



COMHAIRLE | CLARE  
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

# TUARASCÁIL MHÍOSÚIL ÓN PHRÍOMHFHEIDHMEANNACH

## MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Meán Fómhair / September  
2023



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CORPORATE SERVICES



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.

Communications

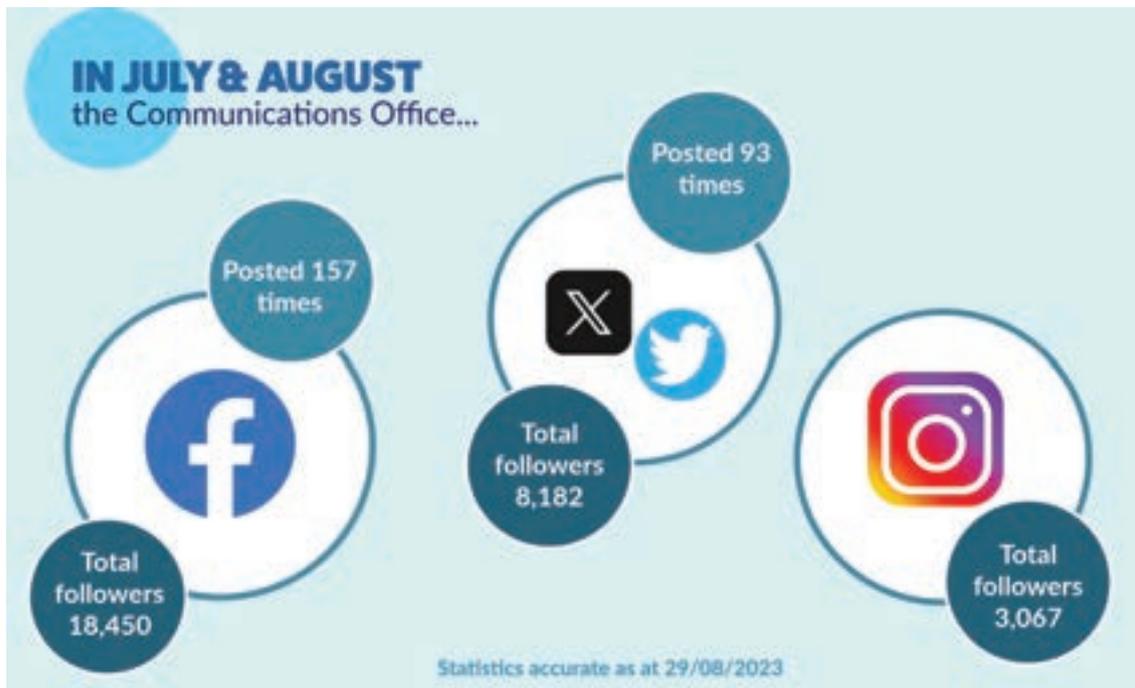
The Communications Office communicates and promotes Council activities and services and raises public awareness of issues of local and national interest.

Media releases issued during July and August included:

- Huge turnout at Clare’s ‘Health & Wellbeing’ Age Expo
- Design contracts signed for One Shannon Hub
- Kilkee selected as My Waste Green Business Hub
- First Town Centre First Plan in Clare launched
- Gum Litter Taskforce Roadshow takes to County Clare to tackle gum disposal
- Key Focus on Shannon Airport During US Tourism Promotion
- Clare Lifeguards Receive Training from Irish Coast Guard, Doolin Coast Guard and Clare Civil Defence
- Levelling Access – Mapping Arts and Disability Provision in Clare, Galway City and Mayo.

Check the Register Media Campaign

The Franchise Section in Corporate Services will be commencing a media campaign this September. The campaign highlights the changes to the electoral register and urges the public to check their details on [www.checktheregister.ie](http://www.checktheregister.ie). to confirm or update their details – including by adding Date of Birth, PPSN and Eircode. A wide range of platforms are being used in the campaign, including traditional, social and digital, to ensure as wide an audience as possible is reached.



## Summer Tour of Clare 2023

Clare FM's Summer Tour of Clare in association with Clare County Council saw Morning Focus broadcast live from towns and villages in each of Clare's four Municipal Districts during June and July.

The outside broadcasts highlighted a wide range of initiatives and activities in communities across Clare. The broadcasts delved into what each local area has to offer in terms of amenities, jobs, local talent and sport, and spoke with various representatives from business, tourism and arts, as well as Council staff and local public representatives.

Outside broadcasts took place in Kilrush, Tulla, Ennistymon, Sixmilebridge, Ennis and Killaloe as part of the series. The average listenership for Morning Focus during this period was 27,000 listeners. Online podcast listens exceed 13,000. Social media reach for the outside broadcast posts exceeded 39,000.

Clare FM's Summer Tour of Clare saw live broadcasts from towns and villages in Clare's four Municipal Districts. Guests included (clockwise from top left): Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr Joe Cooney; Mayor of Ennis Municipal District, Cllr Pat Daly; Cathaoirleach of Shannon Municipal District, Cllr Donna McGettigan; Cathaoirleach of West Clare Municipal District, Cllr Ian Lynch; and Cathaoirleach of Killaloe Municipal District, Cllr Tony O'Brien, with Morning Focus presenter, Alan Morrissey.



## A note of acknowledgement

The Chief Executive received the following message of acknowledgement and gratitude on 30th August, 2023, from Joe Leddin, Mid West Regional Skills Manager:

*Hi Pat,*

*I hope this email finds you well, I just wish to share some thoughts having just returned home to Limerick after three great months living in Kilkee.*

*I would appreciate if you could express my sincere gratitude to the Council workers charged with the responsibility of maintaining Kilkee as a clean and tidy town particularly over the summer period.*

*Day after day I witnessed Council employees from early morning until late at night work tirelessly to ensure the town was clean, the beach was litter free, the dog fouling bins of which there are plenty were emptied.*

*In addition, I saw these same workers spray and place weed repellent along popular scenic walkways again to ensure the public realm was clean in appearance. Despite the often inclement weather your Council colleagues continued to work and show a tremendous sense of pride and commitment in their daily tasks.*

*Both my family and I felt it appropriate to acknowledge this level of public service commitment and grateful if you would convey as life long Kilkee visitors our thanks and appreciation.*

*Best wishes*

*Joe*

*Joe Leddin - Mid West Regional Skills Manager,  
Mid West Regional Skills Forum*

## Recruitment Competitions July & August

### Competitions Advertised

#### Confined

Various Salting Routes (Winter Maintenance Programme) 2023  
Truck Drivers (Salting) Relief Panel, Winter Maintenance 2023

#### Open

Temporary Senior Executive Architect, 2023  
Temporary Executive Engineer Panel 2023  
Civil Defence Officer  
Integration Support Worker (Grade VI)  
Integration Support Coordinator (Grade VII)  
Library Facilities Attendant Panel 2023  
Executive Technician Panel 2023  
Executive Planner Panel 2023  
Retained Part Time Firefighter Panel (Kilkee, Kilrush, Killaloe & Shannon)  
Temporary Technician Grade I (Civil Architectural Building) (July 2023)  
Temporary Executive Quantity Surveyor 2023

### Eligibility Exercises & Desktop Shortlisting

Creative Communities Engagement Officer - Eligibility Exercise  
Assistant Arts Officer - Eligibility Exercise  
Executive Quantity Surveyor - Eligibility Exercise  
Executive Planner - Eligibility Exercise  
Assistant Staff Officer - Desktop Shortlisting

### Interviews

Foreman  
Supervisor (Gardening Section)  
Project Manager - Tourism Sites & Services

**ONLINE TRAINING PROGRAMMES / WEBINARS /  
INFORMATION SESSIONS**

**July & August**

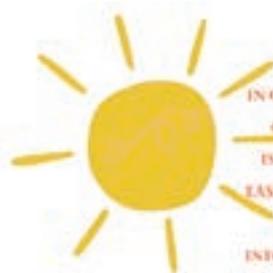
CPC Module 4 Training  
Dealing with Difficult Customers  
Locating Underground Services  
Temporary Traffic Management Design Level 1 & 2

**Essential Skillz on-line Courses**

Cyber Security  
Ergowize  
GDPR  
Health & Safety Induction  
Slips Trips & Falls  
Working in a Covid Era

**Health & Safety**

Manual Handling



IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SUNSMART  
CAMPAIGN A SUNSCREEN LOTION  
ISSUED TO ALL STAFF WHICH CAN BE  
EASILY CARRIED BY KEYCHAIN FOR EASE  
OF USE. THE PACK INCLUDED AN  
INFORMATION CARD ADVISING OF THE 5  
%S OF THE SUNSMART CAMPAIGN.

**Unions:** The Human Resources Department engages with Unions on various matters

**PROCUREMENT**

The following Clare County Council tender competitions were published on eTenders in the period from 26th July to 24th August 2023 inclusive:

RFT Id	Tender Name	Response deadline
2283570	Multi Supplier Framework Agreement for the provision of Photography and Videography services to Clare County Council	29/09/2023 16:00
2276786	Office Furniture for Remote Working 2023	15/06/2023 16:00
2283393	Refurbishment Works at Unit 2 and Unit 3, Ballymurtagh, Shannon, Co. Clare	05/09/2023 16:00
2281547	Provision of Services for Lift Maintenance and Repair Services	21/09/2023 15:00
2276421	Active Travel Project: Safe Routes To School at Clonmoney National School	15/09/2023 12:00
2250183	Town and Village Renewal Works, Drumgeely, Shannon, Co. Clare	01/09/2023 12:00
2202922	Provision and operation of a cashless parking payment service for public parking in County Clare	01/09/2023 12:00
2187820	Tender for the Renovation Works at 111 Dun Na hInse, Ennis, Co. Clare	30/08/2023 16:00

## FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

# FINANCE

See below tables outlining the half year position on both the Revenue and Capital Ledger. Detailed report included on the Agenda.

### Revenue Account summary – Half Year to 30th June, 2023

Div		Actual Expenditure June 2023	Budget Expenditure 2023	% Spent	Actual Income June 2023	Budget Income 2023	% Rec'd
		€'000	€'000	%	€'000	€'000	%
A	Housing and Building	14,492	28,915	50%	12,980	25,541	51%
B	Road Transport & Safety	17,278	40,567	43%	11,052	28,647	39%
C	Water Services	7,214	14,458	50%	6,806	13,658	50%
D	Development Management	16,877	24,242	70%	11,878	14,053	85%
E	Environmental Services	7,881	17,297	46%	1,035	2,368	44%
F	Recreation and Amenity	6,288	12,647	50%	760	1,447	53%
G	Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	336	773	44%	177	409	43%
H	Miscellaneous Services	6,476	12,967	50%	6,255	13,363	47%
LG	LPT Allocation				3,931	7,862	50%
RA	Rates				22,257	44,517	50%
	<b>Total of All Divisions</b>	<b>76,842</b>	<b>151,865</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>77,132</b>	<b>151,865</b>	<b>51%</b>

### Capital Account Summary – Half Year to 30 June 2023

Div	Division	Opening Balance at 1 Jan 2023	Expenditure to end June 2023	Income to end June 2023	Closing Balance at 30 June 2023
		€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
A	Housing and Building	4,785	12,401	13,187	5,571
B	Road Transport & Safety	3,847	14,622	14,336	3,561
C	Water Services	(0)	509	509	(0)
D	Development Management	23,873	3,579	5,643	25,937
E	Environmental Services	1,229	459	254	1,024
F	Recreation and Amenity	2,006	2,038	2,046	2,014
G	Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	0	84	78	(6)
H	Miscellaneous Services	2,181	479	1,929	3,630
	<b>Total</b>	<b>37,920</b>	<b>34,171</b>	<b>37,982</b>	<b>41,730</b>

# TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

## Tourism Promotion on a Global Scale



### Key Focus on Shannon Airport During US Tourism Promotion

A tourism delegation from County Clare attended the world's largest Irish cultural festival at Milwaukee Irish Fest to encourage the US market to travel directly into the West of Ireland via Shannon Airport.

The recent resumption of daily direct flights between Shannon and Chicago O'Hare International, bringing to four the number of US destinations served by the Clare airport, was at the forefront of the county's tourism showcase at the Milwaukee Irish Fest in Wisconsin.

The Clare delegation was led by Clare County Council and members of the Clare Tourism Advisory Forum and spearheaded the promotion of the Banner County as a desirable visitor destination to over 120,000 festival goers.

Covering 74 acres of Lake Michigan's shoreline, the event showcases Irish music, history, dance, sports and culture. The annual festival also is attended by tourism agencies such as Tourism Ireland and Aer Lingus.

The 2023 Milwaukee Irish Fest commenced on Thursday (17th August) and continued through Sunday. Included in this year's music line-up was a string of well-known Irish artists including The Coronas, Hermitage Green, Eileen Ivers, Derek Warfield and Gaelic Storm.



## National Heritage Week 2023



The cultural, built and natural heritage of Craggaunowen, Bunratty Castle & Folk Park and County Clare were celebrated during Heritage Week 2023 from 12th to 20th August.

‘Living Heritage’ was the theme of this year’s programme of events during which members of the public were invited to the popular visitor attractions of Bunratty and Craggaunowen to explore the traditions and practices, knowledge and skills passed down through generations.

Visit: <https://www.bunrattycastle.ie/news/news/national-heritage-week-2023/>

**Watch back Nuacht TG4 coverage:**  
<https://youtu.be/OjFeH2A5AeY>

## New Wolfhounds arrive at Bunratty Castle and Folk Park



Bunratty Castle and Folk Park were absolutely overjoyed to welcome two adorable Irish Wolfhounds, 12-week-old Rían, and one-year-old Míde, to the folk park family. Among the largest of all breeds of dog, Irish Wolfhounds were regular guests at Bunratty Castle from the early days of its medieval banquets in the 1960s. Known for being gentle, friendly and

very intelligent, Rían and Míde are looking forward to welcoming visitors from near and far to Bunratty Folk Park for many years to come. Visit: <https://www.bunrattycastle.ie/.../irish-wolfhounds-return/>

## Arrival of new owl at Bunratty Castle and Folk Park



Social Media competition to name the new Bunratty Owl. Out of over 1.5K entries the name “Boru” was selected. A nod to the once high king of Ireland, Brian Ború, it was felt this was an apt name for such a regal and noble creature.

## Culture and Crafts Fair at Craggaunowen - 16th July



Pole Lathe – Jack Pinson

The crafts, trades, music and old traditions of County Clare were showcased at the inaugural Craggaunowen Culture and Crafts Fair on Sunday, 16th July. Visitors to the popular visitor attraction will have the opportunity to engage directly with artists, crafts and tradespeople, storytellers, musicians, and dancers from across the Banner County. Other highlights on the day included set and step dancing performances, live traditional music and Viking merchants educating visitors: <https://www.shannonheritage.com/news/craggaunowen-hosts-inaugural-culture-and-crafts-fa/>

## Clare Rose 2023 Visits Bunratty Castle and Folk Park



Bunratty Castle & Folk Park was delighted to welcome the 2023 Clare Rose, Aisling O'Connor, to the park as part of her Rose Tour of the County.

During her visit Aisling took in the sites and sounds of the park, met many colourful characters along the way and enjoyed beautiful renditions of "My lovely Rose of Clare" and "Rose of Tralee" by resident musician Maeve. Aisling was joined in her visit by Councillor Joe Cooney, Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, and Nicola Killeen of Visit Clare.

## Newstalk at Bunratty Castle & Folk Park



Andrea Gilligan, Newstalk.

As part of Newstalk's Lunchtime Live Summer Tour of County Clare, presenter Andrea Gilligan took the opportunity to visit Bunratty Castle and experience its world-famous medieval banquet which is celebrating 60 years in operation.

Listen back: <https://www.newstalk.com/podcasts/highlights-from-lunchtime-live/a-completely-unique-dining-experience-andrea-visits-bunratty-castle>

## Clare FM Atlantic Tales on Craggaunowen

Pat Flynn chatted to those involved in the restoration, management, and day-to-day operations of one of County Clare's best loved visitor experiences – Craggaunowen – including: Dr John Logan, historian and Chairperson of The Hunt Museum Trust; Stephen Hanley, General Manager, Clare Tourism

East; Pauline Lenihan, Site Manager, Craggaunowen; and Stefan Leszczynski, Animator/Reenactor, Craggaunowen.

[https://soundcloud.com/clarefm/atlantic-tales-craggaunowen-episode-129?utm\\_source=clipboard&utm\\_campaign=wtshare&utm\\_medium=widget&utm\\_content=https%253A%252F%252Fsoundcloud.com%252Fclarefm%252Fatlantic-tales-craggaunowen-episode-129](https://soundcloud.com/clarefm/atlantic-tales-craggaunowen-episode-129?utm_source=clipboard&utm_campaign=wtshare&utm_medium=widget&utm_content=https%253A%252F%252Fsoundcloud.com%252Fclarefm%252Fatlantic-tales-craggaunowen-episode-129)

## Rebels and Rivals re-enactments – 29th July – Bunratty Castle & Folk Park



The origins of one-thousand years of settlement at Bunratty Castle were brought to life on Saturday, 29th July, when the popular County Clare visitor attraction was transformed into a Norman village. Bunratty Castle & Folk Park and the An Gaill Glais re-enactment group hosted "Rebels and Rivals", a day-long event during which members of the public witnessed life in a Norman encampment up close and personal, experience the sights, sounds and smells of Norman knights on campaign, and hear their stories of how they fought and sought to conquer the

island of Ireland. <https://www.bunrattycastle.ie/news/news/rebelsandrivals/>

## Traditional Summer Carnival at Bunratty Castle and Folk Park – 12th and 13th August

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On 12th and 13th August, Bunratty Castle & Folk Park hosted a Traditional Summer Carnival. Visitors were invited to relive memories of old and create new ones with an array of traditional carnival games and activities bringing the park's traditional village street to life. A kaleidoscope of colour with raised stalls and stripped awnings greeted guests as they enjoyed games such as Giant Checkers, Giant Jenga, Giant Connect 4, Smash A Can Stall, Ball in a Bucket, Hoopla, Coconut Shy Stall and more.

## The Viking Age at Craggaunowen – 19th and 20th August

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On Saturday and Sunday, 19th-20th August, the team at Craggaunowen were delighted to welcome back our Viking cousins for a weekend of Viking culture, crafts, customs and creativity as they celebrated The Age of the Vikings. Highlights included Viking Combat battles, a Viking Village, Medieval games and armoury.

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## Clare Tourism Advisory Forum

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Clare Tourism Advisory Forum meeting at Vandeleur Walled Garden (29-06-23).

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### Clare Tourism Advisory Forum meeting at Vandeleur Walled Garden, Kilrush

The Clare Tourism Advisory Forum held its June meeting in the boardroom, Vandeleur Walled Garden, Kilrush, followed with a guided tour of the garden with Head Gardener, Karoly Torok.

## Burren & Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark

### Geopark: Caherconnell International Furnace Festival and Fossil Findings



Dr Eamon Doyle from the Geopark team was heavily involved in the organisation and running of the Caherconnell International Furnace Festival which ran from 24th-27th August. The hugely successful event was open to the public on the 26th and 27th and saw crowds of curious onlookers attend the event throughout the weekend. This year's festival had the addition of interactive workshops, which gave people an opportunity to get in on the action and learn the techniques involved in smelting, blacksmithing and the theory of both practices. This was the second year that festival was held in Caherconnell and after a successful weekend it is anticipated that it will be back again next year.

### Fossil finds published in the international palaeontology journal, *Geobios*



One of Dr Eamon Doyle's recent fossil finds has been published in the international palaeontology journal, *Geobios*: 'An oversized, late surviving reticulosan sponge from the Carboniferous

of Ireland'. This is a new species of fossil sponge, previously unknown to science, called *Cyathophycus balori*. Leading fossil sponge experts Dr Joe Botting and Dr Lucy Muir were contacted and were very surprised and excited by the discovery by Dr Doyle and travelled to County Clare last year to examine the specimens. This has resulted in the recent publication which again highlights the international significance of some of the fossil discoveries made by the Geopark geologist.

