work recording techniques (field based). This is achieved using a range of training techniques, including audit and survey templates, case studies, group exercises and field mapping.

## EDUCATION ACTIONS

- 2.2.1** Work with the Clare Museum and Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board to provide 'Reading the Landscape' training for communities in County Clare;
- 2.2.2** Provide supports and training on all aspects of heritage and promote best practice guidelines to support local heritage projects and community initiatives;
- 2.2.3** Continued promotion and communication of County Clare's heritage through publications, signage, audio guides, internet and social media and establish local heritage exhibitions and other events;
- 2.2.4** Consult with and provide ongoing heritage training for Tidy Towns and other groups;
- 2.2.5** Support the Clare Education Centre to promote the Heritage in Schools Scheme and support primary, secondary and third level heritage learning and research.





## 2.3 | SUSTAINABLE TOURISM THEME

**To maximise the heritage potential in tourism for the benefit of visitors and the local community.**

Our natural and built heritage forms the basis of tourism in County Clare, including the dramatic Cliffs of Moher, Loop Head Lighthouse and Heritage Trail, Lough Derg and Inis Cealtra, the flora and fauna of the Burren and the many recreational trails throughout the county. The uplands of Slieve Aughties, Slieve Bernagh, Mount Callan and Slieve Elva create the back drop to the landscape that attracts millions of visitors annually to County Clare. The quality of the urban and rural environment and appeal of our towns and villages attract both national and international visitors.



The importance of the Burren (also a UNESCO Global Geopark), Inis Cealtra and the Western Stone Forts is acknowledged by their inclusion on Irelands World Heritage Site Tentative list.

The County Clare coast line, stretching from Galway Bay to the Shannon Estuary, including towns such as Ballyvaughan, Doolin, Lahinch, Kilkee and Kilrush, is central to the Wild Atlantic Way, the world's longest defined coastal touring route and arguably the most spectacular.

Integrating heritage into such initiatives can bring a new dimension to these projects for example, interpretation and signage of the built and natural heritage along a greenway or information on the geological heritage of the area for walking, cycling and tourism development, all present an opportunity to view and present our wonderful landscape.

Tourism is one of the main economic drivers of the County, attracting significant visitor numbers and the Heritage Plan supports the development of sustainable, responsible and ecotourism initiatives.





## TOURISM ACTIONS

- 2.3.1** Work to improve access to heritage sites, provide information, interpretation and signage at heritage sites and assist in the further development of heritage trails;
- 2.3.2** To further research the development of greenways in the County and promote heritage along recreational routes;
- 2.3.3** Continue to support the San Marcos Project at Spanish Point and at other relevant locations along the coast and undertake a feasibility study to develop interpretation and visitor facilities on this theme. Support efforts to organise an international conference on the research, recent developments and importance of the Spanish Armada in world history;
- 2.3.4** Work to increase the knowledge base of heritage and the tourism potential generally and on the mid Clare coast and the Shannon Estuary Way along the Wild Atlantic Way;
- 2.3.5** Support the implementation the Inis Cealtra Visitor Management and Sustainable Tourism Development Plan, 2017 and the Inis Cathaigh, Scattery Island Conservation and Management Plan;
- 2.3.6** Support the development of sustainable wildlife adventure tourism and enhanced wildlife visitor experience throughout the County;
- 2.3.7** Support the work programme of Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark, Burren Eco-Tourism Network (BEN), Burrenbeo Trust and Burren Farming for Conservation Programme. Develop further initiatives to support their collaborative and combined efforts. Support Burren Eco-tourism Network (BEN) and the development of eco-tourism initiatives and sustainable, green tourism throughout County Clare. Support the work of Burrenbeo Trust, including the education initiatives and Conservation Volunteers programme;
- 2.3.8** Seek to agree an approach to progress the Burren as a World Heritage Site in partnership with all interested parties and relevant organisations. Upon agreement, support the co-operative efforts to designate the Burren as the Burren World Heritage Site and carry out public consultation on the draft technical evaluation;
- 2.3.9** Develop a strategy and infrastructural supports to facilitate the development of the Shannon and Fergus Estuaries for recreational including bird watching, water sports, sailing etc in order to fully realise the recreation and tourism potential as part of the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary.







## 2.4 | BIODIVERSITY, CLIMATE CHANGE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING THEME

**Implement actions for the benefit of nature conservation and biodiversity in order to meet our obligations under the Draft 3rd National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021 and the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, EU Convention on Biological Diversity and National Mitigation Plan for Climate Change 2017.**

A wide range of economic and social benefits and services result from the protection of environmental quality and biodiversity, which are not only crucial for the well-being of human kind, they also represent real economic value. Biodiversity forms the basis of our landscapes, provides for food and clean water supplies, opportunities for waste disposal, nutrient recycling, coastal protection, flood storage and regulation, among many others.

County Clare is set apart by the Burren, the Atlantic coastline, Shannon Estuary, Lough Derg and inland waterways, all rich in wildlife habitats and species as well as the associated cultural heritage of local history and tradition, placenames and folklore. Significant challenges to heritage are posed by

a general lack of awareness; inappropriate or uncontrolled development; lack of, or inappropriate habitat management; climate change and invasive species. It is a common misunderstanding that nature looks after itself, as habitats have evolved over time through the interaction of man with the landscape. However the facts are that we are now facing extinctions of wildlife on a massive scale including extinction of wildlife species in Ireland.

The aim of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) is to establish a framework for the protection of all surface waters and groundwater with the aim to reach good status in all waters. 23,440 hectares of wetland have been mapped in Clare (7.4% of the County) and 300 wetland sites including 34 wetland types have been identified to date.

In July 2014, The Department of Environment, Community & Local Government issued the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2014, which gave effect to a new, three tier governance framework and placed new obligations on local authorities to co-ordinate the catchment management and public participation elements of the Water Framework Directive. The Regulations also provide for the employment of Local Authority Waters and Community Officers to mobilise the support of local voluntary and community groups in protecting our natural waters.





More than 20% of the County is designated for nature conservation, with 47 Natura 2000 sites in the County, including 37 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and 10 Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated for nature conservation. These are important at a European level, forming part of a European wide conservation network (Natura 2000 Network). There are 14 Natural Heritage Areas of which 13 are designated to protect areas of relatively intact bog and 61 proposed Natural Heritage Areas. In addition there is the Burren National Park, 5 Wildlife Sanctuaries and 4 Nature Reserves at Caher (Murphy) woodland, Ballyteigue, Dromore Woodland and Keelhillia (Slieve Carron). Many of these areas are also areas of outstanding landscape value and range from mountain top to seashore. In addition there are 45 recognised geological heritage sites.

Invasive alien species (IAS) are recognised as one of the most significant threats to biodiversity throughout the world. In Ireland, considerable attention is being focussed on the various plant and animal species that have been intentionally or accidentally introduced over the last 100 years or so. The National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) has established a National Invasive Species Database in an attempt to determine the current distribution of the various species and monitor their spread. Efforts are now being made to gather information on the distribution of IAS's in the county.

Global climate change is predicted to increase sea levels and flooding, while coastal erosion is now a reality on a large scale and ocean acidification is a major threat to the marine environment. As a result there is a requirement to protect and enhance the main resources of the County including water supply, the built, natural and cultural heritage and the conservation of wildlife and their habitats. There is a requirement to adapt and to build in adaptation and resilience into everyday practice to mitigate against the effects of climate change and sea level rise.

The Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment have published a National Mitigation Plan for Climate Change in 2017. Local Authorities will form adaptation teams in order to prepare local adaptation strategies as required under the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (NCCAF).

Green infrastructure is a useful planning tool and is the development of a network of high quality green spaces. Green infrastructure includes multi-functional green spaces in urban areas, such as parks, gardens, wetland and the ecological connectivity with the wider landscape. The European Commission defines green infrastructure as the use of ecosystems, green spaces and water in strategic land use planning to deliver environmental and quality of life benefits. A Green Infrastructure Plan for Shannon has been prepared and its implementation has commenced. A Green Infrastructure Plan for Ennis will be prepared as part of the Ennis & Environs Local Area Plan.

## BIODIVERSITY, CLIMATE CHANGE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING ACTIONS

- 2.4.1** Develop and work to implement the County Clare Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2023 in partnership with all relevant stakeholders and the community;
- 2.4.2** Promote and implement the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015-2020 and local associated initiatives;
- 2.4.3** Further raise awareness of the value, role and function of wetlands in the County;
- 2.4.4** Support the Local Authority Waters and Community Officer in their work with communities to understand the value of the aquatic environment and to take the leadership role in the protection of our wetlands, including measures to protect high status sites in County Clare, provision of community wetlands, integrated constructed wetlands, natural flood areas with a particular focus on the River Fergus catchment involving community action;
- 2.4.5** Assist in the pilot scheme to map, establish demonstration plots and provide training on Invasive Species as part of an overall Clare County Council corporate strategy to control and eradication of Invasive Species;
- 2.4.6** Research sites of high cultural and nature conservation value along the Clare Coast to fully understand the implications of climate change and sea level rise and the potential approaches to mitigation, adaption and building resilience in these areas;
- 2.4.7** Input into the Clare County Councils Adaptation Team as required under the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (NCCAF) in preparing the local authority adaptation strategy;
- 2.4.8** Further implement the existing Green Infrastructure Plans and consider other opportunities for green infrastructure planning;
- 2.4.9** Enhance biodiversity by providing training and guidance on Green Infrastructure and through the promotion and adoption of a green infrastructure-based approach to planning.





## 2.5 | BUILT HERITAGE THEME

### Promote best practice in building conservation

Built Heritage comprises all man-made structures which are considered to be of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

County Clare has one of the highest densities of monuments of any county in Ireland and is particularly rich in early field monuments and ecclesiastical settlements. There are approximately 7,500 known archaeological sites and many more yet undiscovered in the County. There are over 170 historic graveyards in the County, not including Cillíní or children's burial grounds.

The built heritage of our towns and villages is impressive. Ennis has an attractive medieval pattern and network of narrow streets and laneways. Furthermore Kilrush was a small fishing village in the early 1700s, until the Vandeleur era, when impressive quays and piers were built and the town became one of the major shipping and mercantile ports on the west coast of Ireland. This was reflected in the built form with the construction of wide streets, high quality shop fronts and impressive public buildings. Killaloe in East Clare, due to its location at a major crossing point on the Shannon and the home of the O'Brien's – Kings of Thomond (North Munster), became a major ecclesiastical and urban centre from the early middle ages. It maintained its importance as a busy market town into the 20th century due to its long bridge and Shannon Navigation Canal. The Victorian seaside

resorts of Kilkee and spa town of Lisdoonvarna still hold their charm today.

882 Protected Structures (PS) are included in the Record of Protected Structure (Volume 4 of the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023) and there are 34 designated Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) in the County.

There are also many heritage buildings in the County that are not designated as protected structures, but which make a valuable contribution to our landscape, streetscapes and countryside. One of the major threats to standing recorded monuments including tower houses, ruined churches, and stone forts is ivy growth taking hold on these buildings. Financial support for conservation of built heritage is extremely limited and has been consistently eroded over the last number of years. For owners to be able to maintain heritage buildings and structures they require financial support, access to appropriate technical advice and traditional building skills which are essential to maintaining the historic building stock.

Recent studies by the Heritage Council have highlighted the economic benefits of maintaining heritage buildings, particularly within urban areas and commercial areas. It has been consistently shown that protected structure designation and proximity to Architectural Conservation Areas provides an economic boost and increases confidence in a town centre, contributing to a distinct and attractive public realm. The benefits of a heritage led town centre management strategy can be clearly seen in Westport, Kilkenny and more recently Fethard in County Tipperary.





## BUILT HERITAGE ACTIONS

- 2.5.1** Provide training and demonstrate the use of traditional building skills and materials;
- 2.5.2** Promote the restoration of rural industrial heritage [such as lime kilns, stone mining, salt works, distilleries, quarries, brick works, forges and cottage industries] focusing on the conservation of industrial heritage in East Clare and on furnaces and iron works in particular;
- 2.5.3** Further explore the heritage potential of County Clare's maritime built heritage and opportunities for its conservation and restoration, particularly in light of sea level rise and coastal erosion and flooding;
- 2.5.4** Support local communities in caring for historic graveyards and the conservation of medieval churches in graveyards along with other recorded structures throughout County Clare;
- 2.5.5** Continue the programme of built heritage and vernacular architecture survey, recording and publication;
- 2.5.6** Support efforts to run a Building Conservation Award Scheme;
- 2.5.7** Support and enable a research and development project on the County Clare demesne landscape;
- 2.5.8** Undertake a survey of clachans, their history and composition;
- 2.5.9** Undertake further study of field systems in the Burren and Loop Head and their contribution to the cultural heritage, landscape and seascapes of County Clare.



## 2.6 | CULTURAL HERITAGE THEME

### Promote County Clare's heritage and culture and to meet objectives of the Culture 2025 Framework Policy

Cultural heritage encompasses resources inherited from the past in all forms and aspects: tangible, intangible and digital. This includes monuments, sites, landscapes and natural sites, skills, practices, knowledge and expressions of human creativity, as well as collections conserved and managed by museums, libraries, archives and film heritage.

Cultural vitality is essential to a healthy and sustainable society. Oral history eventually becomes the living heritage, which is being effectively captured in recording past memories from older people. Clare County Council recognises the importance of linguistic heritage to the people and culture of the County. Genealogy is an important educational and leisure activity and in addition, many tourists have developed a keen interest in sourcing information on their ancestors and their family roots.



County Clare's heritage is often experienced through the landscape and by visiting built and natural heritage sites. The County Museum orientates visitors to County Clare's story and provides a focal point for community, visitors, as an educational awareness and economic resource. Likewise, the County's archives are equally important and needs to be supported.

The decade of centenaries will continue to 2023, building on the legacy of 2016 and commemorating the War of Independence, the Civil War in Ireland and the Great War. Culture 2025, A Framework Policy to 2025 and Creative Ireland Programme 2017-2022 offers opportunities to develop our cultural creativity to bring communities together and to strengthen and highlight our sense of identity. Clare County Council will develop a Clare Culture and Creativity Strategy which will be implemented from 2018-2022.