### Events for National Heritage Week 2023



The Geopark hosted several events for National Heritage Week 2023. Dr Eamon Doyle gave an insightful presentation and hosted a Q&A on the latest discoveries in the Burren at the Burren Centre in Kilfenora. He also teamed up with John Hehir of Lisdoonvarna Historical Society to give talks on the history of the Spa Wells in Lisdoonvarna, the geology in the region and the new Geo stack sculpture at Lisdoonvarna Library which was developed with the support of the Geological Survey of Ireland.

## Australian Minister and Ambassador visit Cliffs of Moher Experience



Cliffs of Moher Experience was delighted to welcome Australian Minister for Disabilities Bill Shorten to the Cliffs of Moher Experience on 14th July, accompanied by Senator Martin Conway, H.E. Ambassador Gary Grey, Head of Clare Tourism Deirdre O'Shea and Teresa Lavin to learn about the accessibility measures in place for visitors and staff around the site.

## Loop Head Lighthouse & Visitor Centre

### Loop Head Lighthouse reaches out to the world



Loop Head HAM.

Members of the Limerick Clare Amateur Radio Club, from across the Mid-West, broadcast non-stop for 48 hours from the Loop Head Lighthouse Experience in County Clare on Saturday and Sunday (19th-20th August) as part of the 26th annual International Lighthouse/Lightship Weekend (ILLW).

During the weekend's broadcast, visitors to the lighthouse were able to listen in to communications with amateur radio stations across the world. Of particular interest was the contact with many of the 500 lighthouses and lightships in over 40 countries that were also activated by amateur radio enthusiasts over the same period. Contact was made with all continents and operators in Japan and Australia were particularly keen to get in touch. Contact was also made with an operator in Alaska and this was the highlight of the weekend as that location is one of the most sought-after locations worldwide.

Members of the club reported being very happy with the number and variety of contacts made and feedback from visitors about this additional feature to the Experience was very positive.

The Club operated two stations, one of which was located at the entrance to the lighthouse so members of the public could listen to some of the transmissions, and this proved to be popular. A special QSL Card (confirmation of communication) was designed to mark the event and this will be issued to the hundreds of stations contacted in over 60 countries thus ensuring that Loop Head is firmly on the international map.

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## Vandeleur Walled Garden & Visitor Centre

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### Vandeleur Festival Kilrush, Friday to Sunday, 21st-23rd July

The inaugural Vandeleur Festival Kilrush took place on the weekend of Friday to Sunday, 21st-23rd July, and featured a series of events.

The three-day festival got underway at the Vandeleur Walled Garden and Visitor Centre on Friday, 21st July, with an art exhibition by Kilrush-based Ailish Malone, whose self-taught

abstract landscapes are inspired by the West Clare landscape. This was followed by a musical performance by Teresa Carrig who launched her new CD - 'Roots of Love'.

The Alvin Purple Experience and a Fire Show by Rogu, took place on Frances Street, Kilrush on Friday night.

The renowned Kilfenora Céilí Band took to the stage in a sell-out event in the newly renovated courtyard at the Vandeleur

Walled Garden and Visitor Centre on Saturday, 22nd July, and were supported by popular West Clare singer/songwriter PJ Murrihy.

The deluxe, high street, and boutique designs from some of the best local retailers in Kilrush and surrounding areas were showcased on Sunday, 23rd July, when The Holman Lee Agency hosted another sell out event featuring a Fashion Show at Vandeleur Walled Garden and Visitor Centre.

This event shone a spotlight on the arts and culture community in West Clare and delivered benefits for the local economy and helped promote the West Clare capital town as a vibrant place to visit.

Due to the success of this festival, it is hoped that it will become an annual event going forward.



## Marketing and Promotion

### Newstalk Summer on Tour with Andrea Gilligan



### Newstalk Summer on Tour with Andrea Gilligan

What are your favourite things to do in Clare? Lunchtime Live Newstalk's Summer Tour Andrea Gilligan on 19th July, joined by John Burke, Deirdre O'Shea, Jarlath O'Dwyer and Nuala Mulqueeny.

### Clare Rose, Aisling O'Connor, tours the county ahead of the International Rose of Tralee Festival



Hosted by the Cathaoirleach and Leas-Cathaoirleach, Aisling O'Connor, the Clare Rose, completed a 2-day whistlestop tour of the County ahead of the International Rose of Tralee Festival.

### Experience Great Golf in Clare & Win a Holiday to Clare



**Site Visit took to the Rectory, Mountshannon and Inis Cealtra/Holy Island**



A site visit took place in July by Elected Members and staff to the Rectory, Mountshannon and Inis Cealtra/Holy Island.

**Cliffs of Moher**

National Heritage Week is a celebration of Ireland’s natural, built, and cultural heritage. Our heritage refers to our past and how we protect and preserve it to pass it on to future generations. This year’s theme ‘Living Heritage’ invited us to explore the traditions and practices, knowledge and skills passed down through generations.

The Cliffs of Moher celebrated National Heritage Week from 12th to 22nd August. Visitors at the Cliffs of Moher Experience had the opportunity to explore the traditions and practices, knowledge and skills passed down through generations.

- **Storytelling with Ciara Carew:** Storytelling in Ireland is renowned throughout the world for its rich folklore traditions. This tradition dates back to the time of the Celts, where information was passed on through poetry, songs, and stories.



- **Hurley Making with Aidan Cuddihy:** Hurling and Hurley making dates back further than any written Irish history. It is a vital part of Ireland’s culture and heritage.
- **Traditional Irish Music:** Kate and Jack brought the spirit of traditional Irish culture to life through their captivating

performance, infusing the air with a lively atmosphere that beautifully echoed the essence of Co. Clare’s rich history and vibrant heritage.



- **Basket weaving with Deirdre Heatherington:** With roots tracing back centuries, this ancient craft has woven its way into Ireland’s cultural heritage.



- **Spinning and Knitting with Ann O’Toole:** Experience the captivating world of ancient textile art as you witness the mesmerising craft of spinning yarn under the guidance of the talented and knowledgeable Ann O’Toole.
- **Handbag Making with Sally Ann Bags:** From crafting unique handbags to celebrating the creativity of local artisans, Sally Ann Maron showcased Co. Clare’s culture and skilful traditions.
- **Chair Making:** We also welcomed Nigel Barens from Old Chairs, a true master craftsman recognised for his expertise in crafting Soughan Chairs. Nigel’s commitment to preserving this ancient tradition serves as a poignant reminder of such time-honoured techniques.

Shane Considine, Gerard Morrissey, and Brigid Forde were involved in the planning and organising of Heritage Week 2023 at the Cliffs of Moher Experience.

## WEST CLARE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT- KILRUSH LEA

Clare County Council recruits a number of seasonal Beach Operatives each year. They assist in the operation and maintenance of the amenities at our coastal towns and villages in conjunction with the full-time crews and other council personnel. Here is a snapshot of the West Clare Municipal District team.

### Cappa Kilrush

*Sean Ryan and Gerry Ryan*



### Kilkee

*Joe Linnane, Paul Frawley, Conor Deloughery, John Garvey, Ross Garvey*



*Kieran Burke, Traffic Warden*



### Quilty

*Tomas Crawford with his mother Susan Crawford*



### Lahinch

*Martin O'Neill, Traffic Warden. Niamh Barrett and Darragh McNulty*



### White Strand, Miltown Malbay

*Meabh O'Malley*



### Spanish Point

*Eamon Gray*



### Fanore

*Pat Hogan*



*Raymond Twomey*



## Miltown Malbay Track and Trail

Saturday, 5th August, saw the official launch of the Malbay Track and Trail. This 1.6km looped walk begins at the Church car park and continues down past Clonbony Garden houses and through the fields until it meets the Clonbony River. The walk continues along by the river until it hits the old West Clare Railway Track and continues past the Council yard, the Station House Guesthouse and back along the footpath to the church car park. It is a very peaceful walk allowing people to get out safely into farmland and to experience nature along the way.

The following four farming families kindly donated the track section on their land so that the project could be completed: Martin and Anthony Kerins and Family; Charlie and Francis Lynch; Christy and Ann Curtin; and Brian Lynch and Family.

The project team was comprised of Clare County Council's SEO John O'Malley, SEE Grainne Reddan, former RCDO Margaret Cotter, former Councillor Susan Crawford and landowners Francis Lynch and Eileen Ryan. Expert advice was provided from Eoin Hogan Rural Recreation Officer with CLDC. The team worked closely with Dr Susan Crawford to ensure that the Autism Active principles were considered in the development of the project.

The project was part funded by the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) through the Department of Rural and Community Development and would not have been possible without the collaborative efforts of all involved including the landowners, Clare County Council, Miltown Malbay Development Company, Clare Local Development Company and the funding provided through the Department of Rural and Community Development, GMA funding from Councillor Liam Grant and Clare County Council own resources.



*Walkers on the path of the original West Clare Railway.*



*There was a great turn out for the official opening.*



*Members of the Project team at the start point of the trail with Cllr Joe Garrihy and Senator Martin Conway.*

# RURAL DEVELOPMENT

## CLÁR Projects

### Inagh National School

Works have been completed by Inagh National School on the resurfacing of a car park at the rear of the National School. The car park serves not only the national school and playground but also the community walking track, astro turf, GAA pitch and gym. The car park is heavily trafficked and the surface of same was in poor condition and in need of resurfacing, lining and marking out of disabled spaces. A CLÁR grant of €50,000 was awarded to the school for the delivery of this project. In addition, an area of biodiversity planting took place as part of the project.



### Kilmaley Walking Track

Kilmaley Meitheal Company Limited have recently completed works on their CLÁR funded project (€50,000 grant). Their project involved the development of a 1km wheelchair accessible community walkway around the perimeter of the community playground and local GAA pitch. There are limited footpaths in the parish of Kilmaley, so this was considered an essential amenity in order to provide a safe facility for all members of the community to exercise. This walking track provides not just a facility to exercise but also for social interaction among the elderly community, parents of children using the playground and GAA facilities and the wider community in general.



### Kilkeedy Community Playground

Funding of €50,000 was awarded to Kilkeedy Community Group under the CLÁR grant scheme in 2022 which enabled them to complete a community playground facility in the parish of Kilkeedy. The playground facility is part of a facility which is being developed into a multi-use community and sports activity hub. The site on which the playground is located adjoins the site of a community sports hall, GAA pitch and walking track.



## Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme Projects

### Cullaun Lake

Kilkishen Development CLG received funding of just over €20,000 under Measure 1 of the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme 2022 to carry out works at the Cullaun Lake amenity in Kilkishen. The Cullaun Amenity Park was first developed in cooperation with Clare County Council in 2004 but over the years had fallen into a state of disrepair. As a result of having secured funding, the community were able to carry out upgrade works in the park. The upgrade works consisted of the resurfacing of 300m of trail paths that form a looped walk in the park. A firepit has been upgraded along with repairs to a stone boundary seating-wall surrounding the firepit. 85m of exterior fencing in the car park area has been replaced and painted. The local Tulla Scouts group who regularly use the facility sponsored the purchase of 2 concrete seats and a biodiversity notice board.



## Town & Village Renewal Scheme Projects

### Obair – Newmarket on Fergus

Obair is a community social enterprise that works with people of all ages to combat exclusion as well as to develop enterprise in the area. Obair supports those who are unemployed or elderly and they work to facilitate greater community participation in the area. They operate a community creche, an afterschool programme and a Meals on Wheels Service. Covid had a huge impact on the Meals-on-Wheels part of Obair’s business. The Meals on Wheels service has increased fourfold since the onset of Covid-19, going from 50 meals a day, five days a week to now providing 250 meals on average every day of the week. This has led to the development of an ‘Food4You’ app which is to be launched shortly to make the ordering process easier and offers a greater selection of meals. It is envisaged that once it has been trialled in Clare, it can then be rolled out nationwide.

Over the years, Obair have expanded their work and presence in Newmarket on Fergus. They purchased the derelict Tradaree Arms on the Main Street and have been working on a project for the building over the last number of years. There were two phases to the project and phase 2 has recently been completed a project with the assistance of a €200k grant from the Town & Village Renewal Scheme. The project was a multi-faceted project that involved a number of elements including the creation of an urban garden, a youth space, completion of the commercial cookery school, the purchase of equipment to facilitate the app to be rolled out for the Meals on Wheel service along with the creation and kitting out of three micro-enterprise food hubs that provide space for trainees to develop their food enterprise ideas. The food produced is available to purchase in the newly opened ‘Farm Shop’ on site which is operated via an online system.



### Burren Centre Kilfenora

The Burren Centre in Kilfenora is an Interpretative Centre that gives visitors to the area a better understanding and appreciation of the landscape of the Burren. The centre first opened in the 1970s and at that time it was innovative, well received and served the purpose for which it was developed. The exhibition area was updated in 2001 to enable visitors to discover the unique magic of the Burren in ‘A Walk Through Time’ experience. Twenty-two years later, there was a need to modernise the

visitor experience and exploit modern technologies to enhance the experience. With the assistance of a €200k grant under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2020, the centre has been reinvigorated and modernised. The interpretation and displays have all been updated to give a fresh and modern appearance to the centre. Refurbishment works have also been carried out to the lobby area making it a more inviting and appealing space. The project has re-established the Burren Centre as a compelling, well-managed, sustainable tourism attraction in the heart of the Burren.



### Streetscape Enhancement Measure 2022 for Lisdoonvarna

Streetscape improvement works have been completed in Lisdoonvarna under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme – Streetscape Enhancement Measure. The 2022 measure targeted the improvement of properties located in the town centre and along the northern end of the main street, which serves as the central spine of the town.

In September 2022, workshops were conducted in Lisdoonvarna to provide guidance and support to property owners/lease holders regarding the funding scheme. A total of 23 applications were received, reflecting the community's interest and engagement in the project. €100k was allocated by the Department of Rural and Community Development towards the works with match funding of 20-30% being provided by property owners.



The works carried out under the Streetscape Enhancement Measure encompassed various elements to enhance the aesthetics of the town.

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## RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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The implementation of the Streetscape Enhancement Measure in Lisdoonvarna has resulted in significant improvements to the town. Through the allocation of funding and the engagement of property owners/lease holders, a range of enhancements such as planting, painting, repair works, lighting, signage replacement, canopies/awnings, and street furniture were successfully implemented. These improvements have revitalised the streetscape, creating an attractive and welcoming environment for both residents and tourists. The commitment and collaboration demonstrated throughout this project serves as a testament to the community's dedication to the town's ongoing development and enhancement.

### Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2029



A "Public Consultation Document" containing High-Level Goals and an associated Socio-Economic Statement was published online on Clare County Council's website under "Have Your Say" on 30th July last. The document provided details on how the public consultation was planned and delivered, the satisfaction publicly with the draft High-Level Goals and how they would impact on the people of Clare through a series of draft objectives. The document details the face to face public consultations that were held throughout the county in each Municipal District and facilitated by LCDC Support Staff. These in-person events, which were well attended, were hosted in the following locations:

**Monday, 12th June, 2023** - Shannon Municipal District

**Tuesday, 13th June, 2023** - Ennis Municipal District

**Wednesday, 14th June, 2023** - Killaloe Municipal District

**Thursday, 15th June, 2023** - West Clare Municipal District Offices



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## Ukrainian Services Development

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As of 11th August, 2023, there are 91,300 temporary protection orders granted nationally, up 5,000 on the previous report. The 7-day rolling average is down at 67 from the previously reported 109 but not as high as the December figures. There are 69,500 accommodated with 14,474 Ukrainian people working and contributing and a further 15,600 enrolled in school. The total number of Ukrainian people accommodated in County Clare is 4,701 – up slightly on the last figures from 23rd June.

### Offer a Home

Clare County Council has received 149 offers of unoccupied homes under the 'Offer a Home' scheme since its launch in December 2022. All of homeowners have been contacted and 147 homes have been assessed so far with the remaining home assessments scheduled. Of the homes that have been assessed 9 are not yet available and 33 have been withdrawn from the scheme as they were either unsuitable or the homeowner had a change in circumstances. We have successfully matched 81 of the homes and have accommodated 263 people that were living in hotel or multi-unit accommodation in the locality.

The number of homes offered under this scheme has decreased and of the 16 viable homes currently remaining, 50% are located in rural areas of West Clare, 25% are located in rural areas of North Clare and 25% are located in rural areas of East Clare. We have received in excess of 500 expressions of interest from Ukrainian families currently living in hotel or multi-occupancy accommodation seeking to move into one of the offered homes.

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

## SPORTS &amp; RECREATION



## Active Ennis Leisure Complex

### Pool

Seven weeks of Summer Intensive Swim lessons completed. We had over 600 participants involved. Weekend and week-day lessons back 9th of September fully booked. Numbers in the region of 1,200 expected throughout the terms.

Busy summer but back to normal for the winter with Swimming Club and Schools Programme starting back 1st/2nd week of September.

### Gym

#### New Gym classes

**Egyptian Belly Dancing:** Will commence Tuesday, 5th September, at 6.45pm and will be instructed by Ciara McKenna. Egyptian belly dancing promotes balance, strength, and coordination.

**Chair Exercise:** Will commence Tuesday, 5th September, at 2pm and will be instructed by Trish Cleary. Exercises are done to music from the 40s, 50s & 60s and helps increase flexibility and balance.



### Teen gym

With school holidays finishing up, teen gym has concluded for the summer. During school holidays teen gym was running from 11am to 1pm, Monday to Friday, and has been very popular among gym goers aged 11 to 15 yrs. It will continue during the school term Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday from 4-5pm.

### Instagram

The Active Ennis complex has set up an Instagram page. This is intended as a communication tool with our members and the wider public and will be used to give news, advertise classes, and display the pool and gym timetables.



### Active Ennis Lees Road, TSP, etc

It's a quiet time of year, just soccer and GAA matches going on as per normal. Adult soccer and rugby have started back in the last week or so.

Held Munster Community Games Finals on 20th August. 600 athletes in attendance.

[www.activeennis.ie](http://www.activeennis.ie)      [www.activekilrush.ie](http://www.activekilrush.ie)

**Any defects or operational issues can be reported by email to [info@activeennis.ie](mailto:info@activeennis.ie)**



The **Outdoor EXPO** was a great success and CLSP has put together a video outlining the activities that took place during the month of July: [https://youtu.be/U\\_8f-yU5ofM](https://youtu.be/U_8f-yU5ofM)

There was a teen girls beginner **Tennis Camp** in Ennis Lawn Tennis & Badminton Club. There was a two-day teen girls beginner **Badminton Camp** also in Ennis Lawn Tennis and Badminton Club, both were well supported.

The six-week **Open Water Swimming Course** has just finished in four locations in throughout Clare and as a result there are now 68 more confident swimmers in the county.

**Her Outdoors Week** took place from 14th to 20th August and we had a host of activities for people to get involved in, you can check them out on our website at: <https://claresports.ie/her-outdoors-week-23/>

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

[www.claresports.ie](http://www.claresports.ie)

# SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- We are on course, despite the challenges, to meet our housing delivery targets of 149 units for this year. There are 48 houses completed to date, thereby providing high-quality homes to approved applicants on our social housing waiting list. Work on the remainder of these units is at various stages of development.
- Since the ending of the winter eviction ban on 31st March last, we continue to support circa. 80 clients with Notice to Quits in existing private rental agreements. Our staff area actively engaging with these clients to assist them in accessing other housing solutions and to avoid the need for entering homeless services. A new expedited application process has been introduced for the Local Authority Home Loan for tenants who have received a Notice of Termination to inform them whether this loan option is a viable solution for them. We are also investigating options around purchasing a number of properties while AHB purchases are supporting further clients. We continue to provide advice and support to clients who do not qualify for social housing support but may be able to avail of the Cost Rental Tenant in Situ programme through the Housing Agency and one such referral has been made to date.
- Ennis Electoral Area was designated a Rent pressure Zone from 31st August and this limits rental increases on private rental tenancies to a maximum of 2% per annum. This will hopefully help those currently in private rental agreements with more certainty in relation to future costs.
- Work on the new County Library continues at pace and great progress is now visible on site. This will prove to be a fantastic addition to the town and county and enhance the attractiveness of the town from a visitor perspective.
- The Enhanced Defective Concrete Block Grant Scheme went live in mid-July, with the required Department Regulations now in place. The scheme is open to accepting applications online and staff and IT systems are in place to support an online portal so that affected homeowners can continue to submit their applications.
- Expressions of Interest for the delivery of Affordable Housing Schemes by developers at Ennis and Shannon were advertised this month again and is open until end of September. A scheme of priorities for allocating properties should demand for same exceed availability has been approved by the Minister, and is being brought before Elected Members at the September meeting or final adoption.