2018 is the European Year of Cultural Heritage. The objectives of the year include a sharing and appreciation of Europe's cultural heritage, raising awareness of the common history and values; and to reinforce a sense of belonging to a common European space. It is a people centred approach in line with the Faro Convention, while being cross sectoral and forward looking. The aim is for everyone to understand that heritage is a shared resource for the future and to promote the cultural heritage role in cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue, while enhancing its contribution to the economy and society and as a source of creativity and innovation, sustainable development, tourism, social cohesion and employment.



## CULTURAL HERITAGE ACTIONS

- 2.6.1** Support the Clare Museum in all its activities including the County Museum Collection Policy and Museum Standards Policy for Ireland;
- 2.6.2** To assist in the implementation of the Creative Ireland programme 2017-2022, and ensure that heritage is integral to the development of the Clare Culture and Creativity Strategy 2018-2022;
- 2.6.3** To work with the Heritage Council to maximise the opportunities offered by the European year of Culture 2018;
- 2.6.4** Support community based initiatives that lead to the awareness, collection and preservation of Clare's unique and intangible cultural heritage including oral history, placenames and folklore.







## 3.0 HERITAGE PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Clare County Heritage Plan 2017-2023 sets out the vision and direction for heritage management for the next six years and will represent an agreed plan for the future of heritage in County Clare. Clare County Council commenced the preparation of the 3rd Clare County Heritage Plan 2017–2023 on the 13th of October 2016 at the Pre-Draft Stage.

Public participation at this early stage of the plan-making process was important to ensure that the new Heritage Plan both reflects and responds to public concerns and aspirations, as well as addressing National and Regional heritage strategies and guidelines. In particular submissions were invited from education and wildlife groups, Chamber of Commerce, Tidy Towns, the Public Participation Network, government departments. Notices were placed in all public libraries and at Clare County Council and Municipal District Offices. Elected members were notified at the Planning and Housing Strategic Policy Committee and at the Clare County Council meeting in September 2016. Ten submissions to the Plan were received at the pre-draft stage of the process, all of which were taken into consideration in the Plan preparation. See Appendix 1A. for a list of submissions at the pre-draft stage of the plan-making process.

The Draft Clare County Heritage Plan 2017-2023 showing objectives and actions was also made available for public inspection for a period of 6 weeks, during which submissions and observations from members of the public were invited. A further eight submissions were made at this stage in the process, which were also taking into consideration in the making of this Heritage Plan. A list of submission received on the draft plan is also included in Appendix 1B.



### 3.1 | STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process is the formal systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt the plan or programme. In addition to SEA, a Habitat Directive Assessment is required, which comprises the assessment, based on scientific knowledge, of the potential impacts of the plan on the conservation objectives of any European site and the development, where necessary, of mitigation or avoidance measures to preclude negative effects.

The impacts assessed must include the indirect and cumulative impacts of the plan, considered with any current or proposed activities, developments or policies impact on the site. It informs plans of the environmental impacts of alternative actions and contributes to the integration of environmental considerations into plan making.

The key to deciding if SEA will apply is whether the revised Plan would be likely to have significant effects on the environment. The draft Plan was screened having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the SEA Regulations 2004.

It is the opinion of Clare County Council that the actions contained within the draft Plan are unlikely to give rise to significant impacts on the environment. A key factor in this decision is that the Heritage Plan is not intended to be a detailed programme of works but aims to create awareness and understanding, leading to a greater appreciation, enjoyment and ownership of our natural, cultural, built and community heritage and will optimise the unique character of County Clare's heritage. It will complement existing frameworks and statutory plans and policies of which the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 is of most relevance. The Heritage Plan does not set a framework for projects rather it supports the strategic objectives of the CDP 2017-2023 and provides for greater engagement through community participation which is achieved through public consultation at a local level. The Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 and its objectives there in have been rigorously assessed at the strategic level through the application of Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment. It is concluded therefore that an SEA is not required for this Plan.

### 3.2 | HABITATS DIRECTIVE ASSESSMENT

The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) as transposed into Irish law by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 requires that all plans and projects must be screened for potential significant effects on European sites.

Clare County Council is committed to the implementation of the requirements of the Habitats Directive and therefore screening for appropriate assessment of the draft Clare County Heritage Plan was undertaken prior to its consideration by Clare County Council.

All 41 actions arising from the Clare County Heritage Plan were assessed for their likely significant effects based on direct, indirect and secondary impacts both alone and in combination with other plans and projects. The assessment focused on the key criteria as contained in the Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government (2010) Guidance on Appropriate Assessment for Planning Authorities. This includes consideration of the size and scale, land take, distance from the European site or key features of the site, resource requirements, emissions, excavation requirements, transportation requirements and duration of construction, operation and decommissioning stages.



Following this detailed assessment it was concluded that the proposed Clare County Heritage Plan is not directly connected with or necessary to the conservation management of any European site. Screening established that in view of the best scientific knowledge and on the basis of objective information, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, the Clare County Heritage Plan is not likely to have significant effects on the conservation objectives of any European site within the 15km zone of influence. Therefore, in accordance with Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities (2010), as significant impacts can be ruled out no further assessment is required.



### 3.3 | PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

A partnership between The Heritage Council and Clare County Council saw the establishment of a Heritage Officer post within Clare County Council in 2000. The Heritage Officer is responsible for the preparation and implementation of the Clare County Heritage Plan 2017-2023 (1st Plan in 2003-2007 and the 2nd Heritage Plan 2011-2017).

The Clare County Heritage Plan 2017-2023 is a county-wide plan with many partners responsible for its implementation. Clare County Council is a key partner and the Heritage Officer in many cases will deliver the plan or act as co-ordinator for projects. The Clare County Heritage Plan 2017-2023 sets out primarily to enable and support communities and the voluntary sector.

Commitment and financial support is vital to the successful undertaking of many projects. A flexible approach is adopted by Clare County Council and finance is sought as opportunities arise, and from alternative funding sources where required. As the annual work programme is agreed, commitments will be sought from the relevant partners.

The Heritage Council supports the role of the Clare Heritage Officer and provides financial support and assistance in the implementation of the Clare County Heritage Plan. The Heritage Council has agreed in principle to consider the Plan as a six year strategy for funding. Funding levels for key actions within the Plan will be consistent with normal funding criteria. The Heritage Council will consider funding aspects of the Plan which are compatible with the objectives of the Heritage Council Strategic Plan 2012-2016 or its successor for the life time of this Plan. Clare County Council agrees co-funding support for the delivery of the actions of the Plan and for specific heritage projects on an annual basis.



### 3.4 | TIMEFRAME AND BUDGET

An annual Heritage Work Programme will be formulated to implement the actions proposed and will detail the projects proposed for the year, and the partners involved. The Heritage Plan can only proceed when the required funding is available, primarily from the Heritage Council and Clare County Council.

Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Monument Services and National Inventory Architectural Heritage and the National Parks and Wildlife Service) support the preparation of county heritage plans nationally.

### 3.5 | MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Heritage Officer will report to Clare County Council's Strategic Policy Committee for Economic and Enterprise Development. In addition, each project undertaken will be guided as appropriate by a steering group and the results communicated to the public via heritage conferences, presentations during Heritage Week, Clare County Council website and communication networks.

The Clare County Heritage Plan timescale coincides with the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 and the Heritage Plan will be reviewed in line with the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023. Events will be organised on an ongoing basis to evaluate progress on the Clare County Heritage Plan 2017-2023 and an overall evaluation will be completed at the end of the Plan period.





## APPENDIX 1 | LIST OF SUBMISSIONS AT (A) PRE-DRAFT AND (B) DRAFT PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

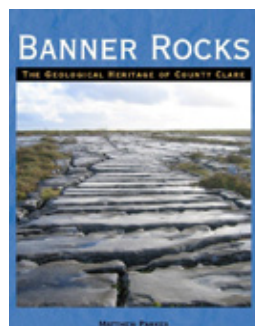
### A. PRE-DRAFT SUBMISSIONS

- 1 O'Briensbridge Community Group
- 2 Burrenbeo Trust, Kinvara, County Galway
- 3 Cuimhneamh an Chláir, Clare Education Centre, Ennis
- 4 Cllr. Johnny Flynn, Ennis
- 5 An Clár as Gaeilge, Inis
- 6 Kilkee Tourism
- 7 Brian Boru Trail, Killaloe
- 8 Waterways Ireland, Scariff
- 9 Heritage Council
- 10 Heritage Council

### B. SUBMISSIONS ON THE DRAFT PLAN

- 1 Clare County Museum
- 2 Kilkee Tourism
- 3 Heritage Consultancy
- 4 Cuimhneach an Chlair, Clare Education Centre
- 5 Clare County Museum
- 6 Waterways Ireland
- 7 Ennis Tidy Towns
- 8 Conservation Officer, Clare County Council
- 9 Community Water Officer, Limerick City and County Council

## SOME PUBLICATIONS UNDER THE COUNTY HERITAGE PLAN 2011-2017



## APPENDIX 2 | ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE COUNTY CLARE HERITAGE PLAN 2011-2017

The following table sets out the substantial work undertaken and positive outcomes achieved through the implementation of the County Clare Heritage Plan 2011-2017. The national economic circumstances of the preceding decade had an impact on the implementation of the Plan. Significant efforts were made to make progress under each of the objectives set out in the Plan, but limited human resources and financial resources were a strong influencing factor. Notwithstanding this, significant progress was made, which is a credit to all stakeholders involved, who were working in a time of scarce resources and reduced levels of support.

There were a number of actions that could not be undertaken, either due to lack of finances, lack of staff resources or the restructuring of stakeholder organisations which resulted in a focus on issues other than those set out in the Heritage Plan. However, as is evident from the table below, progress was made on the achievement of most objectives, which is a testament to the hard work of all involved.

TITLE	SUB TITLE	ACTION
GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING		
	Green Infrastructure Plan and Design Guide for Shannon Town	<p>This Plan was produced in 2013. <b>The Shannon Town Green Infrastructure and Design Guide</b> resource and development potential was assessed including the proposed circulation routes, with a subsequent focus on key green infrastructure areas and their interconnecting green corridors. The Shannon Town Green Infrastructure Plan and Design Guide included detailed design proposals for Shannon Town Park, the Embankments of the Shannon Estuary, Shannon Wetlands, Tullyvarruga Hill, Tullyglass Hill, green corridors and key nodes, walking and cycle routes. Clare County Council won the Irish Planning Institute National Planning Award in the category of Environment and Sustainable Planning Award for the Shannon Green Infrastructure Plan in 2014. The Shannon Green Infrastructure Plan has prepared the way for the funding and development of the Shannon Town Park and Embankment of the Shannon Estuary looped walks, the Slí na Mara and the Green Corridor from St Patrick's to the Riverside. The Shannon Town Park Scheme is central to the layout of Shannon and the project will support physical enhancement of the town. The development will create community space and contribute to social revitalisation and cohesion.</p> <p><a href="http://www.clarecoco.ie/planning/planning-strategy/local-area-plans/shannon-town-and-environs-local-area-plan%202012-2018/">http://www.clarecoco.ie/planning/planning-strategy/local-area-plans/shannon-town-and-environs-local-area-plan%202012-2018/</a></p>
	The Ennis & Environs Green Infrastructure Plan 2014	<p>Initial concept work commenced on the preparation of an <b>Ennis &amp; Environs Green Infrastructure Plan</b>, which will form part of the forthcoming Ennis and Environs Local Area Plan 2018 to 2024. It will set out proposals and design solutions to enhance the diversity of the Landscape Character of Ennis. It will also aim to connect and enrich biodiversity and habitats, address environmental fragmentation, extend access and recreational opportunities, enhance the historic environment, promote enjoyment, health and well being of current and future communities and make a major contribution to the continued development and long term sustainability of Ennis.</p> <p><a href="http://www.clarecoco.ie/planning/publications/clare-county-development-plan-2017-2023-volume-3-municipal-district-written-statement-and-settlement-plans-volume-3a-ennis-municipal-district-241-46.pdf">http://www.clarecoco.ie/planning/publications/clare-county-development-plan-2017-2023-volume-3-municipal-district-written-statement-and-settlement-plans-volume-3a-ennis-municipal-district-241-46.pdf</a></p>



TITLE	SUB TITLE	ACTION
PUBLICATIONS		
	<b>Banner Rocks, 2014</b>	<p>This is a publication on the geology of County Clare and was based on the 2004 survey of the important geological sites in the County, called the <b>Geological Heritage of County Clare</b>. The introduction is a simple and useful guide to the geology, rock structures and geological time. Clare is a county of contrasts and has three distinct geological areas, all significant and important in international terms. This book is a visual exploration of the geological heritage of County Clare; it presents some of the superb geology exhibited in these special places, and briefly explains the stories told by the rocks and provides a record of sites of importance. Three distinct geological areas of Clare are described – East Clare with its ancient upland rocks, north Clare (the Burren) and West Clare (coast and shales). Special interest topics such as the historic mining and modern mineral exploration, karst, cave formation and the Liscannor stone industry are described. The geological history of Clare is ably summarized at the end.</p> <p><a href="http://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/publications/banner-rocks-the-geology-of-county-clare-20915.pdf">http://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/publications/banner-rocks-the-geology-of-county-clare-20915.pdf</a></p>
	<b>The Clare Tree Design Guide 2016</b>	<p>This publication informs the use of trees in street design and urban areas by providing the planning authority and local communities with a comprehensive design guide. It recognises the positive role that well-chosen tree species and hedgerows can play and the multi-faceted role trees and hedgerows need to perform in urban areas. This is an essential guide for anyone <b>designing, planting and maintaining trees</b> in towns and villages in County Clare and provides the advice to enable the planting of the right tree in the right place.</p> <p><a href="https://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/heritage/county-clare-tree-design-guide-for-towns-and-villages-24243.pdf">https://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/heritage/county-clare-tree-design-guide-for-towns-and-villages-24243.pdf</a></p>