## 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)

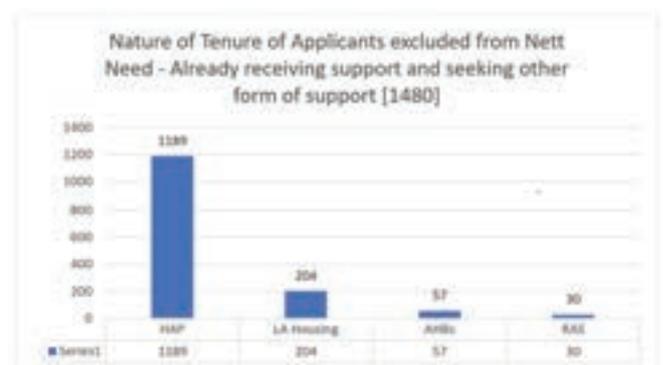
### Social Housing Demand - Assessment of housing need

Our greatest demand throughout the county is for 1 and 2-bedroomed properties. There are 2,180 applicant households (76%) who have a requirement for this property type. The Allocations/Assessment Team are currently carrying out a review of the areas where the demand for this property type is greatest. This exercise was carried out recently in the Shannon, Feakle, Scariff and Whitegate areas, which was very successful and was an opportunity to meet with households in person and update their details.

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

### Current Housing need as of 22/06/23

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



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

### Newly Qualified Applicants

New income limits became effective on 1st January, 2023. To date, 346 new applications have been qualified this year which is broadly in line with previous years.



## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### Housing Allocations

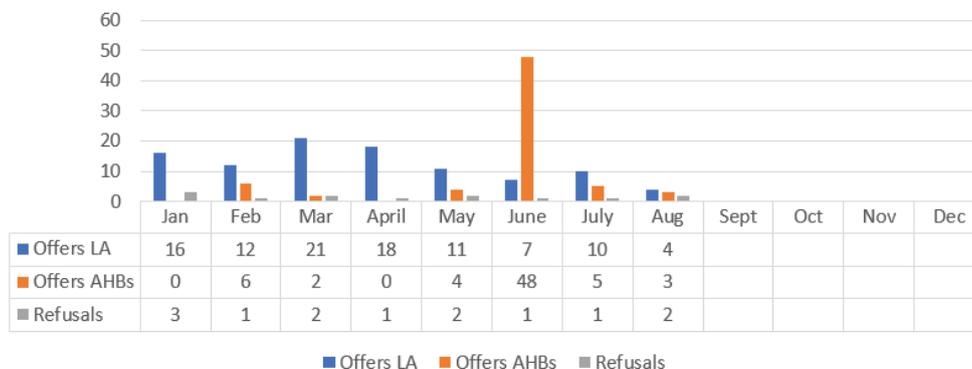
Clare County Council continues to work with the Approved Housing Bodies in relation to the provision of social housing. In this regard the 3 bedroomed houses located at Cill Stuinín, School Road, Lahinch which are being delivered by Co Operative Housing Ireland (CHI) were advertised on the CBL website in June. These properties were allocated in August and the three households have now received their keys and are in the process of moving into their new homes. These properties were made available for social housing under the Part 5 Scheme which allows a local authority to require developers to set aside a certain proportion of new development for social and affordable housing.

In addition, the 26 units comprising three and four bedroomed properties located at An Cosán Gheall, Limerick Road, Ennis were advertised on the CBL website in June. Inis Housing who are delivering these houses are in the process of carrying out Assessment meetings for these properties.

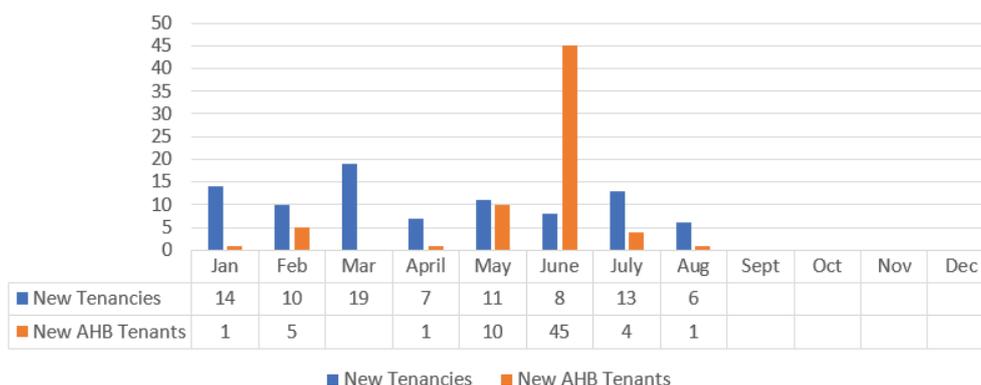
A total of 155 tenancies have been created up to 31st August, details of the basis of need are set out hereunder. All of our vacant stock, casual vacancies and new developments including those being made available by the Approved Housing Bodies are now advertised on the CBL website. The key overall principle of a CBL approach to letting is that the system is based on applicant initiative, i.e. applicants become more engaged with the process, more proactively involved in seeking a social housing property rather than waiting for the Allocations Team to contact them. It can be seen as being analogous to the way in which households in the private sector source their accommodation. It offers more choice and has the advantage of generally been seen as more transparent and fair for those that take part in it, when compared to the previous traditional direct letting approach previously used.

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

**Offers & Refusals 2023**



**New Tenancies 2023**



## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### Tenant Purchase Incremental Scheme

There remains significant interest in the LA Tenant Purchase Incremental Scheme with 6 new applications this year to date. We currently have 13 open cases at various stages of the legal process of which up to 7 are expected to complete in 2023. Sale of 6 properties has completed in 2023 to date.

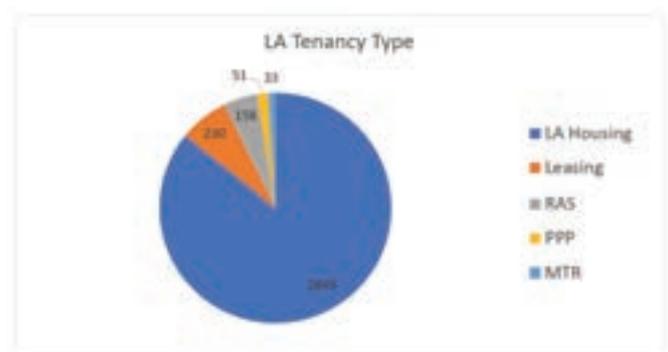
Having consulted with elected members in relation to maintaining our newer stock we have agreed that properties purchased or built since 1st January, 2016, will not be available for sale under this scheme. This can be reviewed at end of current Housing Delivery Plan period in 2026. We have also agreed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



### Housing Tenancies

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

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



In addition, we have 1,189 active HAP Tenancies.

Approved Housing bodies are providing approximately 800 tenancies to Social Housing Applicants.

Clare County Council have full nomination rights in respect of the

majority of AHB properties and these properties are advertised via our Choice Based Letting System Nominations are prepared in accordance with a new National Process agreed by LAs and the AHB sector and commenced in July 2022.

### Vacancies

Vacant Stock	Ennis MD	West Clare MD	Shannon MD	Killaloe MD	Total
Traveller Accommodation	2	8	2	0	12
Derelict Properties	0	0	0	0	0
Projects	4	10	1	0	15
Casual Vacancies	11	14	3	3	31
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>58</b>

### Estate Management

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

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

	21st June to 25th Aug	Total year to date
ASB Complaints recd	124	504
Housing Inspections	68	494
Referrals to TSS	11	24
Tenancy Notifications/Warnings issued	31	101
Abandonment Notices issued	1	7
Keys collected from Casual Vacancies	11	44
Repossession Orders	0	1

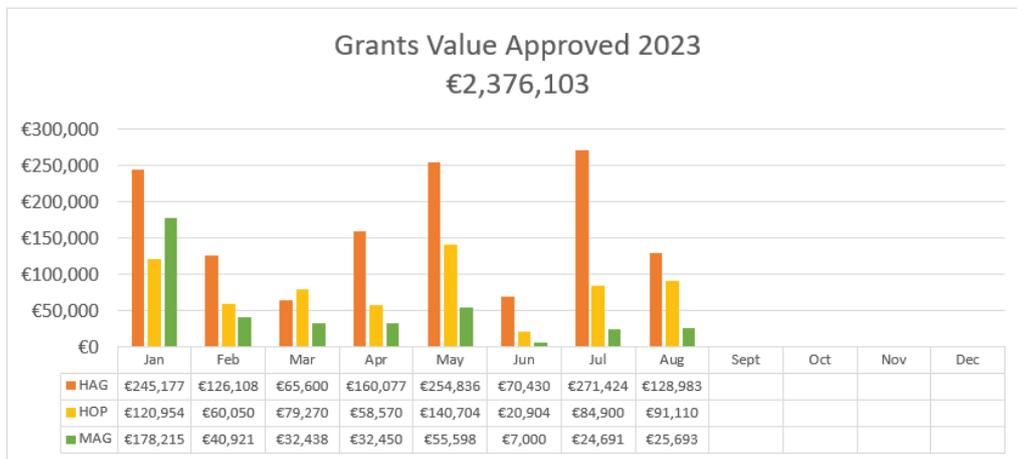
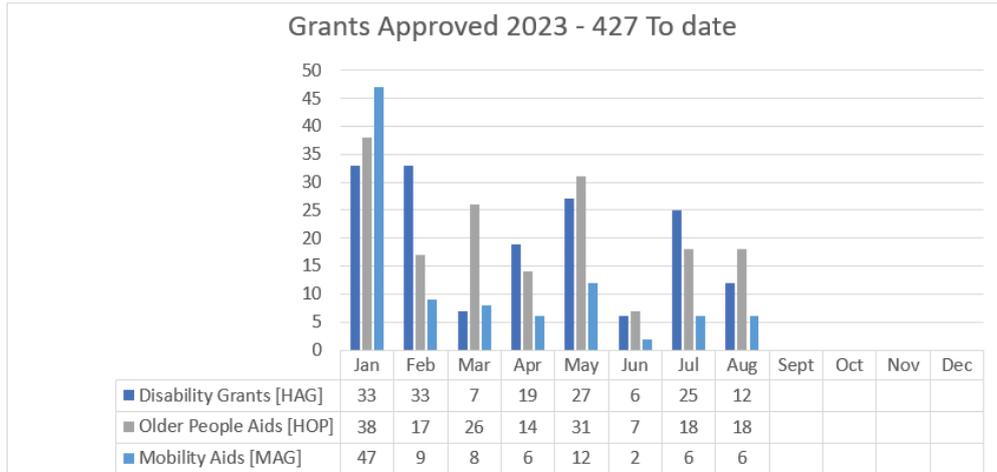
The Tenancy Enforcement team carry out continued patrols of Local Authority housing estates and Traveller sites and have a very visible presence to manage and mitigate against complaints of antisocial behaviour with over 7,100 observations of tenancies as part of these patrols in the year to date. The working hours of the TEO team are flexible to meet required need, involving working after hours and weekends as the need dictates. The TEO team can be contacted out of office hours, should the need arise, by contacting the Council Emergency Phone no. **(087) 4169496**

### Private Rented inspections:

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

## Housing Grants

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



## Local Authority Home Loan

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

Loans data for 2023 up to 21/08/2023: There are currently 40 Local Authority Home Loans Approved in Principle. This includes 2 new approvals on the 27 July 2023.



## Traveller Accommodation

The Department introduced a nationwide Pilot Caravan Loan Scheme in 2022 under Section 25 of the Traveller

Accommodation Act 1998. The Department have recently issued a circular confirming that this scheme has now been extended to March 2024.

Clare County Council continue to progress our Traveller Accommodation Program [TAP] and are currently working with the Traveller Community Development Program in preparing a detailed needs analysis around traveller needs in preparation for the next TAP for which consultation is expected to commence in Mid 2024

## Homeless Services [Homeless Action Team; HAT]

The demand for Homeless Services, Advice and Support, including the provision of Emergency Accommodation within this region is remains significantly high. Following on from the cessation of the moratorium on eviction/Winter Eviction Ban (Residential Tenancies (Deferment of Termination dates of certain tenancies) Act 2022), the Homeless Action Team has witnessed a ricochet effect. This includes an on-going increase in the number of presentations, queries and matters arising around Notice to Quits. This has had an impact on both Family and Single Households, while also on Family/Single Households that exceed the Social Housing Income Limits.

## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Therefore, this has increased the demands on the Homeless Action Team surrounding assessments and the demand/need for assessments to be carried out, with the appropriate actions or referrals put in place following this. In conjunction with this there has been a significant rise in the number of presentations with households experiencing addiction or mental health concerns and an increase in the number of households presenting from the Travelling Community.

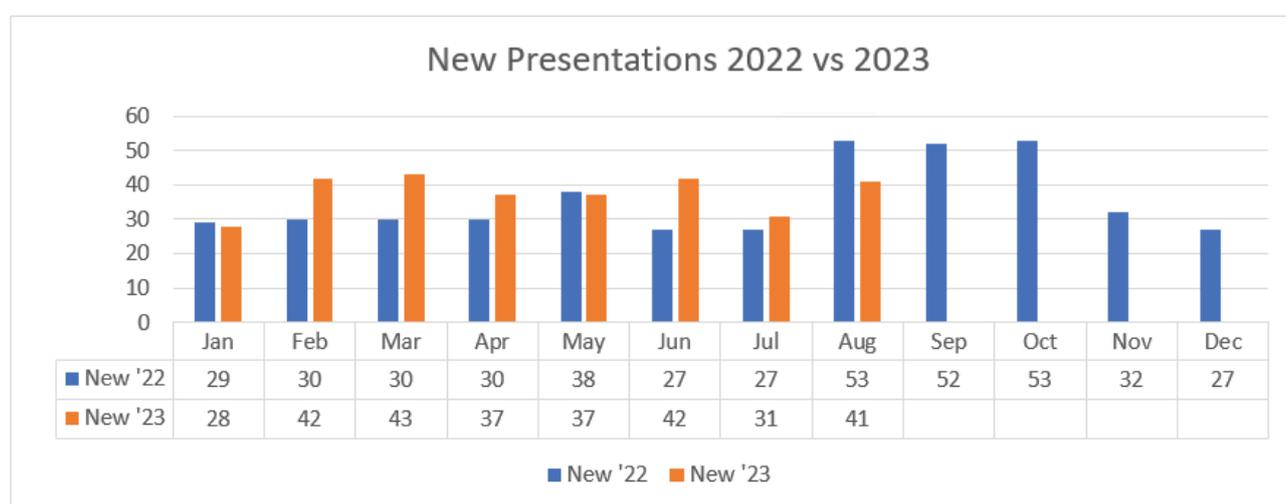
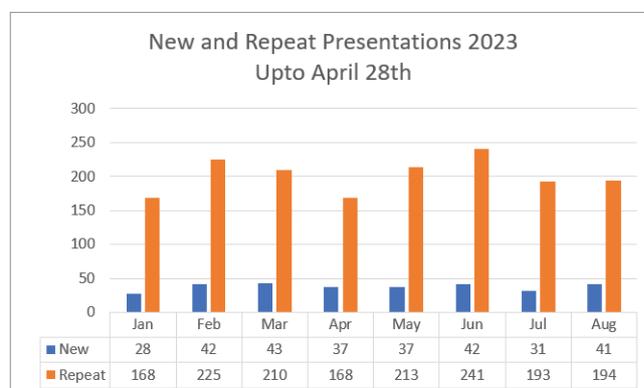
### Presentations to Clare Homeless Action Team [HAT]

The need of immediate Emergency Accommodation

- Notice to Quits from Accommodations
- Seeking Homeless HAP Assistance
- Members of the Travelling Community Seeking

Emergency Accommodation

- Discharge from Hospital or Medical Care Settings
- Discharge from After Care/Foster Care (Tusla)
- Family or Relationship Breakdown
- Discharge from Women Refuge Services
- Prison Releases



A number of 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 the early intervention work and support employed 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 a number of these clients avoided the requirement of being placed within emergency accommodation. This demonstrates the positive effect the prevention work employed by the HAT Team, which is an equally imperative part of this team's work.

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

The Homeless Action Team works with every individual that presents to this service. Unfortunately, during this period there was an increased level of animosity and aggression experienced by the team. This form of behaviour was also experienced by our partner services in Emergency Accommodation where staff safety and welfare has been put at risk. Staff safety within the Homeless Action Team and its partner services remains paramount.

The Homeless Action Team continues to pursue additional emergency accommodation options. However, this is proving challenging due to competing demands for accommodation in the County. A significant number of providers within the Hospitality Sector have been contacted by the HAT team in an effort to secure alternative private emergency accommodation. However, this was not successful. Reasons for this would include, tourist season, unable to accommodate large family compositions and not willing to engage

## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

with Clare County Council. Further to this, a recent initiative by the Homeless Action Team was to place an advertisement in the local newspaper seeking expressions of interest in providing homeless emergency accommodation and we await submissions in coming weeks.

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.

Emergency Accommodation Status as of 17th August 2023:

	Families	Adults	Dependents	Providers
Laurel Lodge	0	13	0	1
Laurel Lodge Weather Initiative	0	4	0	
Cusack Lodge	5	6	11	1
Westbrook	0	16	0	1
Westbrook Weather Initiative	0	1	0	0
Ashford Court	11	17	14	1
EA Families	2	2	4	2
EA Individuals	0	4	0	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>9</b>

It is important to note that the above figures are not a true representation of the significant number of single and family households that have contacted the Homeless Action Team and continue to await placement within services.

### Exits from Homeless Services

Clare Homeless Action Team continues to focus on exits from homeless services.

During the period 23/06/23 to 17/08/23 the following exited from homelessness:

- 7 Discharged to an Approved Housing Body Tenancy
- 1 Discharged to Residential Treatment
- 4 Self Discharged
- 1 Discharge to Own Front Door
- 1 Discharged to Prison
- 3 Discharged from Services

### Affordable Housing Schemes for County Clare

CCC have received approval in principle on foot of a detailed application to DHLGH by CCC, to prove there is potential for affordable housing schemes in both Ennis & Shannon. In this regard, DHLGH are now allowing CCC to submit detailed applications for specific developments so that CCC can gain access to the Affordable Housing Fund (AHF), through the Housing for All programme. In this regard, CCC launched an Expression of Interest (EOI) Campaign running until the end of September, seeking proposals from developers to deliver affordable homes in Ennis & Shannon. This EOI is advertised on various social media channels, local newspapers and also local radio. Also, CCC has engaged with our Elected Members for the purposes of developing a Scheme of Priorities (SOP) in accordance with the Affordable Housing Act 2021, which is subject to Ministerial approval. This SOP will be referenced regarding the future allocation of affordable homes. CCC have received submissions from developers through this EOI campaign, which are currently being assessed and will continue to engage with these interested parties in the coming weeks.

### Defective Concrete Blocks Grant Scheme

Clare County Council have the relevant staff and systems in place for the administration of the Enhanced Defective Concrete Blocks Scheme. The Defective Enhanced Defective Concrete Blocks Scheme went live in mid-July for private dwellings, with the finalised Act, regulations, updated YQA's (Your Questions Answered) & Ministerial Guidelines published. Applications to the scheme can be submitted on-line through CCC's website with supporting information to further assist homeowners regarding the application process on CCC's website.

In addition, CCC's Defective Concrete Blocks Team are willing to assist with any queries homeowners may have. This Team can be contacted by email at [dcb@clarecoco.ie](mailto:dcb@clarecoco.ie) or alternatively by phone at 065-6846385 or 065-6846468.

CCC have received and a number of applications since the commencement of the scheme, through the online portal and continue to validate applications prior to sending them to the Housing Agency for their review and assessment.

It is proposed that the DCB Facilitator will be appointed on the 11th September 2023 to further assist the homeowner's with the DCB process.

CCC continue to engage with the DHLGH to ensure social houses affected by DCB also are included in a similar scheme.