TITLE	SUB TITLE	ACTION
TOURISM INITIATIVES		
	Loop Head Report, Heritage Trail, Z Card	<p>Kilkee and Loop Head epitomise what the Wild Atlantic Way (WAW) aims to portray about Irelands Atlantic Coastline, with its dramatic cliff views and beauty spots, excellent food and wide variety of activities including water sports. This project involved the production and recording of heritage (including built, natural and cultural heritage) information and interpretation on the Wild Atlantic Way in Kilkee and Loop Head.</p> <p>Loop Head Heritage and Tourism group won gold at the World Sustainable Tourism Awards 2015 on the basis of the Heritage Wild Atlantic Way projects in 2013 and 2014. This acknowledged the community efforts and heritage projects including Heritage Audit, <i>Reading the Landscape</i> training and <b>Heritage Trail, database and ZCard production</b>.</p> <p><a href="http://www.independent.ie/life/travel/travel-news/irelandproves-a-world-beater-in-travel-and-tourism-awards-34172110.html">http://www.independent.ie/life/travel/travel-news/irelandproves-a-world-beater-in-travel-and-tourism-awards-34172110.html</a></p> <p>and</p> <p><a href="http://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/publications/loop-head-wild-atlantic-way-heritage-trail-2014-24580.pdf">http://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/publications/loop-head-wild-atlantic-way-heritage-trail-2014-24580.pdf</a></p>
	Lough Derg	<p>The Heritage Officers from Clare, Galway and Tipperary County Councils, in partnership with the Heritage Council, have worked to increase the awareness of the heritage of Lough Derg and enhance the visitor experience. These initiatives arose from the work carried out by the Heritage Council culminating in the publication of the <b>Lough Derg Waterways Corridor Study 2006</b>. The collaborative effort seeks to look at the heritage of Lough Derg as an entity and a landscape unit and further raise awareness and knowledge of Lough Derg and its heritage. The Lough Derg Cultural Heritage Trail was produced in 2015 to complement and be a companion to the Lough Derg (on the Shannon) Heritage Trail brochure and app produced in 2013, and which focused on historical and archaeological sites around Lough Derg. Go Wild in Lough Derg. Lough Derg Nature Trail, 2014, highlights the lake's high nature conservation value including internationally important birdlife.</p> <p><a href="http://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/publications/lough-derg-on-the-shannon-cultural-heritage-trail-24577.pdf">http://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/publications/lough-derg-on-the-shannon-cultural-heritage-trail-24577.pdf</a></p>



TITLE	SUB TITLE	ACTION
TOURISM INITIATIVES CONTINUED		
	Lough Derg	<p><a href="http://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/publications/publications/lough-derg-on-the-shannon-heritage-trail-24576.pdf">http://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/publications/publications/lough-derg-on-the-shannon-heritage-trail-24576.pdf</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/publications/publications/lough-derg-on-the-shannon-nature-trail-24579.pdf">http://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/publications/publications/lough-derg-on-the-shannon-nature-trail-24579.pdf</a></p> <p>The Heritage Officers working together across county boundaries held social media training with local communities in the Lough Derg area on community based web design and Information Technology. <i>Reading the Landscape</i> Training with communities around Lough Derg took place in 2012 and 2016. Heritage information was provided for the Lough Derg section of the Lakelands Treasures smart phone application</p> <p><a href="http://www.failteireland.ie/.../Discover-the-treasures-of-the-Lakeland-on-your-...">www.failteireland.ie/.../Discover-the-treasures-of-the-Lakeland-on-your-...</a></p> <p>Funding was secured to support the drafting of an EU Life (Biodiversity) application for Lough Derg. An Ecological Baseline Report on Inis Cealtra 2016, was completed in advance of the preparation of the Inis Cealtra (Holy Island) Visitor Management and Sustainable Tourism Development Plan 2017.</p>
	Bird Viewing and Information Point (BVIP)	<p>Establishment of the <b>Bird Viewing and Information Point (BVIP)</b> at Mountshannon. This is a public site to see Irish White-tailed Sea Eagles (WTSE) in the wild. It attracted over 10,000 visitors each year since it was opened in 2014. The BVIP is run by the local volunteers as part of the work of the Community Council in Mountshannon.</p> <p><a href="http://www.mountshannoneagles.ie/">www.mountshannoneagles.ie/</a></p> <p>Liaison with consultants in the preparation of a Visitor Management and Sustainable Tourism Development Plan for Inis Cealtra 2017 and a report was commissioned on the baseline Ecology of Inis Cealtra 2016, to inform the former.</p> <p><a href="https://www.clarecoco.ie/planning/publications/draft-inis-cealtra-visitor-management-and-sustainable-tourism-development-plan-volume-1-main-plan-document-24972.pdf">https://www.clarecoco.ie/planning/publications/draft-inis-cealtra-visitor-management-and-sustainable-tourism-development-plan-volume-1-main-plan-document-24972.pdf</a></p>

TITLE	SUB TITLE	ACTION
THE BURREN		
	<b>Burren Community Charter 2012</b>	<p>The draft <b>Burren Community Charter</b> is an agreement between the people who live and work in the Burren and the organisations that have responsibility for the region, to safeguard the place, its people and its heritage while supporting the local economy and enhancing the community life of its residents. The Charter brought a wide range of communities, organisations and agencies together to forge a common approach for the future management of the Burren; defining the role that each of these groups aspires to play and identifying how it can be implemented. The focus was on what we can do together as opposed to what can be done for us. This Charter is a dynamic agreement that can be reviewed on an ongoing basis.</p> <p><a href="http://www.burrencommunitycharter.com">www.burrencommunitycharter.com</a></p>
	<b>Draft Technical Evaluation of the Burren as a World Heritage Site</b>	<p>The Burren is on the Irish Tentative List to be considered for nomination as a World Heritage Site. Clare County Council along with Galway County Council and the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs funded the preparation of a <b>draft Technical Evaluation of the Burren as a World Heritage Site</b>, to consider the merits of the Burren for World Heritage Site designation. Recognition of the Burren as a UNESCO-World Heritage Site will raise awareness of the unique landscape of the region on a local, national and international level. The draft Burren World Heritage Site Technical Evaluation Report, 2016 includes an inventory of documentation on the Burren.</p>
	<b>Consultation</b>	<p><b>Ongoing liaison</b> with Burren groups and support the work programme of Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Geopark, Burren Eco-Tourism Network (BEN), Burrenbeo Trust and Burren Farming for Conservation and initiatives to support their collaborative and combined efforts. Support Burren Eco-tourism Network (BEN) and the development of eco-tourism initiatives and sustainable, green tourism throughout County Clare.</p> <p> <a href="http://www.burrengeopark.ie/">www.burrengeopark.ie/</a>  <a href="http://www.theburrencentre.ie/burren-ecotourism/">www.theburrencentre.ie/burren-ecotourism/</a>  <a href="https://burrenbeo.com/">https://burrenbeo.com/</a>  <a href="https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/farmerschemespayments/otherfarmerssche">https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/farmerschemespayments/otherfarmerssche</a>  <a href="https://www.npws.ie/research-projects/burren-life-programme">https://www.npws.ie/research-projects/burren-life-programme</a> </p>



TITLE	SUB TITLE	ACTION
TOURISM		
	Spanish Armada	<p>Support efforts by the <b>San Marcos Project</b> and <b>Spanish Armada Project</b> at Spanish Point to locate the San Marcos (a Portuguese galleon which participated in the 1588 Armada campaign, which wrecked off the west Clare coastline at Mutton Island) and other Spanish Armada ships lost off the Clare coast, burial site and the associated development of a proposed Pan-European Armada and Maritime Heritage and Tourism Network, Project Charter and a Three Year Action Plan.</p> <p><a href="https://sanmarcosproject.wordpress.com/2015/02/.../the-san-marcos-proje...">https://sanmarcosproject.wordpress.com/2015/02/.../the-san-marcos-proje...</a></p> <p>A Geophysical (fluxgate magnetometry) survey of Tuama Na Spainneach, Breaffy South townland, Spanish Point, Co. Clare took place. The aim of the survey was to identify any sub-surface features which may indicate the location of the buried remains of those lost on the San Marco and San Esteban after both ships were wrecked off-shore on the 20th of September 1588. The survey was undertaken by Rubicon Heritage Services Ltd on behalf of The San Marcos Project in 2015. The survey identified geophysical anomalies that may be indicative of anthropogenic ground disturbance and possibly indicate the attested burial spot of those lost.</p> <p>Funding was secured to undertake an archaeological excavation at the site of Tuama Na Spainneach in 2017, thought to be the burial site of Spanish armada sailors. The group are now planning an excavation for same and continued sea floor survey to locate items from the Spanish Armada ship wrecks.</p>
	I Phone App and Audio guide for Historic Ennis	<p>The medieval origin of Ennis, along with its diverse and interesting history has made the town the natural home of many great political leaders and events. This Smartphone application uses GPS technology and Google Maps to guide tourists around the Heritage Trails of Ennis. <b>The “Ennis Walking Trails” app</b> provides detailed information and photographs for 56 points of interest along 5 walking routes around the Clare County Town. Amongst the well known heritage attractions profiled in the app are Ennis Friary, Chapel Lane, Poor Clare's Monastery, Ennis Courthouse, Bindon Street, O'Connell Monument, Steeles Rock, and the Cathedral of St's Peter and Paul. The walking routes, which are also highlighted by colour-coded signage and on 41 associated interpretation boards around the town, range from 1-3 km and take 35-80 minutes to complete. The app also includes audio information relating to 13 points of interest in the 'People &amp; Places' route.</p> <p><a href="http://www.visitennis.com/trails-app/">www.visitennis.com/trails-app/</a></p> <p>A booklet accompanies the App which includes maps and the app can be downloaded for free from iTunes and Google Play (search for 'Ennis Trails').</p>

TITLE	SUB TITLE	ACTION
TOURISM CONTINUED		
	Clare Trails Group	Member of the Clare Trails Group which saw the development and implementation of the Recreational Trails Strategy County Clare 2012-2015, with the then Rural Recreation Officer and Walks Officer. <a href="http://cldc.ie/home/rural-recreation/">http://cldc.ie/home/rural-recreation/</a> <a href="http://www.irishtrails.ie/trails.aspx?c=Clare">http://www.irishtrails.ie/trails.aspx?c=Clare</a>
SURVEYS		
	Survey of Trees in Towns and Villages in County Clare 2015	<p>The overall aim of the study was to survey and record existing trees in 8 settlements of County Clare. The survey categorised trees suitable (or otherwise) for retention and assessed their quality and value. It analysed the contribution that trees make to the place and made recommendations to the community and Clare County Council for tree management and enhancement. The main purpose was to highlight and raise awareness of the amenity value of trees and hedgerows and to show how trees and hedgerows can contribute to a sense of place, street design and the landscape in the towns and villages of County Clare.</p> <p><b>Tree survey</b> work was under taken in O'Briensbridge, Killaloe, Bridgetown, Ogonelloe, Scariff, Tuamgraney, Whitegate, Mountshannon, Feakle, Tulla, Newmarket-on-Fergus, Sixmilebridge, Bunratty, and Quin.</p> <p><a href="http://www.clarecoco.ie/.../survey-of-trees-in-towns-and-villages-of-county-clare-22398.pdf">www.clarecoco.ie/.../survey-of-trees-in-towns-and-villages-of-county-clare- 22398.pdf</a></p>
	North Clare Bridge Survey, 2015	<p>There is no comprehensive list of <b>bridges</b> in County Clare and the number and nature of the bridges in the county is not known. The goal of this study was to achieve a better understanding of the stock of bridges of heritage interest in the county, which form a part of the civil engineering heritage of County Clare. The survey found that bridges of North Clare constitute a rich civil engineering and architectural heritage, often hidden from view, yet form a defining element of the evolved cultural landscape of the county.</p> <p><a href="http://www.clarecoco.ie/.../the-bridges-of-north-county-clare-an-inventory-of-civil-engineering-heritage-22291.pdf">www.clarecoco.ie/.../the-bridges-of-north-county-clare-an-inventory-of-civil-engineering-heritage-22291.pdf</a></p>



TITLE	SUB TITLE	ACTION
SURVEYS CONTINUED		
	<b>Fresh Water Pearl Mussel Survey, 2016</b>	<p>Survey of the Cree and Annagheeragh rivers found that there is not a viable population of Fresh Water Pearl Mussel in the two rivers. A further survey took place in the Doonbeg River in order to add to the information on the presence of Fresh Water Pearl Mussel in this river. Previous records of Freshwater Pearl Mussels exist from the Doonbeg River dating back to the early 2000's. The results of the survey gave a total absolute minimum population for the Doonbeg river system of approximately 7,000 mussels. The study found no juvenile mussels indicating no recent recruitment in the population. The river shows evidence of high silt loads and nutrient input along with widespread modification to river banks and modification to flow regime through drainage activities. These combined stressors are evidently affecting the survival of juveniles and without recruitment the future prospects for the freshwater pearl mussel in the Doonbeg River does not look favourable.</p> <p>A public information presentation event was held in Kilrush during Heritage Week 2016, which included an introduction to the species, its habitat requirements, life cycle and long term prospects within County Clare. Training on Fresh Water Pearl Mussel survey methods was undertaken in 2017.</p> <p><a href="https://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/publications/doonbeg-pearl-mussel-survey-report-2016-24581.pdf">https://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/publications/doonbeg-pearl-mussel-survey-report-2016-24581.pdf</a></p>
	<b>Kilrush Town Centre Health Check, 2012</b>	<p>A detailed assessment was carried out of the current 'overall health' of Kilrush Town Centre. It was promoted by the Heritage Council working in partnership with Kilrush Town Council. The Town Centre Health Check (TCHC) provided a robust dataset, which establishes a useful 'baseline' for comparison with future Town Centre Health Check assessments of Kilrush and surrounding towns – competing towns or otherwise. The 2012 Kilrush TCHC was the first step in an on-going strategic management programme of health checks for the historic town centre. This data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided an evidence base for use in other studies and strategies carried out in the Kilrush Town centre and in the wider west Clare area.</li> </ul>