### New County Library Construction Project

Construction work continues to make progress on the new Clare County Library and Art Gallery building. The external composite cladding panel installation, Level 03 primary structure steel frame and all other reinforced concrete works are now complete. Internal blockwork is also complete, with partitions to be completed on second floor office area shortly. Curtain wall and glazing frames installation is nearing completion. Precast Stairs throughout the building have also been installed. Roofing Contractor is on site with main Library roofing membrane complete, with entrance lobby nearing completion. M&E contractors are making good progress with first-fix works for both trades. Plastering has also commenced on site and will continue to make progress over the coming weeks. Floor screeds is also planned for the Art Gallery next week.

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



### Update on capital programme

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



Works progressing on Clarecastle



Progress on Scarriff housing development



Image of works ongoing on Sixmilebridge project

## Approved Housing Bodies

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



Completed bungalow at Hogan’s Place, Limerick Road, Ennis

SHIP Capital	No. approved	Current stage	Start Date	Completion Date
Newtown Corofin	1	Under construction.	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
Clarecastle	5	Under Construction.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023
Scarriff	18	Under Construction	Q1 2023	Q3 2024
St. Senan’s Terrace, Kilrush	5	Under Construction	Q3 2023	Q1 2024
Clarehill Clarecastle	13	Turnkey - Under Construction	Q3 2023	Q4 2024
Doonbeg Lands	8	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH. Design recommenced. Documentation being prepared for submission of planning application to An Bord Pleanála.	Q4 2024	Q4 2025
Drumcliff Rd. Ennis	26	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH. Part VIII Withdrawn. Determination issued to ABP and awaiting outcome.	Q3 2023	Q4 2024
Sixmilebridge	15	Under Construction.	Q1 2023	Q2 2024
Ennistymon	30	Stage 2 approved. Stage 3 application currently being prepared.	Q3 2023	Q4 2024
Gort Rd. Ennis	20	Stage 2 approved. Planning application submitted to An Bord Pleanala on 16th June 2023.	Q2 2024	Q2 2025

## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

SHIP Capital	No. approved	Current stage	Start Date	Completion Date
Moore Street, Kilrush	21	Stage 1 approval. Design Team appointed.	Q1 2023	Q2 2025
Doonbeg Road, Kilkee	25	Stage 1 approval. Design Team has been appointed.	Q4 2023	Q2 2025
Subtotal	187			
Limerick Road, Ennis (Cluid Housing Assoc)	15	CALF Turnkey (Part V) – Completed	Q3 2022	Completed
Church Road, Tulla (Cluid)	2	CAS Construction – completed	Q1 2022	Completed
Kincora Park, Ennis (Saint Vincent de Paul)	1	CAS Construction – completed	Q4 2022	Completed
Roslevan (Co-Operative Hsg. Ireland)	25	CALF Turnkey - completed	Q2 2022	Completed
Lahinch (Co-Operative Hsg. Ireland)	3	CALF Turnkey (Part V) – completed on 20/7/2023	Q2 2022	Completed
Bruachlan, Westbury (Cooperative Housing Ireland)	22	CALF - Property transfer complete. Planning application submitted	Q2 2022	Q2 2025
Limerick Road, Ennis (Inis Housing)	18	CALF Turnkey – construction in progress	Q1 2022	Q3 2023
Market Street, Ennis (Peter McVerry Trust)	14	CAS Turnkey – contracts currently being signed and construction to commence.	Q2 2023	Q4 2024
Cluain na Laoi, Kilkishen (Circle Housing Assoc.)	16	CALF Turnkey – const. commenced. 6 units to be delivered in Q1 2024 10 units to be delivered in Q2 2024	Q1 2023 Q1 2023	Q1 2024 Q2 2024
Ballyminogue, Scarriff (Focus)	4	CALF Turnkey – under construction	Q1 2023	Q1 2024
Ashfield Close (Sophia Housing)	6	CAS Construction – Dept approved	Q2 2023	Q3 2024
Sixmilebridge (Co-Operative Hsg. Ireland)	3	CALF Turnkey (Part V) under construction - sale due to close	Q3 2022	Q3 2023
Derg View, Scarriff (Inis Housing)	4	CAS Turnkey – under construction	Q2 2023	Q4 2023
Subtotal	133			
Total	320			

# CULTURAL SERVICES - LIBRARY, ARTS, MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

## Clare County Library

Work is progressing on the upgrade to the Clare Library website. Clockwork Satellite was awarded the tender. There have been a number of focus groups with library staff, stakeholders and the general public during July and August. It is anticipated that the new website will be available from early next year.

Clare libraries is currently distributing the Message in a bottle initiative to library users on behalf of the Ennis Lions Club.

Online Resources usage in recent months as follows with Press Reader (a digital repository of newspapers) being the most popular online resource for the first time).

1871 E-Books	2146 E-Audiobooks	687 E-Magazines
88 Online courses	2172 Press Reader	54 Transparent Languages

## Marketing & social media

New marketing resources presently in production include a user guide on how to access the library catalogue and library app and a new Sensory Services brochure.

The public consultation for the Library Development Plan 2023-2027 began with a number of focus groups attended by staff, stakeholders and members of the public. Feedback from these and the public surveys was compiled in a report. Analysis of the surveys will inform the marketing strategy for the coming year and also be reflected in the priority actions in the new plan.

	New Followers	Total Followers	No of Posts & stories (Insta only)	Likes	Shares/ Retweets/ Reach	Comments
	90	7154	22900	803	2100	34
	6	2130	10900	85	316	0
	42	1955	6000	381	887	34

## Library Activities in Figures over the summer months

Total number of in branch events	286
Total audiences at live events	4,195
Total number of outreach events	47
Total audiences at outreach events	2,337
Total number of home deliveries	20



## Right to Read

Almost 2,000 children have registered for the annual children's Summer Stars Reading Adventure.

Children were incentivised to keep reading during the school holidays by receiving Summer Stars rewards at their local libraries. Each child who entered the Summer Stars initiative will receive a special certificate of achievement at the end of the month. They will also be included in a draw to win a visit from award-winning author Judi Curtin for their school in the Autumn, compliments of Clare Libraries. Thirty-six events were programmed by the Children's Services section at Library HQ with most branches supplementing this programme locally, adding special activities for young library members and visitors.

Climate Awareness events featured heavily with nature and wildlife talks by NPWS rangers, biodiversity information workshops, craft workshops showing children how to connect creatively with nature and green themed story-times and book displays in all branches. Other workshops included Rhyming and Rapping sessions, Chess classes and Fun Illustration classes for children.



## Healthy Ireland

The Marie Keating Foundation Mobile Unit visited Clare Libraries during August. A specialist nurse provided evidenced based up-to-date information on the most common types of cancer and provided information to people on how to recognise signs and symptoms of the various types of cancer. People also learned about the supportive services on offer within the community.

## Creative Ireland

Clare County Council have advertised for a Creative Communities Engagement Officer. The successful candidate will work exclusively on the Creative Ireland project ensuring continued growth and engagement with communities. Clare County Council's new Biodiversity Officer has joined the Creative Ireland Culture Team. A programme of biodiversity workshops and talks will take place in schools in the Autumn. Clare County Council is supporting a number of projects through the Creative Ireland Project Award scheme that celebrates our living and built heritage. Community events include The Twin Town Lua Festival, the Caherconnel International Furnace Festival, Mindfulness and Crafting workshops with Irish Hand Weaves and a biodiversity event "From the Shannon Wetlands to Hastings Cottage" with Gaelscoil Donncha Rua.

## Decade of Centenaries

Inis Cathaigh Kilrush Comhaltas held a series of Decade of Centenaries concerts during July in Teach Ceoil, Kilrush. Local historian Colm Hayes spoke in Ennistymon Library on north Clare's Fight for Irish Freedom on 15th August. Dúchas na Sionna held a History Day at Hastings Farmhouse in Shannon on 20th August for Heritage Week which included the story of the Hastings family during the War of Independence. Marie Connole is holding an art exhibition 'Vial' in Scariff Public Library from 15th August – 15th September, the exhibition explores Ireland's revolutionary years.

## Local Studies

The Local Studies Centre has added several new resources to its collection. The Minute books of the Cratloe and Meelick Dispensary 1835-1845 have been acquired on microfilm and two collections have been donate, papers relating to the John Creagh Scott Estate in Kildysart and Ballynacally 1900-1930, and a further donation from John Holohan of newspapers and scrapbooks from the 19th century to the present. The Local Studies Dunboyne News Cuttings 1824-1878 transcription project is continuing. Some Killaloe Church of Ireland Parish Records were added to the Clare Libraries website. The online subscriptions to Irish Newspaper Archives and Find My Past have been added to the Clare Libraries website. These resources are valuable to historical and genealogical research and are available free to access at any branch.

## Clare Archives

The Barrett collection continues to be catalogued and processed. Queries relating to Board of Health Records and Our Lady's Hospital Records have been dealt with this month through research by the Archivist. Queries relating to various collections within the archives have been dealt with by the archivist in conjunction with the Local Studies Centre. The scanning project is continuing. Material from the Kilrush Urban District Council (1899-2001) is in the process

of digitisation. The Clare Grand Jury Collection is now available to view at Clare Grand Jury - Digital Repository of Ireland (dri.ie). The Board of Guardian Records' metadata is the current project as the next collection to be available through the DRI.

## Clare Arts Office



Gary O'Briain, Ann Kirrane, Francis Droney and Aine McGrath at Riches of Clare concert in glór. Pic Credit: John O'Neill

The Arts in the Community programme continued with the hospital radio taking place twice a week in St Joseph's Hospital, Ennis and arts activities in Raheen Hospital. The "Musicians in Healthcare" programme with Limerick and Tipperary Arts Offices also began with performances in nursing homes in Ennistymon and Kilrush. Clare Youth Theatre members worked with a Ukrainian film maker over the summer months to produce a film screened as part of the Ukrainian Culture Festival in August.

The Arts Office continue to support to artists & arts organisations by promoting their work on three Arts in Clare slots on Clare FM and issuing a monthly newsletter to the sector. Six artists were supported through the bursary scheme for artists. Work began on the PRISM scheme for street art in Ennis, Tulla and Killaloe. Meetings were held with artists and community development organisations in South East Clare, Ennistymon and Miltown Malbay and a co-ordinator was appointed to the Creative Places programme in Shannon.

Residencies in Doora, Tubber and Lissycasey schools were completed by two artists with 110 children participating. A residency with the Dulick Centre in Ennis started with projects with the Dulick Centre, Irish Wheelchair Association and Brothers of Charity (Ennis and Ennistymon) all completed working with 35 participants with disabilities. A call out for a new panel of artists happened in August as well as mentoring opportunities for artists looking to work in schools or with disability organisations. The Culture Night programme was launched with over 40 events organised county-wide for Culture Night 2023. Three exhibitions took place in Ennis, Scariff and Kilkee and eight Riches of Clare concerts took place in Ennis and Feakle with over 900 people attending. The Arts Officer launched the Feakle Festival in August.

Culturlann Sweeney, Kilkee had audience figures of 1,329 in attendance at 3 concerts in July, 4 music events, 4 children's movies, children's workshops and a craft fair. It is anticipated that these figures will rise to approximately one 1,450 in August with 2 music concerts, 4 talks, four children's movies, two craft fairs, children's workshops and performances and a storytelling residency all taking place.

**Clare Museum**

The museum hosted two temporary exhibitions during the summer months. One, about St Michaels Villas, was opened at the end of July and 270 people attended on the opening night. The second, an art exhibition had 70 people at its opening.

A total of 300 items from the Georgina Frost collection were catalogued by the curator over the summer months, and many of these were photographed for uploading to the website. The photographs of 30 catalogued items were uploaded to the website over the summer and two blog entries were uploaded during July and

August. Twenty three posts were made to the Museum Facebook page, promoting the museum collection online.

The curator spoke on Clare FM in early July discussing objects that had been donated to Clare Museum since the start of the year. Several people have donated items to the museum collection over the summer months or have sought more information about donating collections. The curator has successfully applied for funding from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. Four public talks will be held in October in relation to this initiative.

**KILLALOE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

**Rural Regeneration Development Fund - Scarriff Regeneration Plan**

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

Following the Scarriff Market Square plan of July 2022 and significant consultation from March to July with Scarriff Town Team and Scarriff Community Council, public consultation of the agreed plan and traffic calming proposals for the Market Square area, went on display in accordance with Section 38 of the Roads Act. Public consultation concluded in late August. It is anticipated that the Section 38 will be considered at the next Municipal District Meeting.

The acquisition of a long-term car-park, integral to the overall development of the town centre and for which planning consent has been obtained, is progressing. In addition another location for another town centre car is due to be finalised within the next month.

**July August 2023 works/projects Killaloe MD**

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



Works at CIS project at Errinagh. Road crew carrying out drainage and banking works.



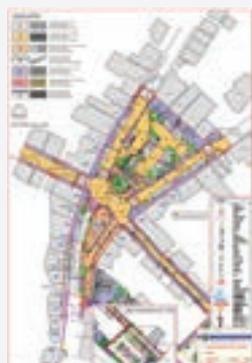
Footpath Upgrade works outside Bodyke National School.



Completion works at LIS project in Drumullan.



Plans for Market Square – Scarriff Market Square (July 2022)



Section 38 proposals for Scarriff Market Square (July 2023).

# PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

## ACTIVE TRAVEL



### International Study Tour

Clare County Council has secured grant funding from the National Transport Authority (NTA) to deliver Active Travel schemes throughout county Clare. To aid in the delivery of cycling schemes, the NTA requested that Clare County Council undertake an International Study Tour.

In consultation with the NTA, it was determined that the Dutch Cycling Embassy, based in the Netherlands, would be a suitable entity to host the study tour. With the focus on Ennis initially as the largest town in the county, a delegation consisting of selected staff from within the Executive together with the following Elected Members attended the two-day study tour on Thursday, 27th, and Friday, 28th July 2023:

- Cllr Joe Cooney, Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council
- Cllr John Crowe, Chair of the Physical Development Strategic Policy Committee
- Cllr Pat Daly, Mayor of Ennis Municipal District
- Cllr Ann Norton, Ennis Municipal District
- Cllr Clare Collieran Molloy, Ennis Municipal District
- Cllr Mary Howard, Ennis Municipal District
- Cllr Paul Murphy, Ennis Municipal District.

The study tour consisted of lectures in the mornings and cycling during the afternoons around the towns of Ede and Bennekom and the city of Utrecht.

The itinerary was well structured in that lectures on the mornings provided expert detail and participants were then well informed before the cycling tours on the afternoons.

Of the many items discussed during the lectures, it was interesting to note that there was initial resistance by businesses to the removal of cars from town centres but that data has since shown that this reallocation of road space to

walking and cycling has resulted in increased footfall and revenue generation of those affected businesses. We were provided with the following telling statistic:

- 75% of cyclists stop to shop; whereas
- 84% of car drivers go through town without stopping.

In respect of cycle parking facilities, they were observed to be typically located adjacent to railway / bus stations and also at multiple locations within town centres. This was beneficial in that it afforded cyclists shortcut advantages to make their sustainable mobility journey as easy and effortless as possible thereby encouraging greater uptake.

Another key outcome from the study tour was the implementation of 30 kilometre per hour (km/h) speed zones within towns and cities. It was noted that this did not only improve safety but also allowed for increased social interactions between residents.

Similarly, it was interesting to see filtered permeability measures introduced throughout the urban centres and residential neighbourhoods. These measures are designed to provide shortcut advantage to cyclists (and pedestrians) by restricting through vehicular traffic. This resulted in safer, quieter streets by removing what were once 'rat runs'.

In summary, it was particularly encouraging to see that we are moving in the right direction in terms of our collective efforts to enhance and increase sustainable mobility within County Clare. Through suitable and timely engagement with members of the public, we will be able to continue to implement model shift particularly within urban areas. It is acknowledged that an incremental approach is necessary but to experience the benefits directly was hugely beneficial in framing the vision for all participants of what could be realised within our towns and villages in county Clare.

## TRANSPORTATION

### Roadworks Programme and Operations

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

### Strategic Transportation

#### Transportation Progress Update

##### Active Travel

The following is a brief overview of the activities within the Active Travel office:

##### International Study Tour:

- An International Study Tour was organised to review and assess cycling infrastructure in the Netherlands, hosted by the Dutch Cycling Embassy and fully funded by the National Transport Authority (NTA).

##### Tulla Road Cycle scheme:

- The project was presented at the July meeting of Ennis Municipal District (MD) and the Statutory Process advertised under Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act was adopted by Elected Members.
- A Design Team has been appointed to complete the Detailed Design phase with designers on-site week commencing Monday, 21st August.

##### Connecting & Co-creating Ennis:

- Following adoption of Section 38 for proposed junction tightening works throughout town, construction works are to commence on-site week commencing Monday, 28th August.

##### Limerick Road (incl. St. Flannan's Drive) Cycle scheme:

- Call for Tender advertised on eTenders for the appointment of Consultant to progress this scheme through Options Selections, Preliminary Design and Statutory Processes phases.

##### 'Safe Routes To School' programme:

- Following adoption of Section 38 for proposed works on routes to Clonmoney National School, the Detailed Design phase has been completed. A Tender Package has been prepared and advertised on eTenders for the appointment of a Contractor to carry out the Construction phase.

##### Ennis Town Local Transport Plan:

- Tender competition for appointment of Consultant to undertake a Local Transport Plan for Ennis has concluded. Tender analysis ongoing with Consultant expected to be formally appointed presently.

##### Ballycasey Close, Shannon:

- Construction works completed for this Active Travel scheme which provides shortcut connectivity for walkers and cyclists in addition to incorporating many traffic calming measures for enhanced road safety.



**Public Lighting**

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

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

## Road Design Office

### TII Road Safety Projects

Project	Progress Update
Lahinch Road, Ennis	For the N85 national road: An interim design solution has been prepared to address concerns at the junction of Lahinch Road and Shanaway Road in Ennis. The concept design which includes for a raised pedestrian crossing has been agreed with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII). A Road Safety Audit was carried out for the proposal during week commencing Monday, 21st August. Pedestrian counts are to be completed when schools reopen in September. A Design Report will then be formally submitted to TII to progress the scheme.

### Other Projects 2023

Project	Progress Update
Bridge Rehabilitation Programme	<p>Section 50 application submitted to OPW for the following bridge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ballycloghessy Bridge</li> </ul> <p>Construction works to commenced on the following bridges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cloghera Bridge</li> <li>Crean Bridge</li> <li>Drimeen Bridge</li> <li>Gortnaglough Bridge</li> <li>Gortnagonella Bridge</li> <li>Inchiquin Bridge</li> </ul> <p>Tender evaluation complete and Contractor appointed for the following bridges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alagha Bridge</li> <li>Ballybran Bridge</li> <li>Dromore Bridge</li> <li>Gortalassa Bridge</li> <li>Wyndham Bridge</li> <li>Knockanena Bridge</li> </ul> <p>Tender evaluation and Contractor appointment ongoing for the following bridges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erinaghmore Bridge</li> <li>Rathmeehan Bridge</li> <li>Mahonburg Bridge</li> <li>Poulnagun Bridge</li> <li>Ballykeel North Bridge</li> <li>Boolyduff Bridge</li> <li>Drumellihy Bridge</li> </ul> <p>Consultant appointment ongoing for the design of a replacement culvert on the N85 at Fountain, Ennis.</p>

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Liaison with NTA regarding bus stops	<p>The NTA has approved 15 bus shelters for the 2023 programme. Works are completed at 14 locations.</p> <p>The following is an update of progress with respect to the final bus shelter at Clarisford:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Road Safety Audit has been carried out and will be forwarded to the NTA for approval.</li> </ul>
Low-Cost Safety Schemes 2023	<p>Design works are complete for all 17 low-cost safety schemes.</p> <p>Section 38 advertised for the following scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Old Mill Road, Ennis</li> </ul>

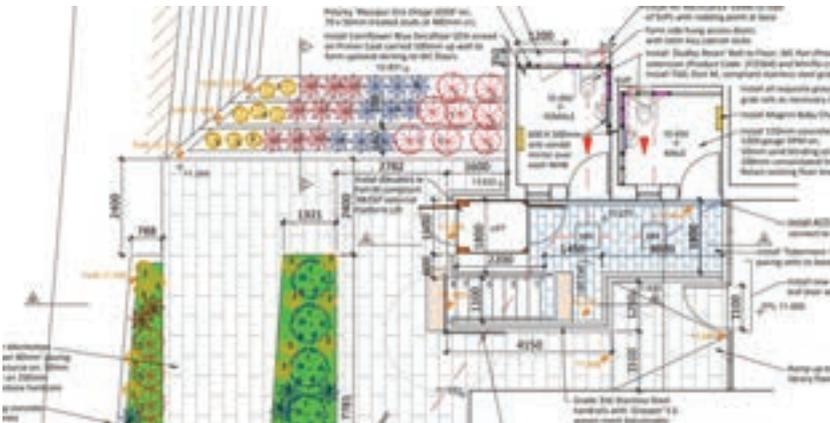
### Health And Safety

The Health and Safety Team are continuing with their schedule of Annual Safety Statement and Risk Assessment Reviews with updates to the Occupational Health and Safety Management System approved by Management Team and communicated to staff in March 2023. The top level H&S objectives approved by the Safety Management Committee in March 2023 have commenced implementation with face-to-face briefings delivered on Health & Safety across a range of Departments, a trial of Traffic Management Software using a handheld device underway in West Clare MD and Serious Incident Simulated Workshops being delivered to Senior Staff in each Department.