TITLE	SUB TITLE	ACTION
SURVEYS CONTINUED		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supported the future preparation of the town development plan, particularly helping to inform economic development, tourism and retail policies contained within the plan.</li> <li>Provided a best practice baseline for assessing the impacts of proposed retail development on the historic town centre.</li> </ul> <p>Overall, the results of the Kilrush TCHC showed a town centre under pressure due to the impact of the prevailing economic climate at the time on the retailing sector nationally. The centre continued to provide a good range of comparison and convenience retailing. There was a dominance of independent retailers over multiple retailers (Irish and UK). The land use survey undertaken as part of the health check showed a wide range of land uses in addition to retail, including civic and professional services and medical services, which reflected the role of Kilrush as a principle commercial and administrative centre in west Clare. The designated Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and attractive built environment and overall unique form and fabric of the town centre create a pleasing public realm for residents, shoppers and visitors. To see the full report follow the link below <a href="http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/content/files/kilrush_town_centre_health_check_report_2012.pdf">http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/content/files/kilrush_town_centre_health_check_report_2012.pdf</a></p>
	Scattery Island	<p>Completed research and survey work for the <b>Natural Heritage Conservation Plan for Scattery Island</b>, Co. Clare 2014. Took part in the Scattery Island radio documentary Scattery Island: Hidden Treasure. The Gathering 2013 in Scattery Island saw 2,000 people on the Island during the two day festival.</p> <p><a href="http://www.heritageireland.ie/en/shannon-region/scatteryislandcentre/">http://www.heritageireland.ie/en/shannon-region/scatteryislandcentre/</a></p>
TRAINING		
	Community Training in Graveyard Recording and Management for County Clare, 2015	<p><b>Graveyard Management</b> This project raised awareness of the long term and continuous need for care and conservation in graveyards. It also raised awareness of both the built and the genealogy heritage and information contained within graveyards.</p> <p><a href="http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/content/files/grants_2015_81kb.pdf">www.heritagecouncil.ie/content/files/grants_2015_81kb.pdf</a></p>



TITLE	SUB TITLE	ACTION
TRAINING CONTINUED		
	<b>Biodiversity Programme</b>	<p>Clare County Council employed a full time <b>Biodiversity Officer</b> from 2010 to mid 2014. During this time the 2nd Clare Biodiversity Action Plan 2014 – 2017 was prepared. It was published and launched during Biodiversity Week 2014.</p> <p>Annual Biodiversity awareness initiatives and events took place during Biodiversity Week, talks, outings, bog walks, bat outings demonstrations, articles were written for local media, among many other activities while working with local communities to undertake Local Biodiversity Actions and planning.</p> <p><b>Banner Wetlands</b>, a public information booklet was produced based on the County Clare Wetland Survey, 2008.</p> <p><a href="https://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/publications/banner-wetlands-11874.pdf">https://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/publications/banner-wetlands-11874.pdf</a> and <b>Buds of the Banner</b></p> <p><a href="https://www.clarecoco.ie/water-waste-environment/publications/buds-of-the-banner-10116.pdf">https://www.clarecoco.ie/water-waste-environment/publications/buds-of-the-banner-10116.pdf</a></p> <p>The Living Farmland Calendar was produced in 2014.</p> <p><a href="http://www.clarecoco.ie/water-waste-environment/publications/living-farmland-calendar-2014-19276.pdf">http://www.clarecoco.ie/water-waste-environment/publications/living-farmland-calendar-2014-19276.pdf</a> based on the The Living Farmland publication</p> <p><a href="http://www.clarecoco.ie/water-waste-environment/publications/the-living-farmland-10126.pdf">http://www.clarecoco.ie/water-waste-environment/publications/the-living-farmland-10126.pdf</a> Local Biodiversity Actions Plans have been produced including the Kilrush Biodiversity Plan 2015 and Ennis Local Biodiversity Action Plan in 2017, along with the development of Wild About Ennis website.</p> <p><a href="http://ennistidytowns.com/project/wildlife/">http://ennistidytowns.com/project/wildlife/</a> Invasive Species training took place for both Clare County Council staff and communities in 2017.</p>
	<b>Raptor Workbooks and Video</b>	<p>John Lusby of BirdWatch Ireland produced two Raptor workbooks aimed at primary school students, one for 1st – 3rd classes and one for 4th – 6th classes and one was available for every school child in the county. Raptors were chosen as the focus for these workbooks as they are instantly appealing to children and as top predators they can be used as a conduit through which we can explore and learn about a wide range of environmental topics such as ecosystems, food chains, conservation threats and the importance of a healthy environment. The workbooks contain information on local raptor populations and use the different raptor species to introduce topics through images, graphics and animations, basic ecological information, fun facts and games. The aim of the workbooks is to increase appreciation and awareness of the local environment in a fun and appealing way while fostering a sense of the value of biodiversity and a healthy countryside outside the classroom window. Several video pieces from 12 to 40 minutes long have been produced to accompany the workbooks.</p> <p><a href="http://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/publications/raptor-workbook-1st-2nd-3rd-classes-24673.pdf">http://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/publications/raptor-workbook-1st-2nd-3rd-classes-24673.pdf</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/publications/raptor-workbook-4th-5th-6th-classes-24674.pdf">http://www.clarecoco.ie/recreation-culture/publications/raptor-workbook-4th-5th-6th-classes-24674.pdf</a> and <a href="https://www.clareed.ie/cpd-courses/primary.../484-raptor-workbooks.htm...">https://www.clareed.ie/cpd-courses/primary.../484-raptor-workbooks.htm...</a></p>

TITLE	SUB TITLE	ACTION
TRAINING CONTINUED		
	Conservation Volunteers	Organised maintenance with Conservation Volunteers in <b>Dromore Stables</b> , an internationally important <b>Lesser Horseshoe bat roost</b> and Special Area of Conservation. Conservation works were undertaken and vegetation was removed to conserve the walls at Dromore Stables.
BUILT HERITAGE		
	Built Conservation	<p>The economic crash resulted in the level of funding to building conservation fall to very low levels. In 2011 there was no Local Authority Conservation Grant Scheme for the repair of Protected Structures and the Heritage Council's Building at Risk Scheme was shelved by the then Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Improvements in grant aid under the Built Heritage Jobs Leverage Scheme saw urgent repairs carried out to 13 protected Structures in Clare in 2014.</p> <p>In response to the lack of funding and difficulties experienced by communities to navigate the complex legislative and permission structures, a <b>Built Heritage Animator Scheme</b> in Clare was established to encourage communities to avail of funding from LEADER, the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013. As part of this scheme training took place on traditional building skills in 2013.</p> <p><a href="http://www.clarecoco.ie/planning/grants/architectural-conservation-grant-schemes/built-heritage-investment-scheme-2017.html">http://www.clarecoco.ie/planning/grants/architectural-conservation-grant-schemes/built-heritage-investment-scheme-2017.html</a></p> <p>In 2015 the three Records of Protected Structures in the county were reviewed, updated and amalgamated into one Record in Part 4 the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p><a href="http://www.clarecoco.ie/planning/publications/clare-county-development-plan-2017-2023-volume-4-record-of-protected-structures-24145.pdf">http://www.clarecoco.ie/planning/publications/clare-county-development-plan-2017-2023-volume-4-record-of-protected-structures-24145.pdf</a></p>
	Survey Work	It was an objective of the Heritage Plan to undertake surveys of Demesnes and Clachans in the county. Due to a lack of resources, these surveys were not undertaken. However, the Conservation Officer of Clare County Council oversees the ongoing conservation of these areas/features of built heritage value and surveys may be undertaken in the future, should resources become available.