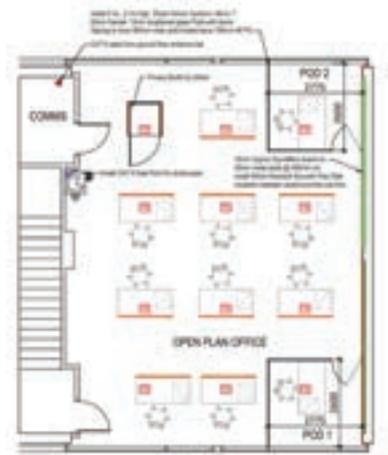
The Health and Safety Team has commenced their schedule of Safety Inspections in order to inspect, monitor and advise on the implementation of the Clare County Council Occupational Health and Safety Management System.

### General Design Office

Project	Progress Update
Ennistimon Library Public Toilet Refurbishment	Tenders were received by the General Design Office and a Contractor appointed to carry out refurbishment works to the existing Ennistimon Library Public Toilets. The project provides for the installation of an external platform lift with the complete internal refurbishment of the Male and Female toilets, each to be Part M compliant and contain baby changing facilities. The Library Plaza is to be repaved with the addition of landscaping works. Works are due to commence on site by the end of August and completed by the end of October 2023.
New Shannon Heritage Offices at Clare Technology Park, Gort Road, Ennis	Tenders have been sought to carry out internal renovations to the new Shannon Heritage Offices at the Clare Technology Park, Gort Road, Ennis. Works to include the upgrading of the existing Canteen, provision of Glass Office Pods on the first floor and soundproofing of the existing party walls.



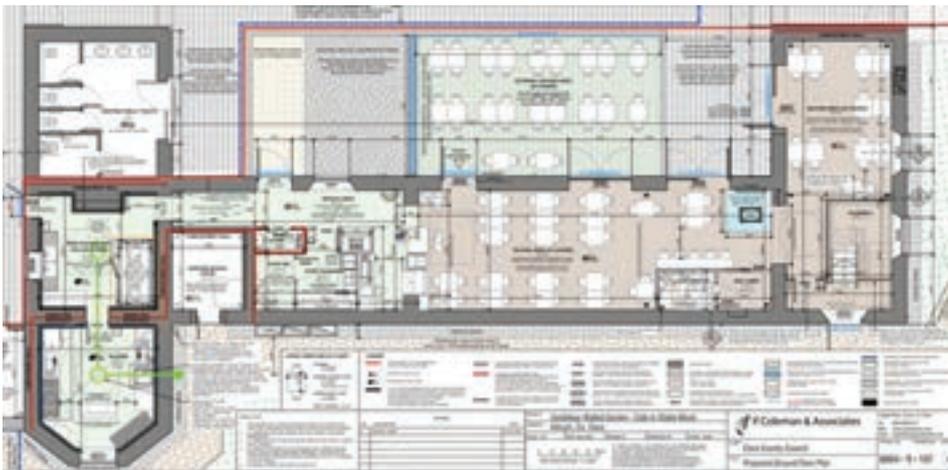
**Ennistimon Library Public Toilet Refurbishment**



**New Shannon Heritage Offices**

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Project	Progress Update
Vandeleur Walled Gardens, Kilrush - Upper Carpark	Contract awarded, works almost complete on site with the exception of some outstanding items.
Vandeleur Gardens Café Fit Out and Building Works	The General Design Office have sought Tenders for the fit out and building works required for the provision of the new Café proposed within the former Stable Block of the Vandeleur Gardens. Tenders are due to be received on 31st August, 2023, with a commencement of the works on site of 9th October 2023. Works due for completion on 10th June, 2024.
Vandeleur Walled Gardens, Kilrush - Courtyard Paving	Preliminary design drawings completed and proposals agreed, GPS levels survey completed.
Cliffs of Moher – Northern Loop Walk	Contractor progressing, 90% works completed to date, due to finish end September. Dry stone wall complete and stone stiles now in place. This project is funded by the ORIS (Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme), Measure 3 for large scale projects.
Drumgeely Town and Village Renewal Scheme	Under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme the redevelopment of the plaza outside the shops, housing and Crossroads pub, at Drumgeely, Shannon, has been sent out to tender. Works include a new paved area consisting of paving, grassed surfaces along with planters and new public lighting. The existing 2 No. trees are to be protected and the rose bushes are to be replanted. There are also 2 No. new uncontrolled crossing points to be constructed along with cycle and car parking bays along with all ancillary underground services.
Town and Village Renewal Schemes	Clonlara - Contractor appointed, works due to start on site September 2023.



Vandeleur Gardens Café Fit Out

Drumgeely Town and Village Renewal Scheme



Vandeleur Upper Carpark

Vandeleur Upper Carpark

Cliffs of Moher stone walls



Cliffs of Moher stile

## CAPITAL DELIVERY / PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

As the last Monthly Report was tabled at the July Meeting, the following update covers progress during July and August on the Major Capital Projects being managed by the PMO.

Doolin Pier Visitor Services Building	Having considered some of the more significant environmental requirements and resolving options over land use, the Design team is developing a proposal with a view to applying to the Department for additional funding to enable completion of design stages up to and including completion of the planning process.
Ennis Public Realm Regeneration (Project B)	<p>Members will be aware that following significant engagement with the Department, we were allocated an uplifted URDF allocation of €8.6million which represents a significant endorsement for the continued regeneration of Ennis Town Centre. The necessary funding approval enabled us to progress to Contractor appointment stage which is currently in progress. Letters of Intent and Regret have issued and following the necessary Standstill period and satisfactory due diligence, we will be in a position to appoint the successful Contractor in the coming days with mobilisation on site in the coming weeks expected all going well.</p> <p>It is noted that Uisce Éireann (Irish Water) has also recently confirmed that approval has been given to significantly refurbish the foul sewer, which will be completed concurrently as part of the main scheme. This is a very important development of legacy infrastructure in the town centre and future-proofs the sewer system and associated service delivery.</p> <p>Some disruption/inconvenience during the works phase will be experienced but is unavoidable in major civil and infrastructural works of this nature. It is expected that the longer-term benefits in terms of user amenity and accessibility will far outweigh the temporary disturbance and both the Council and the Contractor will engage and liaise with the Businesses and Residents of the Town to ensure every effort is made to keep the impacts to a minimum. The Contract includes for a Public Liaison person within the Contractors Team to work with all users to ensure that normal business activity is maintained throughout the construction phase.</p>
Ennistymon Inner Relief Road and Bridge Crossing (Blake's Corner)	The Judicial Review proceedings are still ongoing, the outcome of which will determine our next course of action in the delivery of this critical and much awaited infrastructure.
Kilkee Flood Relief Scheme	During the July and August periods, our consultant JBA/JB Barry has completed and submitted the AA Screening Report, Buildability Report and the EIAR Scoping Report. To date, two submissions have been received from statutory consultees relating to the EIAR Scoping Report. Works planned for the coming period include completion of the Climate Change Adaptation Plan (CCAP) and the Natura Impact Statement (NIS). The Options Report will also be updated to reflect the findings of the Climate Change Adaptation Plan.
Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF)	<p>RPS Consulting Engineers have now finalised the detailed design and preparation of the tender documents associated with the road element of the scheme. Updated total scheme cost estimates have also been produced which have escalated in line with inflationary increases as experienced across the construction industry generally.</p> <p>Discussions and cross directorate meetings are continuing with our colleagues in Housing &amp; Planning regarding the optimum design and composition of the housing element of the scheme.</p> <p>A Review meeting is scheduled in early September with the LIHAF Section of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.</p>
Lough Donnell Culvert Repair works	Construction works commenced on site in July. The Contractor, Donnelly Brothers Civil Engineering are making good progress with the project on schedule and due to be completed in Q3, 2023.

Killaloe Bridge and By-Pass

Following the inclement weather in July, recent good weather has led to increased activity and progress across the scheme. Earthworks, mass haul and deposition operations continue apace. Marine Works are progressing well, with the marine piling installations now complete.

Installation of the Precast Pile Cap shells are currently progressing and will continue over the next few months. Land based Bridge Pier and Abutment works continue.

On the R494 Upgrade section, the existing railway bridge was demolished over the August Bank Holiday Weekend. This work has necessitated a road closure to through traffic for a period of 9 months whilst a new bridge is constructed. However, local access is maintained to all affected properties and Signage and Diversionary routes are in place. Landowner Accommodation Works and Road Construction elements are making steady progress.

Excavation to the main Bypass Cutting continues. The installation of surface water drainage on the Bypass is progressing with sections of kerbing now installed. Trimming of batters and topsoiling to same has commenced. Rock breaking is almost complete.

Deposition of fill materials to Kincora continues.

A Road Closure at the proposed staggered junction on the Hill Road, is required to facilitate the installation of utilities. The closure application has been lodged by the Main Works Contractor for a 1-week period from Monday, 25th September, to Friday, 29th September. Further details can be found on the Council's project webpage under the Traffic Management Tab:

<https://www.clarecoco.ie/services/capital-projects/roads-and-bridges/killaloe-bypass-shannon-bridge-crossing/#tma>

Further project specific information including monthly drone footage on the scheme is available on <https://www.clarecoco.ie/services/capital-projects/roads-and-bridges/killaloe-bypass-shannon-bridge-crossing/>

Killaloe Bridge and By-Pass



## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

<p>N19 Shannon Airport Access Road</p>	<p>The Phase 3 (Design and Environmental Evaluation) stage is currently ongoing and is expected to be completed in late September/early October 2023 with Phase 4 (Statutory Consent) stage progressing thereafter. This will involve a Development Consent Application &amp; EIAR to An Bord Pleanála.</p> <p>Over July and August, significant works continued with regard to the EIAR chapter compilation and the issuing of various reports such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Junction Strategy Report,</li> <li>- Phase 3 Traffic Modelling Report,</li> <li>- Updated Cost Benefit Analysis Report.</li> </ul> <p>The Preferred Option includes a combination of active travel measures, improvements to public transport, along with new and improved road infrastructure between Drumgeely Roundabout and Knockbeagh Point roundabout on approach to Shannon International Airport. Utility Diversions have now been agreed with all Utility providers for the scheme and our scheme Consultants have updated the land-take requirements which will assist with landowner negotiations which have also recently commenced.</p> <p>As always further information and associated literature on the project can be accessed via the scheme website: <a href="http://www.shannonaccess.ie">www.shannonaccess.ie</a></p>
<p>Quin Flood Relief Scheme</p>	<p>Despite poor weather conditions during the July and August period works have progressed on site. Groundwork preparation for the reinforced concrete (RC) wall are complete and the RC contractor has mobilised to site. Construction of the earthen embankment has also commenced. A meeting to discuss the necessary design changes and associated budget increase has been scheduled with the OPW for the coming week.</p>
<p>Piers &amp; Harbours</p>	<p>A 500kg Quayside Lifting Davit has been constructed at Liscannor Pier with a similar one also recently installed in Seafield Pier. The project was funded by the 'Brexit Adjustment Local Authority Marine Infrastructure Scheme 2022-23'.</p> <p>The provision of these cranes will greatly improve working and safety conditions for the local fishermen by reducing the need to manually handle heavy equipment or their catch.</p>

Crane at pier



## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Remediation of sites containing ACM	<p>Tenders in respect of disposal of bulk soil material were published this summer and submissions are now being reviewed by Clare County Council and appointed Consultants. The information gathered from these tender proposals will define the receiving locations and transport requirements for the bulk materials to be removed. These details will be incorporated into tender documents for works contract expected to issue in the coming weeks in respect of the excavation and remediation of the sites. These tenders have also benefitted from a workshop held with MD staff earlier this year to finalise traffic planning arrangements necessary to minimise disruption during the export of bulk soil material from the sites.</p> <p>In the interim, the sites continue to be routinely monitored and maintained as required by Council staff in accordance with our agreed approach following discussion and consultation with the EPA.</p>
Shannon Town & Environs Flood Relief Scheme	<p>During the period, our consultant RPS have continued to develop potential fluvial solutions as part of the Optioneering task. The latest suite of these potential solutions was issued mid-August and reviewed onsite jointly by Clare County Council and the OPW. Our observations and comments have issued to RPS for consideration. The field work for the Ecological Surveys has progressed successfully over the summer period and is now nearing completion.</p>
Springfield, Clonlara FRS	<p>The Pump manufacturers and their agents travelled to Springfield in early August to commission the pumps and provide training and instruction to Clare County Council Staff. An exercise was carried in which a flood scenario was replicated, and everything worked in accordance with the design and operating procedure.</p> <p>Work is progressing in parallel on the accommodation works associated with affected Landowners. Fencing on the western end and the southern side of the embankment is now complete. Landscaping and drainage works are practically completed bar the land raising area at Cottage. This has necessitated an extension to the programme, with all works now expected to be completed by the end of September 2023. The delay was due to the weather and getting the fencing contractor to site. The important point, however, is that these outstanding works are minor in nature and do not affect the protection offered by the scheme which is fully operational since the commissioning of the pumps in August.</p>
West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 1: Kilrush to Kilkee)	<p>Topographical survey data has been received for the full route. Clare County Council is, as always, available to meet landowners to discuss their concerns throughout this process, and various landowner meetings have taken place over the summer. Planning applications along the route corridors are being monitored. Work continues on the 'Option Selection Report' in line with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) requirements. The recent introduction of a revised Transport Appraisal Framework by TII has delayed the completion of this report somewhat. Preparations for the Emerging Preferred Route Corridor Public Consultation (PC3) are ongoing, and it is expected that this will take place before Christmas. The procurement of a land valuer is also ongoing in consultation with TII who is the Approving Authority for National Greenway Developments.</p>
West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 2: Ennis to Ennistymon)	<p>Studies of environmental sensitivities, including protected sites and flood prone areas, are underway. Information on other planned complementary works at Corofin (e.g. Burren Visitor Centre) has also been collated and is being assessed by the consultants in the finalisation of the Option Selection Process. There has been further engagement with the NPWS in relation to its plans at Corofin and the local environmental sensitivities. There has been engagement with the Ennis 2040 Team in relation to ensuring that all plans/proposals for the Ennis and Environs area are properly aligned.</p>
West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 3 & 4: Ennistymon to Miltown Malbay and Miltown Malbay to Moyasta)	<p>Roughan O'Donovan Consulting Engineers have now been formally appointed for these stages also of the project. This involves developing the Route Options Selection Phase &amp; Public Consultation as well as the Planning and Environmental Phases. A Study Area is being defined and mapping of constraints has commenced.</p> <p>It is intended to undertake initial Public Consultation on the Study Area later this year.</p>
Other Greenway Proposals	<p>Works are continuing in Shannon, Bunratty and Sixmilebridge in terms of optimum route selection that may be possible. Clare County Council continue to work closely with TII and Waterways Ireland on developing the proposal between Limerick/UL and Scariff.</p>

## Killaloe Site Visit



Clare County Council Chief Executive Pat Dowling met with Sean Killeen, Senior Executive Engineer, Clare County Council, and Padraic Cullen, Executive Engineer, Land Liaison Officer, Clare County Council, on a site visit to the Killaloe Bypass/Shannon Crossing/R494 Upgrade project in July.

## FIRE & BUILDING CONTROL SECTION

### Industrial Action

Firefighters in Clare, along with their colleagues throughout the country, partook in strike and industrial action in early August regarding issues surrounding recruitment and retention within the Retained Fire Brigade. On 16th August following talks between the LGMA and SIPTU which was facilitated by the Workplace Relations Commission, the action was suspended. It is expected that firefighters will ballot on the WRC proposal in the coming weeks.

### 2 Bay Shed, Kilrush Fire Station

A Capital Grant Aid request to construct a new 2 Bay Shed at Kilrush Fire Station and carry out general upgrade works at the station was submitted to the National Directorate for Fire & Emergency Management in August.

### Emergency Tender Appliance

A Capital Grant Aid request to rechassis and carry out general upgrade works to an Emergency Tender Appliance based at Ennis Fire Station was approved by the National Directorate for Fire & Emergency Management in August. This project will now go to tender stage.

Fire & Building Control Section Main Activities	June 2023	July 2023	Aug 2023 (Up to 25.08.23)	Year to Date
Emergency Calls Attended	78	97	46	611
Fire Safety Certificates Received	11	11	5	66
Fire Safety Certificates Granted	8	3	10	53
Fire Safety Certificates Invalidated	0	0	0	4
Disability Access Certificates Received	8	8	5	35
Disability Access Certificates Granted	0	2	9	29
Commencement Notices Received	31	49	34	276
Dangerous Structures/Places Complaints	0	0	0	5

(Note: In the July Monthly Management Report, the June figures related to 1st-22nd June due to timing of report)

## CLARE CIVIL DEFENCE

### Clare Civil Defence

#### Operational Duties

- Civil Defence provided medical cover at a large number of events in July and August including Gaelforce Swimming Event (Mountshannon); Clarecastle Reggata; Clare Motor Club Rally Cross Event (Doonbeg); South East Clare Show (Bridgetown); Tulla Music Festival; Kilrush Music Festival; Munster Community Games (Lees Road); Junior Tour of Ireland; West Clare Cycling Club Road Race (Cree).
- Members provided transport for a patient to a hospital appointment in Limerick.



## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

### Members Training & Professional Development

- Members continue to participate in weekly training
- Emergency First Responder Course
- Volunteer & Equipment Management System (VEMS) Training
- Members of the Boat Team participated in water training at Ballyalla Lake, Ennis.



## ENVIRONMENT

### Environmental Awareness

#### An Taisce Green Schools

For preparation of the Ennis Communities in Bloom judging our Environmental Awareness Officer supported Holy Family Junior and Senior Schools and St Anne's School represent the An Taisce Green Schools Programme in the video element of the competition.



#### Leave No Trace National Awareness Campaign

During July and August there was regular promotion through print and social media of the Leave no Trace Love Your Place campaign. Clare County Council supported 'Love This Place' Day on Friday, 28th July.



#### Kilkee Green Business Hub

Kilkee was selected as one of Ireland's first My Waste Green Business Hubs. This initiative launched in July is a partnership with the Environment Section, Clare County Council, working in conjunction with Kilkee Chamber of Commerce, Kilkee Tidy Towns and My Waste Ireland. The aim of the Green Business Hub is to work with businesses and support staff, as well as customers, to firstly prevent and reduce waste generated, including food waste, as well as to separate waste into general waste, recycling, and food waste. Business can register at: <https://your-say.clarecoco.ie/kilkee-green-hub>



#### Gum Litter Task Force

Killaloe Tidy Towns, in conjunction with Clare County Council, joined forces with the Gum Litter Taskforce (GLT) to raise awareness around gum littering during August in Killaloe. This interactive Roadshow works with local authorities and communities across the country to carry out fun and engaging education and awareness initiatives that demonstrate the proper means of gum disposal and raise awareness of the environmental and financial.



## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

### Gardening

As final preparation was carried out for the Communities in Bloom judging in late July, our Gardening Team ensured that all floral displays around Ennis have been maintained to the highest standard. The widespread introduction of pollinator friendly perennial planting at various locations across the town will be an aspect that the judges will undoubtedly have appreciated for the increased benefits such planting brings to the local environment.

Other notable works undertaken during July and August have been the assistance provided by the Gardening Team to the residents of St Michael's Villas, which marked the estate's 70th anniversary in July, while in August the Team liaised with Shannon MD to provide planters to enhance the streetscape of Newmarket on Fergus in preparation for the 2023 Women's Irish Open, and the accompanying '19th Hole Community and Family Fun Festival'.

### Water Enforcement and Laboratory Scientific Services

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

Water Enforcement Scientific Team	July 2023	August 2023	Jan to August 2023
Bathing Water (testing)	57	37	230
Domestic Wastewater Treatment Plant Inspections (NIP Plan)	0	0	63
Enforcement actions (S12 issued or number of 'active' cases)	0	0	0
Inspection of Section 4 licenced premises	2	14	33
Planning applications (Agriculture)	6	2	23
Planning applications (Domestic)	10	36	292
Planning applications (Large Developments)	0	0	12
Planning applications (Forestry)	5	2	61
Pollution complaints received	10	11	63
Private Commercial Drinking Water Supplies	1	2	26
Private/Public Group Water Scheme supplies	1	0	87
Rivers	5	5	151
Warning & advisory letters issued	1	2	5

### Bathing Water Monitoring.

The bathing season continues until 15th September.

In accordance with the requirements of the Bathing Water Quality Regulations 2008 (SI No 79 of 2008, Public health notices were placed at the following locations in July and August due to heavy rainfall.

- Lahinch
- White Strand Miltown Malbay
- White Strand Doonbeg
- Cappagh, Kilrush
- Kilkee
- Spanish Point

Prior Warning Notices are used to advise bathers that bacterial levels may increase in the bathing water as a result of heavy rainfall due to run-off from the catchment into rivers/streams and the bathing areas. The table below summarises the number of prior warnings required during July and August as well as detailing the follow up actions required.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Bathing Location	STP Start Date	STP End Date	STP occurred Yes/No	Action Required
Lahinch	14th July	18th July	Yes	Prohibition Notice from 18th – 20th July
	21st July	27th July	No	None required
	4th August	10th August	No	None required
	18th August	22nd August	Yes	Advisory Notice 22nd – 24th August
Kilkee	14th July	20th July	No	None required
	21st July	27th July	No	None required
	4th August	10th August	No	None required
	18th August	22nd August	No	None required
Spanish Point	14th July	20th July	No	None required
	21st July	27th July	No	None required
	4th August	10th August	No	None required
	18th August	22nd August	No	None required
White Strand Doonbeg	14th July	20th July	No	None required
	21st July	27th July	Yes	Follow up sampling on the 26/07/23 showed improvement in results and no further action required
	4th August	10th August	No	None required
	18th August	22nd August	No	None required
White Strand Miltown Malbay	14th July	20th July	No	None required
	21st July	27th July	No	None required
	4th August	10th August	No	None required
	18th August	22nd August	No	None required
Cappagh Pier Kilrush	14th July	20th July	No	None required
	21st July	27th July	No	None required
	4th August	10th August	No	None required
	18th August	22nd August	No	None required

### Waste Enforcement

The team continue to respond to illegal dumping complaints. 141 complaints of litter and dumping were received in July and August, 80 of which are now closed. The remainder are under investigation and relevant enforcement actions are underway i.e. Warning Letters and Notices under the Waste Management Act has been issued and compliance is being monitored. Five Litter Fines were issued under the Litter Pollution Act, three of which have been paid.

### Kilkee Green Hub update

Work on this initiative is ongoing. Correspondence has been received from caravan park owners regarding their waste management practices in response to site visits from the Waste Enforcement team.

Links to the businesses who have signed up are now live on the “Have Your Say” page on the Clare County Council website. The Waste Enforcement team continue to liaise with local food re-

tailers and caravan park owners to improve the litter management in Kilkee. Call back visits have been scheduled.

A Water Refill Station has also been installed in Kilkee, using funding received under this initiative.

### Anti-Dumping Initiative 2023

A total of 10 Solar compactor bins, which had been on hire for three years have been purchased from the rental company at a reduced cost using Anti-Dumping Initiative Funding.

In August, the Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authority (WERLA) working in collaboration with the Environment Section have agreed to fund both a Mattress Amnesty Event and Household Hazardous Amnesty Event at four locations throughout the county. Social media will be used to advertise shortly. These will be paid for under the Anti-Dumping Initiative.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

### Annual Return Validations and Inspections of WFP/ COR Sites

Validations of the 2022 Annual Returns are ongoing as required by WERLA. This involves carrying out site inspections, and completion of any follow-up actions. A joint inspection between WERLA and the Waste Enforcement team was carried out at one of the EPA priority sites in August. Follow-up actions are currently being addressed.

### Beach Bye-Laws

The Waste Enforcement team continue to carry out Beach Bye-Law patrols at weekends in July and August, to monitor compliance with the Clare County Council Beach Bye-Laws, 2021. The main issues on the ground were found to be dog control including fouling and litter. These issues were addressed by the wardens on patrol and an informative approach was taken to remind the public of their responsibilities.

## CLIMATE ACTION

### Climate Action Plan Development

#### Phase 1: Advance Planning



- Baseline Studies
- Engagement

#### Phase 2: Statutory Plan Making Phase



- Plan Development

#### Phase 3: Completion



- Address submissions
- Adoption by Cllrs

With Stage 1 of the Plan development process complete, work was ongoing over July and August on the development of the Climate Action Plan towards a proposed publication of the Draft by mid-October. The stakeholder engagement process undertaken by the Council ensured a broad response from all sectors to inform the development of the plan.

Stakeholder engagement included briefings to all Councillors, public evening events at each MD in conjunction with the LECP process, the preparation and publication of a Climate Summary report on the Councils Engagement platform and the inclusion of online Climate Surveys aimed at the general public and young people.

83 responses were received from secondary school students along with over 200 responses from the general public.

The Stakeholder engagement process will serve to inform the development of the plan. Areas such as electric charging infrastructure, Climate Awareness, Energy Efficiency, clean renewable sources of energy and improvements via Active Travel were all identified by stakeholders through the engagement. Workshops have been held throughout July and August with many sections within Clare County Council to ensure action lists developed are ambitious and realistic.

The Climate Team will brief Councillors on the proposed draft plan in late September/early October.

### Community Climate Action Programme

The Community Climate Action Officer began in post in mid-July. In preparation for the official launch of the Community Climate Action Programme, weekly meetings have been held between the national network of Community Climate Action Officers and the Climate Action Fund team in the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications. Regular updates are provided on the status of the grant agreement discussions in relation to the launch date, and these meetings provide an opportunity for the Community Climate Action Officers to pose questions relating to the Community Climate Action Programme directly to the team responsible for the programme.

Community engagement is a key component of the Community Climate Action Programme. A community engagement plan has been initiated to advise and support local community groups throughout County Clare to prepare and submit an expression of interest for funding once the programme has been launched. Elected members will be accommodated with a briefing on the detail of the Community Climate Action Programme once the Department have finalised all details.

The Community Climate Action Officer has begun the task of creating networks in the Community arena towards ensuring active participation in the programme.

## WATER

### Future Delivery Of Water Services

The Master Co-Operation Agreement (MCA) and the Data Sharing Agreement was signed by the Chief Executive on 5th May, 2023. This master agreement will replace the existing Service Level Agreement on the effective date, which has now been set at 20th September, 2023. The Council held briefings with Water Services staff on 22nd June to update staff on the future of water services in Clare. The briefings were well attended and afforded staff the opportunity to engage with Council management. During August Uisce Éireann (UE) held staff briefings focused on the changes for staff in the transition to UE, they have also commenced one-to-one meetings with staff. These meetings are an opportunity for staff to inform themselves on the terms and conditions of UE should they wish to transfer from the Council to UE.

### Water Services Operations

From the effective date which is set as 20th September, the Council will have no functional responsibility for water services in Clare with the exception of the rural water programme. Staff of the Council will be working under the control and direction of UE from the effective date with no change to their current terms or conditions.

#### Water Operations

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

Area	Date	Location	Issue
<b>East Clare Area</b>	25.08.23	Killaloe	Leak Repair
	23.08.23	Clarisford, Killaloe	Burst mains
	25.08.23	Ardnacrusha	Burst mains
	25.07.23	Clarisford / Shauntraud, Killaloe	Burst mains
	14.07.23	Gortatogher, Parteen	Burst mains
	12.07.23	Gortatogher, Parteen	Burst mains
	06.07.23	Gortatogher, Parteen	Burst mains
	21.06.23	Scarriff Rd., Killaloe	Hydrant Replacement
	<b>Ennis Area</b>	31.07.23	Cloughleigh
24.07.23		Clonroadmore	Burst mains
20.07.23		Ballyalla	Burst mains
14.07.23		Dromore, Ruan	Burst mains
05.07.23		Clon Rd./ Station Rd./ Quin Rd.	Burst mains
23.06.23		St Joseph's Rd, Clarecastle	Burst mains
<b>West Clare Area</b>	21.08.23	Alva, Cooraclare	Burst mains
	21.08.23	Chapel St, Chapel Drive, Kilrush	Burst mains
	20.08.23	Kilrush	Burst mains
	19.08.23	Bansha, Kilrush	Burst mains
	14.08.23	Lisdeen / Lisgreen, Kilkee	Burst mains
	11.08.23	Lisdeen, Kilkee	Burst mains
	10.08.23	Lisdeen / Lisgreen, Kilkee	Burst mains
	10.08.23	Liscormick, Kildysart	Burst mains
	08.08.23	Moveen, Carrigaholt, Cross, Loop Head	Burst mains
	04.08.23	Cross / Rehy / Carrigaholt	Burst mains
	03.08.23	Rineen, Miltown	Faulty Valve
	01.08.23	Moliskey, Cree & Kilmacduane	Burst mains

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

	25.07.23	Alva, Creegh	Burst mains
	23.07.23	Creegh	Burst mains
	23.07.23	Doonbeg	Burst mains
	20.07.23	Rineen, Miltown	Burst mains
	16.07.23	Lisdeen, Kilkee	Burst mains
	15.07.23	Kilfearboy, Rineen, Miltown	Burst mains
	04.07.23	Lisdeen	Burst mains
	29.06.23	Killard, Doonbeg	Burst mains
	28.06.23	Doonmore . Killard, Doonbeg	Burst mains
	27.06.23	Cappagh, Kilrush	Burst mains
	26.06.23	Killard / Doonmore, Doonbeg	Burst mains
	24.06.23	Alva, Cree	Burst mains
	24.06.23	Ballykett, Kilrush	Burst mains
	21.06.23	Alva, Cree	Burst mains
North Clare Area	04.08.23	Moy, Lahinch	Burst mains
	10.07.23	Kilshanny	Burst mains
Shannon Area	31.07.23	Shannon	Burst mains
	27.07.23	Craganoun, Quin	Burst mains
	26.07.23	Shannon Industrial Est.	Burst mains
	25.07.23	Shannon	Step Testing
	11.07.23	Firgrove, Shannon	Burst Mains
	29.06.23	Limerick Rd., Sixmilebridge	Burst Mains
	27.06.23	Delginis, Shannon	Burst Mains
	21.06.23	Ballymorris, Cratloe	Mains Outage

Water operations team in conjunction with the Environment staff are co-operating with the EPA and Uisce Éireann in respect of recent audits of the Killaloe and Broadford Public Water Supplies. Water Operations recently completed minor capital works at St Flannan's Drive, Ennis to address a recurring mains failure. Uisce Éireann are currently undertaking capital mains works at Clonroadmore, Ennis and Clonlara.

### Water Conservation

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

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

A sample of works carried out during the period are noted below:

Wastewater Operations	
Wastewater Pumping station sump de-sludging works	A project to de-sludge wastewater pumping stations to maximise the wastewater storage available was carried out during July /August at multiple locations across the county.
Remediation of wastewater connections at Milltown Malbay	Rehabilitation works to waste water connections on the Ennis road, Milltown Malbay occurred in August. Works were organised to minimise the impact on traffic and were completed within the day.
Wastewater treatment plants – Sludge dewatering equipment	Service of sludge dewatering equipment was carried out at wastewater treatment facilities in Inagh, Lahinch and Lisdoonvarna during August.

Uisce Éireann Capital Programme	
Ballycannon and Elton Court Sewerage Pumping Station Upgrade	A project to upgrade the pumping facilities at Elton Court and to provide the required replacement infrastructure to allow the decommissioning of the existing Ballycannon wastewater treatment facility is underway. The construction of a new storm water holding tank and new wastewater pumping chamber on the existing pumping station site at Elton Court is ongoing, with final mechanical and electrical work expected to be completed in September. This will improve the capacity for pumping wastewater to the Limerick main drainage network. A new rising main from the existing Ballycannon plant to the Elton Court site and new pumping facilities at the Ballycannon treatment plant will then be constructed. When completed this will allow for the decommissioning and demolition of the Ballycannon WWTP. Planning permission for the works at the Ballycannon site has been submitted. The original planning decision date has been extended due to a request for further information and is now due on 31/08/23.
Ballymacraven Water Treatment Plant	This plant provides water to the North Clare Region, including Ennistymon, Lahinch, Lisdoonvarna, Doolin and Ballyvaughan. Phase 1 of this will modernise the water treatment processes at the plant with Phase 2 delivering the sludge handling line to follow. Phase 1 Work has commenced with the construction of a new third water clarifier now complete. Work to rehabilitate the old clarifiers now underway. The phase 1 upgrade is programmed to be complete by end of 2023, with the phase 2 works expected complete by Q4 of 2024.
Ballyvaughan WWTP	A new wastewater treatment plant, pumping station including pipework extensions are proposed in Ballyvaughan. The planning application for the proposed scheme was lodged by Consultants for Uisce Éireann on 19th July and a planning decision is awaited. Subject to a grant of permission it is anticipated that works will commence during 2024. When the scheme becomes operational it is forecast that during the summer months 100% of the power requirement will be supplied from the proposed on-site solar panels.
Clarecastle Sewerage Scheme	This scheme consists of a new pumping facility at Quay Road and new rising main from Quay Road connecting to Clareabbey Wastewater Treatment Plant inlet. The routine discharge of raw sewage to the River Fergus at Clarecastle Quay has ceased. Uisce Éireann/Clare County Council Operations took over maintenance of the new Quay Road Pump Station in mid-July.
Clonroadmore & Clareabbey WTPs	A project has commenced to examine the two wastewater treatment plants serving Ennis to ensure adequate capacity is available to cater for the future growth and development. The output of this stage of the project is a feasibility study report which will inform the decision on the most appropriate option to develop capacity in the plants. The consultant is preparing options reports for each plant and assessing the assimilative capacity available in the River Fergus.
Doonbeg WWTP Upgrade	This scheme is in the 'Early Contractor Involvement' programme. Work on the west coast of Clare marine model continued. Data supplied by Clare County Council staff to Consultants Aecom was included in a Draft Environmental Scoping Report and the report has been issued to Uisce Éireann for review.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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 or improved pumping infrastructure might be required. It will also be used to identify where groundwater is infiltrating into the network. It will allow Uisce Éireann to have confidence in obtaining the best value for money on network improvement. The consultant has completed an unverified preliminary model build and will now proceed to check and verify this using survey and flow data to be gathered by a contractor once appointed.
Ennistymon And Lahinch WWTP Upgrade	Work on selection of an exact site, pipeline route, detailed design, land acquisition and a planning application will commence in the coming months. The marine model mentioned above is required to inform the design of a new effluent outfall.
Inagh Wastewater Treatment plant Upgrade	Úisce Eireann is progressing the design for an upgrade including additional headroom at the Inagh Wastewater treatment plant under the IWSS programme. A designer/contractor has been appointed and is undertaking options development for the upgrade.
Kilfenora WWTP Upgrade	Reinstatement of temporary working areas was undertaken. Fencing was completed around the WWTP. Process testing continued at the WWTP.
Kilkee WWTP	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, and it is anticipated that a planning application will be lodged in the coming weeks. Liaison with the flood defence project team is continuing.
Kilmihil WTP upgrade	A project under the National Certificate of Authorisation Programme (NCAP), to modernise the existing wastewater treatment plant for Kilmihil, is at design stage. The project includes new inlet works, primary and secondary treatment with nutrient removal and a storm water holding facility. It will provide sludge dewatering and storage capacity. The stage 4 design workshop was held in May.
Kilrush WWTP	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 clearance, testing, pre commissioning, signage, fencing and snagging work continued. The odour control system was commissioned. Site Investigation was carried out at Cappagh Road bridge in relation to consideration of an option to replace some of the existing rising main.

### Kilrush



## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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. Official hand over of the scheme was backdated to April 2023 and EPS, the Design Build Contractor, will operate the plant on behalf of Uisce Éireann for one year up to April 2024. An event to mark the scheme’s completion was held in Liscannor on 25th July.
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Miltown Malbay Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade	The upgrade project is now at the investment planning stage. Workshop minus 1 re-rerun was held in mid-May to further discuss options for a proposed outfall and potential WWTP sites. Uisce Éireann held Workshop Zero on 30th June. The marine model mentioned above is required to inform the design of a new effluent outfall. Uisce Éireann have indicated they will not include treatment of Spanish Point effluent in the proposed WWTP upgrade scheme as the funding mechanism does not allow for inclusion of settlements without current UÉ infrastructure. They have indicated that the proposed WWTP and new outfall will be able to cater for inclusion of Spanish Point effluent in the future.
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Úisce Éireann is progressing the design for a package plant to be installed to supplement the water supply at Doolough and facilitate the decommissioning of the Old Doolough water treatment plant. Options are being developed for this work.

Newmarket on Fergus Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade, rising main and outfall	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. Further information on the planning application was submitted to Clare County Council on 2nd August by Consultants for Uisce Éireann and a decision is awaited. Subject to a grant of planning permission, construction is anticipated to commence in 2024.
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Old Doolough Water Treatment Plant	Uisce Éireann is progressing the design for a package plant to be installed to supplement the water supply at Doolough and facilitate the decommissioning of the Old Doolough water treatment plant. Options are being developed for this work. The project team carried out an initial site assessment during June.
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Uisce Éireann Investment Plan Preparation 2025 to 2029	On 5th May Water Services, Clare County Council, made a submission to Uisce Éireann on the Consultation Paper in Advance of their Investment Plan Preparation 2025 to 2029. It outlined UÉ wastewater infrastructure in County Clare which currently needs investment due to deficiencies in capacity or treatment quality and also outlined County Clare settlements which currently have no wastewater treatment.
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Note: WWTP indicates wastewater treatment plant, WTP indicates water treatment plant.

## Asset Transfer

Following an assessment of the water and wastewater networks in County Clare, 384 sites have been identified for potential transfer to Uisce Éireann to date. Following on-site surveys, 69 of these assets have been determined to be duplicate, non-operational assets or assets which Uisce Éireann will not accept. Of the remaining 315 assets, 221 have now been fully transferred to Uisce Éireann. The 94 assets remaining to be transferred are divided into the following four categories:

- **Report prepared / Pending/ Internal Query (5 assets)**– These consist of assets for which a report is being prepared or which need further investigation or information /approval from another council section to proceed.
- **National Special Projects Office (NSPO) (79 assets)**– This is a department within Uisce Éireann dealing with special projects which includes facilitating the Asset Transfers from Local Authorities. Most assets in this category are folios under third party ownership but where long standing use and some evidence of previous land dealing is present. Uisce Éireann are now advocating that property in long term operational possession but not in the Council name be obtained by the adverse possession process. Circular L1 2022 has confirmed department support for this approach. All assets which

have not yet transferred will be examined to see if they can be progressed using this method.

- **Outstanding assets to be reported on (0 assets)** – All identified sites have now had reports completed.
- **With County Solicitor (10 Assets)** – These assets are now with the County Solicitor to either progress by ordinary transfer or by adverse possession processes. A new batch of five sites is being prepared.
- A review of assets which were originally determined to be disused has been commenced.