TITLE	SUB TITLE	ACTION
HERITAGE AWARENESS AND BEST PRACTICE		
	Heritage Week	<p><b>Heritage Week</b> has continued to grow every year in County Clare and allows local communities and interested individuals to showcase their rich local heritage. <a href="http://www.heritageweek.ie/">http://www.heritageweek.ie/</a></p> <p>There is ongoing communication with the <b>Heritage Council</b> on community heritage grants, promotion, information dissemination, reporting, training and research opportunities and as matters arise on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>The Heritage Council continue to refine the <b>Heritage Map Viewer</b> which is a web-based data viewer focusing on the heritage and further data from County Clare and the Burren has been made available and is shown as part of the Heritage Viewer.</p> <p><a href="https://www.heritagemaps.ie/">https://www.heritagemaps.ie/</a></p>
	Heritage Signage	<p>It was an objective of the Heritage Plan to undertake a gap analysis on heritage signage and develop policies for an integrated approach to signage. While this objective was not achieved for the entire county, a signage strategy has been developed for the Lough Derg and Burren areas. It is hoped that further strategies will be developed for other parts of the county during the 2017-2023 period.</p>
	SAPs and HAPs	<p>It was an objective of the Heritage Plan 2011-2017 to assist Clare Biodiversity Ltd in the implementation of Species Action Plans (SAPs) and Habitat Action Plans (HAPs). However, during the lifetime of the Plan, Clare Biodiversity ceased to function as a working group and therefore the implementation of this objective was not achievable.</p>

TITLE	SUB TITLE	ACTION
EVENTS		
	1916 Commemoration	<p>Clare County Council was represented on the <b>Clare 1916 Commemorative Committee</b> and assisted in the development of the associated programme of events.</p> <p><a href="http://www.clarecoco.ie/community/news/commemoration-of-1916.html">www.clarecoco.ie/community/news/commemoration-of-1916.html</a></p> <p>Heritage submission to the Clare 2020: Local Economic and Community Plan and Clare Rural Development Strategy 2026.</p> <p><a href="http://www.clarecoco.ie/community/lecp/">www.clarecoco.ie/community/lecp/</a></p> <p>and proposed heritage actions to be incorporated into the Clare Local Development (LEADER) Strategy.</p> <p>Collaboration with agencies such as Fisheries Ireland, NPWS, Forest Service, Clare Roots Society, Clare Rural Recreational Officer, Tidy Town groups and community groups etc.</p> <p>Loop Head Heritage and Tourism Group, Scatterry Island Heritage Group.</p> <p><a href="http://www.fisheriesireland.ie/">http://www.fisheriesireland.ie/</a>  <a href="https://www.npws.ie/">https://www.npws.ie/</a>  <a href="https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/forests-service/">https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/forests-service/</a>  <a href="http://www.clareroots.org/">www.clareroots.org/</a></p>
	Liaison and Collaboration	
	National Famine Commemoration 2013	<p>Kilrush, County Clare and its environs were among the areas worst hit by the Great Irish Famine between 1845 and the early 1850s. <b>The 2013 National Famine Commemoration</b> took place on Sunday 12th May on Frances Street in Kilrush. A full ten-day programme of events leading up to the National Famine Commemoration took place, including a series of lectures, walks, tours, re-enactments, theatre, music, exhibitions and local commemoration ceremonies. These events recall the impact of the Great Famine on the people and the landscape of the Kilrush Poor Law Union.</p> <p><a href="http://www.clarecoco.ie/your-council/news/kilrush-to-host-2013-famine-commemoration-event.html">http://www.clarecoco.ie/your-council/news/kilrush-to-host-2013-famine-commemoration-event.html</a></p>

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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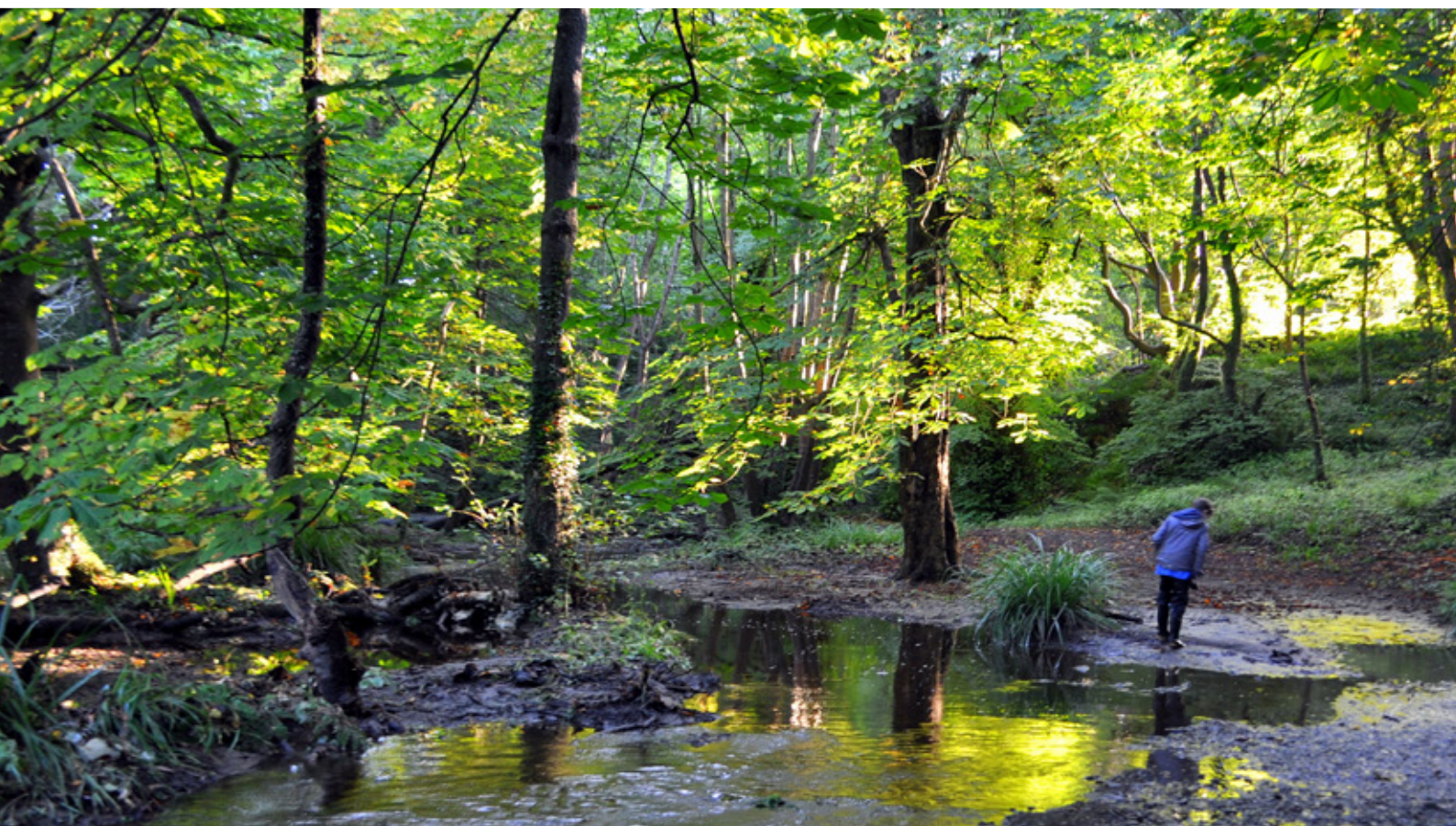




COMHAIRLE CONTAE AN CHLÁIR  
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL



Oidhreacht an Chláir  
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