## Rural Water Programme

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

The Clare Rural Water Programme awaits the publication of the 2022-2025 Multi Annual Rural Water Programme although we now enter into Q3 of year 2 of the programme. Much frustration is being by GWS in respect of the delay to the programme.

Under the ‘Grant for the Improvement of a Private Water Supply to a House’ 48 applications have been received to date in 2023.

# SHANNON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

## Clonlara TVR

Neville Construction Ltd have been appointed to carry out significant enhancement and upgrade works under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme in Clonlara. The Town & Village Renewal Scheme is a key initiative under the Action Plan for Rural Development Realising our Rural Potential and Project Ireland 2040. The works include a central plaza area in the village centre as well as seating and other upgrade works. The programme of works will be carried out in tandem with the upgrade of a watermain which will also be of considerable benefit to the Clonlara Area.



## Public Consultation Event for the Shannon Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2024 – 2030

There was great attendance and interest at the public consultation evening on July 20th which was held in Shannon Town Centre. The event provided the opportunity for members of the public to view information and discuss any issues they considered important in the plan-making process with the forward planning team, MD staff and Cathaoirleach Donna McGettigan and fellow Councillors who were all on hand to assist with any queries and encourage participation. The pre-draft Issues Paper and display boards provided material to stimulate discussion around relevant topics to be included in the draft local area plan. Participants were encouraged to give their input by making a submissions at this pre-draft stage in the preparation of the new Plan.



The Local Area Plan is a statutory document that sets out the planning and development objectives of the Council for the designated area and is prepared in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000. In consultation with the Shannon MD Councillors, the public consultation timescale was extended to 4th September, 2023. The Shannon Town and Environs Local Area Plan will set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Shannon Town and its Environs over a six-year period (2024-2030). The process is ongoing with various technical work/reports to be produced in addition to consultation with local schools etc as part of the next steps.

**Preparation for Women’s Irish Open and Newmarket on Fergus ‘19th Hole Community and Family Festival’ in full swing!**

Shannon MD staff are working diligently to have the area ready and looking its best for the anticipated 30,000 strong crowd that will visit Clare for the prestigious Women’s Irish Open Golfing event from 31st August until 3rd September, 2023. Given the success of last year’s event and the opportunity it presented in terms of showcasing Clare to a global audience, Shannon MD is hosting a community and family festival in the heart of nearby Newmarket on Fergus on 2nd-3rd September. This quality festival offers a diverse range of events, from the popular Shaskeen traditional music band and the Papa Zitas Motown band experience on Saturday evening to Clodagh Lawlor and Abba Sensations Tribute Band on Sunday evening. The programme of events ensures there’s something for everyone in the family to enjoy, including children’s entertainment at O’Regan Park in Newmarket on Fergus and a further children’s event in Moo-ghaun on Sunday from 3-5pm. The Newmarket on Fergus Community Centre Brass Band will commence proceedings and will lead some local sporting teams to the stage area on the first day. Shannon MD is working closely with Newmarket on Fergus Community Forum, Tidy Towns, Obair and other residents to ensure a successful event.

The MD Crews have been involved in the construction of a full length new footpath which now runs from the Inn at Dromoland to Newmarket on Fergus town. The works also incorporate a dedicated cycle-way from Dromoland to the village which offers safety to cyclists as well as the added benefit of cutting down on fuel use for users of the cycle-way. Shannon MD has worked closely with TII with regard to works at the roundabout at the Inn in Dromoland and Colas Ireland incorporated the installation of fencing for safety purposes at that location. Ongoing meetings have been held with the organisers of the Dromoland event. A mini-road sweeper will be in place to assist with daily cleansing of the area throughout the duration of the Women’s Irish Open. Promotional signage has been put in place by Shannon MD on various approach roads to the event. Work is well underway in the Newmarket on Fergus including painting, general maintenance, floral displays, bunting etc. This is a really positive initiative for Newmarket on Fergus and will bring a boost to the local economy. It is the community collaborative element that has inspired this unique and creative event, so be sure to visit Newmarket on Fergus on 2nd-3rd September for a weekend not to be missed.



**Summary Of Other Works**

**Newmarket on Fergus ORIS**

A Mural is currently being completed as part of this overall project. The mural celebrates local sporting achievements and will add real value to the neighbourhood and will be a must-see focal point in the area.



**Sixmilebridge Railway Station**

Overhead barrier currently being put in place.



**Newmarket on Fergus school**

New table-top pedestrian crossing, footpath upgrade & traffic calming at school.



**Ballycasey More Estate**

New re-installed bollards and surface upgrade in Ballycasey-more estate beside St Aidan's School, Shannon.



**Town Village Renewal Schemes**

Contractor on site in Bunratty and works underway; Contractor appointed in respect of Clonlara (Clonlara); Tender advertised (Drumgeely).

# PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Town Centre First Sixmilebridge Town Centre First Plan

The Sixmilebridge Town Centre First Plan was officially launched in Sixmilebridge on Wednesday, 2nd August, 2023. It is the first Town Centre Plan in the county completed that received funding under the first phase of the National Town Centre First initiative. Over the past 12 months, Clare County Council has engaged with the community in Sixmilebridge, working collaboratively to establish a local Town Team and gathering feedback to understand what the community wants to see for their town in the future. The Town Team is made up of representatives including elected members, community members, businesses, youth, age-friendly and sports representatives amongst others, who have played a key role in the development of the Town Centre First Plan and will play a key role in supporting its implementation.

The plan sets a vision for the future development of Sixmilebridge, addressing key emerging issues including tackling dereliction and vacant properties, improving community facilities and public space and building on the town's assets and positive attributes including the river and heritage. Taking account of the feedback received from the local community, the Town Centre First Plan identified opportunities for improvements and proposed a town team-led action plan and projects in the short, medium and long term. The Town Team, in collaboration with a multi-disciplinary team in Clare County Council and other agencies, will use the plan to implement these actions and seek funding to deliver positive change. A focus on job creation, place-making and an improved quality of life is key for the sustainable development of the town.



### Shannon Town Centre Masterplan

Significant progress has been made in the next stage of the delivery of a new transformational cultural, community and civic building in Shannon Town Centre that is identified as a priority proposal in the implementation strategy of the Shannon Town Centre Masterplan. Clare County Council formally signed contracts with the appointed Integrated Design Team BDP and the appointed Integrated QS & Project Manager Tom McNamara & Partners in July.

The new development, which will be located on land held on a 999-year lease by Clare County Council, will feature public realm improvements to the town square adjacent to the site. It will combine a town hall, an adaptable performance and community space, library, and flexible co-working spaces in the heart of County Clare's second largest town. The development of a Concept Design is now underway which involves significant public consultation to ensure this integrated building can be used by all from young to old.



*Shannon Hub Contract Signing*

The Shannon Town Centre Masterplan has been shortlisted for an award under the Irish Planning Institute.



### Roche Masterplan

On Wednesday, 26th July, Clare County Council met with Roche senior management where the Local Authority was formally presented with a letter by Roche offering the Council “the benefit of a right of first refusal in respect of the Roche site in Clarecastle after the remediation works are completed”. Recognised as a key strategic site in the Ennis 2040 Economic and Spatial Strategy, the redevelopment of the Roche site is expected to play a key role in the economic development of County Clare in the years ahead. Representatives from Roche Basel, Roche Products Dublin, Clare County Council, the community, IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, the Environmental Protection Agency, together with elected representatives,

attended the on-site event. Guests were taken on a guided tour of the site to showcase the remediation work undertaken by Roche to date and the plans for the completion of the project.

A masterplan for the overall site will now be undertaken, the purpose of which will set a clear vision for its future as a location for investment and employment in the Mid-West region. It will be important that the development of the site is integrated with the overall development of Clarecastle and be complementary to the village and community. Clare County Council is working closely with the village team to support an integrated approach.

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## FORWARD PLANNING

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### Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029

On 3rd August, 2023, the Minister of State in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage issued a final Direction to Clare County Council regarding the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029. This followed the Minister’s consideration of the Chief Executives’ Report on the submissions received by the Planning Authority on the Draft Direction (which had been issued to the Council on 18th April) and the recommendation of the Office of the Planning Regulator.

The Minister’s final Direction remains unchanged from the earlier draft Direction issued whereby the Planning Authority is required to reinstate the zoning objectives and associated to that of the Draft Clare County Development Plan as they relate to specific zoning objectives for lands identified in In Kilrush, Killaloe, Mullagh, Liscannor, Broadford, Cooraclare, Ballynacally and Ennis, as well as to remove the provision for ‘Existing Accesses onto National Secondary Roads’ under ‘Exceptional Circumstances’ of section 11.2.9.3 of the Plan. The Direction is deemed to have immediate effect from the date of issue on 3rd August, 2023, and the requirements set out in the Direction are being incorporated into the relevant volumes of the Development Plan.

The Direction is available for viewing on the Council website: <https://clarecdp2023-2029.clarecoco.ie/stage3-amendments/adoption/ministerial-direction-on-clare-county-development-plan-2023-2029-52489.pdf>

### Shannon Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2024-2030

Following the adoption of the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029, Clare County Council commenced pre-draft consultation on the statutory Shannon Town and Environs LAP 2024-2030. On 7th July, 2023, the Council published a pre-draft Issues Paper and published notices which invited submissions from the public and from statutory bodies. The Forward Planning team met with the Shannon Municipal District members to brief them on the proposed LAP plan-making process and discuss the parameters and progress of the project. The team subsequently held a public consultation event at the Shannon Town Centre on 20th July. The event was a hugely successful evening with a steady stream of attendance throughout its duration.

Numerous submissions have been received and the opportunity to make submissions remains live until Monday, 4th September, 2023. The submissions and consultation feedback will help to inform the preparation of the Draft LAP. Pre-draft consultation

with both the secondary and primary schools within the plan area is also being undertaken. The Draft LAP will include Land Use Zoning Objectives for Shannon Town and Environs, and also contain analysis and policy objectives relating to, for example, local transport, flood risk, public realm, habitats and environment.

In 2022, Shannon Town’s population exceeded 10,000 for the first time, with a total of 10,256 residents recorded in the 2022 National Census. The Core Strategy of the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 assigns ambitious population and housing unit growth to Shannon over the next 6 years, in line with its designation as a Metropolitan Town in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.



**Clare County Heritage Plan 2023-2029**

Clare County Council is preparing the fourth Clare County Heritage Plan for the years 2023-2029. The Heritage Plan will address natural, architectural, archaeological, oral and cultural heritage and is the Council's statement of intent in relation to the heritage of County Clare over the period of the plan.

Consultants, GM Innovations, are continuing to work on the preparation of a Draft Clare County Heritage Plan 2023-2029 following the recent Pre-draft Public Consultation process. Pre-draft public consultation was carried out from 21st July, 2023, to 21st August, 2023, and provided a number of opportunities for the public and local communities to get involved including via an online questionnaire on the Council’s Engagement HQ platform, by making a submission and through participation in 3 no. public consultation events held during National Heritage Week, 12th to 20th August, 2023. The public consultation events included an Information stand and public consultation workshops at Vandeleur Walled Gardens, Kilrush and at Bunratty Castle and Folk Park, and a pop-up information stand at O’Connell Square in Ennis. A total of 28 questionnaires were completed and 7 submissions were received as well as significant input at the various events which will be considered in the preparation of the draft Heritage Plan.

The next step is the preparation of a draft County Clare Heritage Plan 2023-2029 by the end of September 2023.

**Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT)**

The RZLT is a new tax aimed at activating existing planning permissions, increasing housing supply and regeneration of vacant and idle lands in urban locations. RZLT will come into effect from 2024.

The first phase of the RZLT process, which began with the publication of a Draft Map on 1st November, 2022, has concluded following receipt of An Bord Pleanála’s decision in relation to 15 appeals. The Bord has confirmed the Planning Authority’s determination in all cases except one.

The second phase of the RZLT process commenced with the publication of a Supplemental Map on 1st May, 2023, with 4 submissions received during the public consultation stage. All submissions were assessed, and landowners were notified of the Planning Authority’s decision by 1st August, 2023. The closing date for appeals to An Bord Pleanála is 1st September, 2023, with a decision due by 27th October, 2023.

The next step is to prepare the Final Map which is due to be published on 1st December, 2023. The Tax will come into effect on 1st February, 2024.

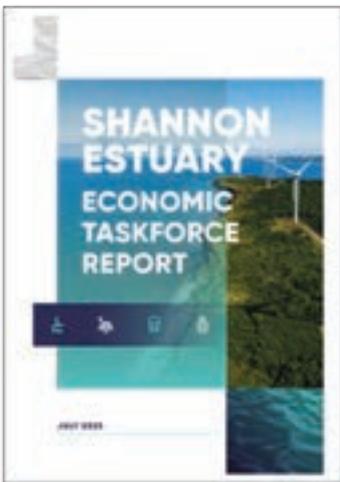
### Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce Report

Clare County Council welcomed the Taoiseach Leo Varadkar to Clare for the launch of the Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce Report at Ardnacrusha on Saturday, 8th July.



*Pictured at the launch were (l-r): Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr Joe Cooney; Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD; and Pat Dowling, Chief Executive, Clare County Council.*

The independent Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce was established in April 2022 by Government to make recommendations to government on the economic development potential of the Shannon Estuary region.



The Taskforce’s Final Report sets out recommendations for the delivery of up to 30GW of Atlantic Offshore Wind through the Estuary by 2050, and measures to maximise the industrial development opportunities arising from this. It also sets the vision for the Shannon Estuary to become Ireland’s Atlantic

Green Digital Corridor, and the lead location for Atlantic offshore wind.

Also included are proposed actions for scaling up the deployment of onshore renewable energy across the region, and proposed new initiatives in the transport, logistics, connectivity, and tourism sectors.

Among the targets are:

- The creation of 10,000 new green jobs by 2035 and 50,000 by 2050
- 2GW of green energy capacity in development by 2030
- Up to 30GW installed by 2050

The potential of the Shannon Estuary to deliver unprecedented economic and environmental transformation for the region,

the entire country and to play a part in the greening of Europe was endorsed by cabinet members at the launch. Attended by Ministers Eamon Ryan, Norma Foley and Simon Coveney, there was a clear commitment from all local and national stakeholders to work towards delivering on this ‘opportunity of the century’ for Ireland. The Report sets out a vision for the Shannon Estuary to become Ireland’s Atlantic Green Digital Corridor, and the lead location for Atlantic offshore wind.

An historic day as the report was launched at the ESBs Ardnacrusha Generating Station, the seat of another energy revolution which electrified Ireland almost 100 years ago.

To view the report, visit: [gov.ie](http://gov.ie) - [Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce Report \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie) and the launch video click here: [Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce Report Launch Video](#)



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

Members of the Project Delivery Team were delighted to attend the launch of the Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce Report in July where the delivery of the Kilrush Maritime Training Centre established by the Clare Maritime Economic Zone has been included as a strategic objective in not only the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 but also in the Final Report from the Government Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce.



*(L-r): Dr Carmel Kirby, Director of Economic Development and Ennis Municipal District; Siobhán McNulty, Acting Director of Physical Development; Helen Quinn, Acting Senior Planner; and Sheila Downes, Environmental Assessment Officer.*

Listed as a key action target under “Skills Development” the report sets an ambitious target for the establishment of the training centre by 2025.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a Maritime Training Centre of Excellence in Kilrush by 2025, with funding supported by government through existing funding routes.</li> </ul>	CCC	Q4, 2024
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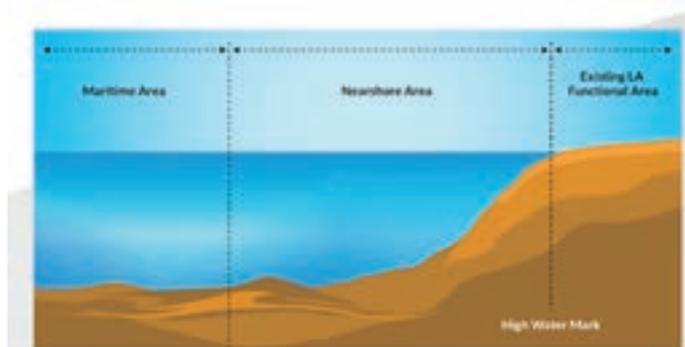
Clare MEZ has entered a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Maritime College of Ireland/Munster Technological University to undertake a review of the Business Plan together with the overall project costs with a focus on the inclusion of simulated, virtual, and augmented reality training solutions.

Clare MEZ has ongoing discussions with the Limerick Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB) with respect to potentially offering a variety of further education and training opportunities and to build on the pilot Maritime Training Course in Kilrush Marine delivered in 2019 by the LCETB.

Discussions are ongoing with the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science in terms of funding towards the project.

### Marine Spatial Planning

Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) is a new way of looking at how we use the marine area and planning how best to use it into the future. In line with Ireland’s Marine Spatial Plan – the National Marine Planning Framework and in line with the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021 (the “MAP Act”) Clare County Council has been identified as a Coastal Planning Authority. This will see maritime functions within the nearshore (High Water mark to 3 nautical Miles) assigned to the Local Authority.



Clare County Council hosted the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR), the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) and the Coastal Planning authorities Subgroup of the County and City Management Associated (CCMA) in the delivery of a Marine Spatial Planning workshop for staff of coastal planning authorities and relevant stakeholders in Ennis this July. The workshop, which was held on 6th July, provided an overview of the national and strategic context for Marine Spatial Planning in Ireland and focused specifically on how the new legislation will be implemented by coastal planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála. Presentations were delivered by senior personnel from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA), An Bord Pleanála together with a presentation from Acting Senior

Planner in Clare County Council, Helen Quinn.

The workshop was very well attended by those working in all of the Coastal Planning Authorities together with many specialist consultants and planning agents. A lively discussion took place at the end of the various sessions with many questions from the floor on the future workload, resourcing and the preparation of the forth coming DMAPs (Designated Maritime Area Plans) under Part 2 of the MAP Act. It is anticipated that further training will be required and provided for with respect to Marine Spatial Planner with this first workshop proving a resounding success.

The presentations are available to view and download via the following link:  
<https://www.opr.ie/marine-spatial-planning-workshop/>



### Flexible Outdoor Structures

Clare County Council has received funding under the Outdoor Public Space Scheme as promoted by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. This funding stream asks us to reimagine how we use our outdoor public spaces and proposes a series of flexible outdoor structures which can be erected in outdoor locations during one-off events. The structures are designed to animate the streetscape and will have incorporated lighting to create a presence in the street at night. A design team led by GKMP Architects have been appointed to provide specialist input into the project. Alan Meredith Studio Ltd have been appointed to fabricate the structures. The structures have been erected in O’Regan Park in Newmarket on Fergus as part of the Family and Community Festival organised by Clare County Council. This represents the first installation of the structures and they will form a valuable part of the festival events. An expression of interest process will be undertaken ahead of the wider roll-out of the structures.



*The Flexible Outdoor Structures erected at O'Regan Park, Newmarket on Fergus.*

### **Public Realm Enhancements at Cappa Village, Kiltrush**

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

has been identified. A letter of intent has been issued and it is expected that the design team appointment will be finalised in September.

### **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 plan-led project proposes to enhance the public realm offering at Parliament Street to make it a more pedestrian friendly, age-friendly, and accessible street. A tender was issued for a design team to provide specialist consultancy services on the project, and the most economically advantageous tender has been identified. A letter of intent has been issued and it is expected that the design team appointment will be finalised in September.



*Project at Cappa Village.*

## HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY

### National Heritage Week

Heritage Week (12th–20th August, 2023) is co-ordinated by the Heritage Council with support from the Department of Housing, Local Authorities and Fáilte Ireland. It is part of European Heritage Days, a joint initiative of the Council of Europe and the European Union. The aim of Heritage Week is to create awareness of our natural, built, oral and cultural heritage, thereby encouraging conservation, preservation and enjoyment of County Clare’s heritage assets. Over 85 events were hosted across Clare to celebrate National Heritage Week. A range of biodiversity events including demonstration walks and talks were held encompassing a wide range of topics including a talk on wildlife rehabilitation organised by Clare Libraries, biodiversity enhancement and wetland creation hosted by Shannon Town Community Wetlands, a bat walk and talk organised by the Clare Association of An Taisce, a talk on Pollination, Biodiversity and the Importance of Wild and Edible Plants organised by Clare Libraries, native orchards and bud grafting hosted by Seed Savers; children educational workshops such as marine biology (whale and dolphin) themed events hosted by the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group, Wild Child Day hosted by Lough Grainey Forest School, and invertebrates and wildflowers of the Burren hosted by Burrenbeo Trust. Other events included riverbank walks to learn about otter biology hosted by the Local Authority Waters Programme; and Urban Forest Management in Ennis organized by Clare County Council.



Shannon Town Wetlands hosted a talk on wetlands during National Heritage Week.

### Clare Heritage and Biodiversity Forum

The first meeting of the Clare Heritage and Biodiversity Forum was held at the end of July and was coordinated and organised by the Planning Department within Clare County Council. The Council has commenced the process of preparing a new Clare County Heritage Plan for the period 2023-2029 and it is intended that the plan preparation process for a new Clare County Biodiversity Plan 2024-2030 will commence over the coming months. In order to best inform both of these plan preparation processes, it was the intention of Clare County Council to establish a Heritage and Biodiversity Forum consisting of a wide range of stakeholders drawn from a variety of sectors and organisations with a county wide remit, all of whom have a recognised role in the protection and promotion of heritage and biodiversity in County Clare. The forum will inform and provide observations during the preparation stage of the Heritage and Biodiversity Plans and provide feedback and assistance in the implementation and monitoring of the plans. The forum will also promote exchange of information, good practice, awareness, and a discussion of biodiversity and heritage related topics.

The first meeting provided an opportunity for members to introduce themselves and the organisations/networks they represent. A PowerPoint presentation on the county’s biodiversity assets and council funded projects was delivered by the Council’s Biodiversity Officer Barry O’Loughlin; and separately, a presentation on the county’s heritage was presented by external consultants who have been commissioned by Clare County Council to prepare the next Heritage Plan 2023-2029.

### Marsh Fritillary Surveys

The Marsh Fritillary Monitoring Scheme tracks the population status and habitat quality of the marsh fritillary (*Euphydryas aurinia*), Ireland’s only legally protected insect species. The scheme is coordinated by the National Biodiversity Data Centre. Marsh Fritillary is a red-listed butterfly species of conservation concern in Ireland (categorised as ‘Vulnerable’ under the Red List of Irish Butterflies published by National Parks and Wildlife Service in 2010) and listed on Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive. The species has undergone declines due to a decrease in the amount of suitable habitat. The species conservation status is reported every six years under Article 17 of the EU Habitats Directive. This scheme involves carrying out a detailed habitat condition survey and a count of larval webs at key sites in September and October each year. Devil’s-bit scabious (*Succisa pratensis*) is the main food plant for the marsh fritillary and the larvae construct a web wrapped around the leaves at the base of the plant which is visible from late August to early October. Several sites and landowners have been identified by the Council’s Biodiversity Officer in South Clare with confirmed larval webs identified in late-August. It is envisioned to support landowners to manage habitats to benefit Marsh Fritillary populations.



Marsh Fritillary larval web.



Adult butterfly.

### Irish Bishops Conference on Biodiversity

Irish bishops have asked parishes across Ireland to set aside 30 percent of their grounds for pollinators and biodiversity by 2030 so the land can be enjoyed “in perpetuity by the whole community.” With 1,365 parishes that include 2,646 churches across 26 dioceses on the island of Ireland, the initiative has the potential to make a difference to local biodiversity as well as create awareness of global conservation efforts, particularly the agreement of countries at the 2022 United Nations conference on biological diversity (COP15) to return 30 per cent of land to nature.

## PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

The table below provides a summary of Enforcement activity for the months of July and August and for the year to date 2023.

July 2023 stats are as follows:

New complaints received	20
New files opened	11
Files closed	7
Warning Letters issued	6
Enforcement Notice issued	4
Legal	1

August 2023 stats are as follows:

New complaints received	7
New files opened	7
Files closed	2
Warning Letters issued	9
Enforcement Notice issued	1
Legal	0

## LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

- **The Trading Online Voucher Scheme** provides grant support to small businesses to develop an ecommerce website. In July and August, four further applications were approved, and four grants were drawn down. In 2023 LEO Clare have approved 24 businesses for a Trading Online Voucher.
- **Mentoring:** LEO Clare has continued with a strong requirement for all of our Mentoring Options including mentoring in Starting a new Business, Finance, Digital Marketing, Export Development and Brexit. Over the months of July and August assigned 34 Mentor applicants to Mentors.
- **Training:** Although a quiet period for Training Programmes, LEO Clare held two training courses over the two months which saw over 30 participants take part. These included training digital marketing and start your own business. The summer also saw several long running Management Development programmes finish with great feedback from all who attended.

### July Evaluation Committee Meeting

The Local Enterprise Office Evaluation and Approvals Committee (EVAC) held their fourth evaluation meeting of 2023 in July. Three projects totalling €91,525 were approved for funding including Two Business Expansion Grants and One Feasibility Grant.

### Client Engagement

Throughout the months of August and September, Local Enterprise Office Clare decided to commence meetings with over 50 of our current and former grant aided clients via our business advisors. These meetings will cover LEAN, Green and the new Energy Efficiency Grant plus all upcoming training programmes.

### Chambers Ireland ELG Awards 2023

A Local Enterprise Office training project, Female Entrepreneurship and Leadership in Promoting Economic Development, has been shortlisted in the twentieth annual Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards. Five other projects from the Clare County Council have also been nominated for an award. The awards will be presented on Thursday, 23rd November, in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dublin.

## PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

### Property Transactions and Conveyancing

The Table below shows the number of property transactions completed by Property Management Unit in July and August (up to 23rd August), together with the totals for 2023 to date and the full year 2022.

We continue to assist many solicitors acting for their clients 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	July and August 2023	Year to date 2023	Full year 2022
Lease / Sub Lease of Property / Building	1	2	4
Licence to use property / building	2	4	13
Grazing Agreement for Lands	0	17	22
Deed of Transfer signed	4	13	19
Contract for Sale / acquisition signed	0	1	2
Deed of Right of Way / Wayleave signed	1	1	6
Deed of Rectification / Variation signed	2	3	10
Allotment Agreements signed	0	39	39

### Casual Trading

As we come to the close of the Summer season, one licence applications has been granted for Lisdoonvarna Matchmaking Festival to be held in September.

### Property - Capital Works Programme

The following projects have been completed by the Property Management Unit during recent months and result in physical and operational improvements to our Corporate buildings.

Property / Building	Works completed
Kilrush Town Hall	Works to desk spaces for staff have been completed on the first floor during the Summer. The area was previously used as the Kilrush Digital Hub, which has recently relocated. In addition, works were completed in the public consultation room on the ground floor to improve privacy and accessibility. This will provide a safe and presentable area for staff to meet customers.
Ennistymon District Office	In preparation for an international visit by Unesco delegates, work was undertaken to show the building in its best light. Internal painting and externally, power-washing, gutter and fascia cleaning and landscaping works were completed. Some guttering and fascia were replaced on the external storage sheds in the yard and all walls and doors in the yard were painted.
Scariff Municipal District Office	Repair and Maintenance work was recently completed at the MD Office and Library building in Scariff. The flagpoles are now back in use and the timber façade and other surfaces have been painted. A replacement Platform Lift was also fitted in the Public Library area of the building, providing continued accessibility for all to the upper level of the Library.
Mill House - Ennis	In preparation for a visit by Minister Simon Harris to Haven Horizons, works to showcase the protected structure were completed. These included general maintenance, power-washing and planting. Removal of graffiti to the side of the building is being planned at present.
Shannon Municipal District Office	A new automated door operating system was fitted to the front doors, providing easy access to all members of the public.
Tullyvarraga Community Hall - Shannon	Disabled and Age Friendly Car Parking Spaces have been provided outside this community facility in recent weeks by the Shannon MD office. This follows our investment last year which included replacing emergency light fittings, a new fire alarm panel, new oil burner, new oil tank and new heating controls. Further upgrade works are being done by the Committee of the Hall to provide universally accessible toilets. This Project is funded by Pobal- Community Centres Investment Fund.

## DERELICT SITES

The Derelict sites team are currently dealing with 235 properties that are considered derelict. Of this number, 69 were identified in 2022 and to date in 2023, we have opened files on 34 new properties. Initial engagement with owners or their representatives is key to resolution of the issues of dereliction and to understand the various reasons why the properties are in a derelict stage. Since the start of the year, a number of properties have been brought to the market and some are at 'sale agreed' stage and we continue the engagement with the new owners of those properties to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities under the Derelict Sites Act, 1990. Due to the Vacant Property refurbishment Grant (see details below), there is a noticeable increase in the number of derelict and vacant properties on the market at the current time.

We are also seeing the outcome of sales agreed in recent months, with planning applications for refurbishment increasing and some works commencing on individual properties. We are advising owners of properties of the grant for refurbishing vacant and derelict properties to residential use and the amalgamation of the Vacant Homes Team and the Derelict Sites Team is accruing benefits. With time and effort, working with owners, financial institutions and other departments, there are definitely options for positive re-development and revitalisation of many such derelict sites.



*Acha Bhile.*



*Harmony Row (before).*



*Harmony Row (after).*



We continue to see the results of the effort and the work done by owners on properties around the county. Examples below include:

- A detached house that was vacant since 2008 in Acha Bhile in Ennis, now completely refurbished and on the market
- A two-storey house in Cappa, Kilrush
- Four terraced houses in Harmony Row in Ennis, vacant and derelict for many years.



Cappa.

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

Derelict Sites	July and August 2023	Year to date 2023	Full Year 2022
No. of new files opened	10	34	69
No. of Section 8(2) Notices issued - Intention to enter site on Derelict Sites Register	4	24	33
No. of Section 8(7) Notices issued - Entry of site onto Derelict Sites Register	3	15	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	3	8	21
No. of Notices served to Compulsorily Purchase (CPO) (see note below)	3	9	6
No of Vesting Orders signed	2	5	4

### Compulsory acquisition of Derelict sites (CPO)

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

**2023** Of the nine CPOs initiated in 2023 to date six are at the Vesting stage, submissions have been received on two of them and one has recently been advertised.

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

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

Since the Government made the decision in May 2023 to extend the Croí Cónaithe Vacant and Derelict Property Refurbishment Grant to those who wish to renovate a vacant or derelict property for either permanent occupancy or full-time rental and also increased the levels of grant aid, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of enquiries and the number of applications. The detail on the number of applications (as at 23rd August) is shown in the table below.

This measure will boost the supply of rental properties and options for permanent homes and will deliver on a key plank of ‘Housing for All’ National Policy and the Vacant Homes Action Plan, the key objective of which is to reduce vacancy and dereliction in our cities, towns, villages and rural countryside and provide more housing options in the process.

No. of Applications Submitted	Overall %
Year 2022	33 16%
Year 2023	170 84%
<b>Total no. of Grant Applications</b>	<b>203 100%</b>
<b>Proposed use of Grant aided property</b>	
Private Residence	160 79%
Rental Property	43
<b>Decisions Made</b>	
Approved	49 24%
Rejected	5 2%
Withdrawn	9 4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>63 31%</b>
<b>Applications in progress</b>	
In Progress	41
Further Information Requested	60
Awaiting Technical Inspection	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>140 69%</b>

Key items to note include:

- There has been a significant increase in applications during the Summer months.
- Since May 2023, we have received 43 applications from owners for the grant to refurbish properties for rental.
- Since May 2023, the time period for completion of works is 13 months from the date of grant approval and this is challenging for applicants to achieve.
- The revised maximum grant amounts are being applied to all existing approved applications.
- We have processed our first payment under the Grant, including the signing of the Deed of Charge.
- Following on from the appointment of additional staff to the Team, much progress has been made on advancing the application assessment process and the carrying out of technical inspections.
- The applications in rural areas account for 59% of all applications and those in towns and villages account for 41%. This has remained fairly consistent since the grant was introduced.
- While an enhanced scheme for refurbishment for

properties on off-shore islands was announced by Government, none of the islands off County Clare are eligible for the scheme.

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

Based on the applications received and the revised grant levels, there is a potential investment of €4.5 million by Government in refurbishment of vacant and derelict properties to be returned to economic use as permanent homes.

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## ENNIS MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

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### Communities in Bloom Judges visit Ennis

Ennis, nominated as the Irish entrant to the international Communities in Bloom (CiB) competition 2023, welcomed CiB judges, Berta Briggs from Canada and Dr Andrea Bocsi from Hungary, to Ennis from July 23rd-25th. The judges evaluated the town under six specific criteria: community appearance, environmental action, heritage conservation, tree management, plant and floral displays, and landscape.

Bernadette Solon, an adjudicator with Tidy Towns Ireland and a judge with Communities in Bloom, also came to Ennis along with staff from the Department of Rural and Community Development.

Council officials met with the judges on the evening of Sunday, 23rd, to brief them on the strategies and plans for Ennis, which aligned with the CiB criteria. The evaluation tour began in the

Friary on Monday, 24th, where judges were officially welcomed by Carmel Kirby, Director of Economic Development. They watched a short video which covered initiatives and projects in Ennis that the judges would not see on the tour but aligned with specific criteria. At the Friary they also met with a number of Community Groups from across the town followed by a tour of the Friary, delivered by a guide at Ennis Friary.

Judges and members of the CiB committee then navigated Ennis, taking in the floral displays at Club Bridge, public realm enhancements at Parnell Street Laneways and Bow-ways. They met with Cllr Howard and Ennis Tidy Towns committee and were treated to traditional music and refreshments in Merchants Square. Council officials outlined future plans for O’Connell Street, Cathedral Place and Barrack Square. At the Old Ground Hotel, the General Manager briefed on their ambitious environmental action plan. The judges then travelled to Doora on an EV bus, to witness the remediated landfill and meet with members of Ennis Men’s Shed. The Clare Camogie Development Squad put on a fine display while Banner Beekeepers provided the judges with an opportunity to suit up and visit the hives. Other stops included Cloughleigh community garden, a guided tour of Tim Smythe Park provided by Tim Forde and the WW2 memorial garden.

The Gardening section did an exceptional job in designing, planning and planting to ensure Ennis was blooming for the evaluation tour. An evaluation report will be provided to Ennis MD following the CiB awards ceremony which is due to take place in Canada at the end of September.



**TY Project**

In May 2023 of this year, Transition Year students from Coláiste Muire, Ennis, travelled to Dáil Eireann to present their vision to make Ennis Ireland’s first ‘Green Mode’ town. TY Students from St Flannan’s College, who were runners up in the competition, also attended.

Maya Hogan, Megan Hassett, Ciara Fitzpatrick, Amy Gibbons, Emma Dunlop and Aisling Hammond set out the vision they and their classmates developed for Ennis in 2040 following months of research, surveys and pilot tests undertaken.

Minister for Finance, Michael McGrath TD, Minister Stephen Donnelly, and Minister of State Kieran O’Donnell all took time out of their hectic schedules to meet with the students. Deputy Cathal Crowe, Senator Timmy Dooley, Deputy Michael McNamara, Deputy Violet-Anne Wynne, Deputy Mary Lou McDonald, Senator Roisin Garvey and Senator Martin Conway were also present on the day, in addition to the Ennis MD Councillors.

The students first presented their vision for Ennis to the Ennis Municipal District Councillors at Council Chambers, which gave them a unique opportunity to participate in local democracy and have their say on the future of their town.

As part of their presentation, the students put forward proposals on how and why more environmentally friendly modes of transport could be deployed in Ennis. They demonstrated how streets could be re-imagined and requested support to make interventions like a Bike Library and more cycle lanes available in Ennis. Their initial survey showed only 13.2% of students walked or cycled (green mode) to school.

Coláiste Muire were announced as the ultimate winners of the TY Project from the four secondary schools who developed a vision for Ennis in 2040 and taking into consideration sustainable practices, energy sources, accessibility and transport. Coláiste Muire won the overall TY Project but had stiff competition from St Flannan’s College, Rice College and Ennis Community College & Gaelcholáiste An Chláir.



A core focus of the TY programme was to encourage young people in Ennis to learn and engage with their local community and become participants in local democracy through active citizenship.

Following its success, a new programme will be rolled out in this academic year throughout the secondary schools in Ennis. This year's programme will require students to focus on the Climate Action Plan. As part of the 6-8 week programme, students will carry out research, surveys, devise an action plan highlighting changes students and teachers can make to reduce emissions in their schools, homes and in their community.

### Celebrating 'Heritage Week' in Ennis

The theme for this year's National Heritage week was 'Living Heritage'. EMD embraced this theme hosting an event at De Valera Park, Ennis on Thursday, 17th August, which was advertised on the Heritage Council's website and on social media.

Ennis Municipal District secured funding under the Heritage Stewardship Fund 2023 to develop a 'Tree Management Strategy', which was presented to locals and visitors at the event. There was an opportunity to engage with John Morris (John Morris Arboricultural Consultancy Ltd) and Tommy Scott (EMD) on its design and implementation. Those in attendance were also informed of how EMD are safeguarding and future-proofing Ennis' urban forests.

In addition, Mairtin Davy and his team from Inverin, Co. Galway, engaged and entertained the audience with demonstrations on the traditional crafts of wood turning, sugán chair making and creating a St Brigid's cross. They also brought a

selection of their craft works for display.

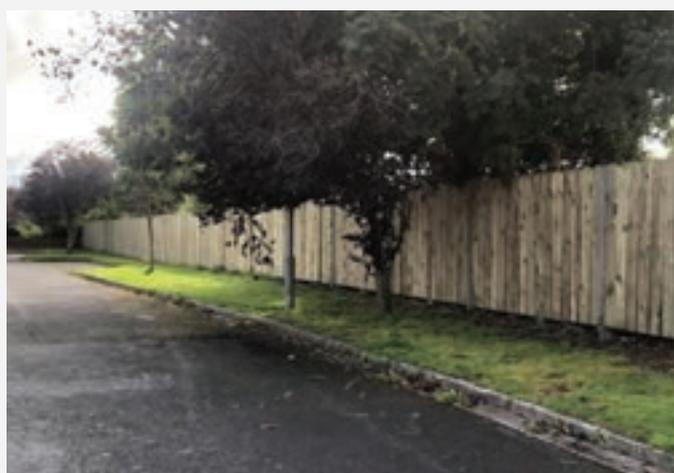


### MD Current Works

Surface Dressing and Restoration Maintenance Recycling works in the Ennis MD area have now been completed for 2023.



Replacement of fencing that had deteriorated over time has been completed at the For Uisce housing estate in Ennis.



Drainage works and the resurfacing of the Clare Camogie grounds were carried out by a contractor at the Quin Road in Ennis.



### Ennis Public Realm Update Ennis Public Realm

Following the approval of €8.6M in funding under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) in July for the Ennis Public Realm Regeneration Project, Ennis Municipal District are currently engaged in extensive consultation with the Project Management Office and the project team regarding the award of contract and development of a programme of works. It is anticipated that information sessions will be held in September 2023.

### Ennis Transport Plan Update

During August, procurement of consultants to undertake the Area Based Transport Assessment (which will form part of the upcoming Local Area Plan for Ennis) was advanced, with contract signing anticipated in September 2023. The work is being funded by the National Transport Authority Active Travel Funding. The Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) process seeks to devise the most appropriate strategy for the development of Ennis, taking into account land use and environmental considerations, identifying a viable and appropriate solution to Ennis's anticipated transport impacts and requirements.

The prioritisation of the funding for future transportation projects will be dependent on Ennis having completed this process and having a Local Area Plan and Transport Plan as required for a Key Town under the Southern Region Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES).

The first stage of the Area Based Transportation process will be to carry out a Baseline Assessment of the Plan and Surrounding Area. This will examine various levels of policies and objectives from international, national, regional and local Plans, the area characteristics, existing travel patterns, existing transport infrastructure, baseline consultation, schools' consultation and environmental conditions. This should give a clear understanding of the existing spatial characteristics, land uses, transport conditions and constraints relating to Ennis.

There will be several occasions during the process where consultation will be carried out to get inputs, concerns, opinions of the Ennis Municipal District Councillors and the public. It is expected that the work will be carried out over the next year.