

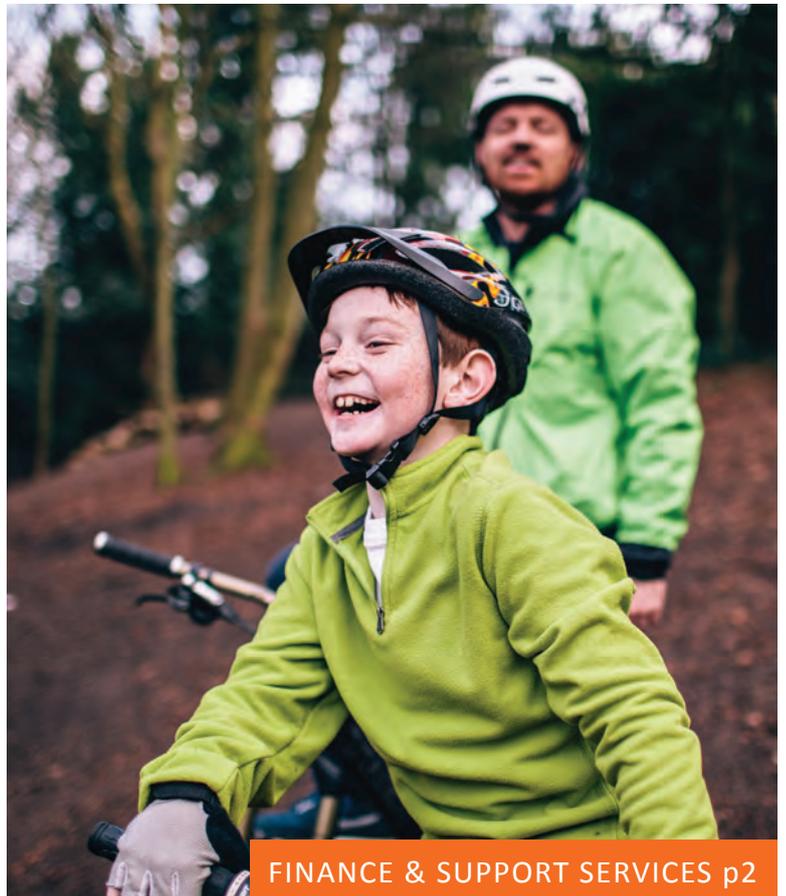


COMHAIRLE | CLARE
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

TUARASCÁIL MHÍOSÚIL ÓN PHRÍOMHFHEIDHMEANNACH

MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Samhain / November
2020



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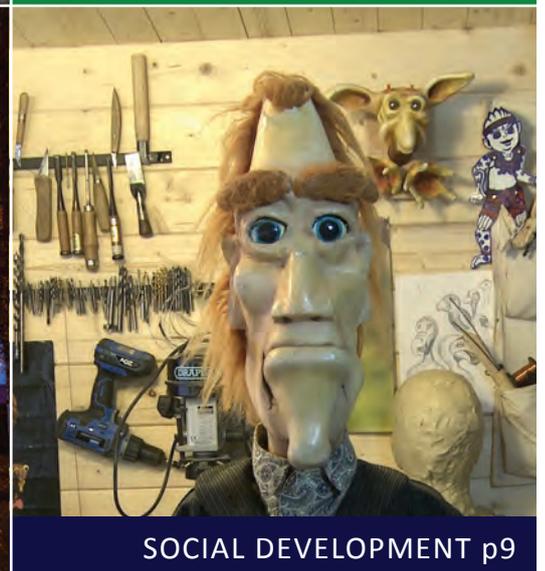
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FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

CORPORATE SERVICES

Register of Electors

The Draft Register of Electors 2021/2022 is published on 1st November, 2020, and is available for inspection. The public have a period of 25 days up to and including 25th November to make additions, deletions or modifications to the Draft Register.

The total electorate on the 2021/2022 Draft Register of Electors is 92,482, a slight drop of 468 electors from the current 2020/2021 figure of 92,950 electors.

An awareness campaign is in place highlighting the importance of checking the register online at www.checktheregister.ie and registering to vote.

Freedom of information and data protection

2020 statistics to 29/10/2020:

- 140 freedom of information requests
- 4 freedom of information Internal Review applications
- 3 appeals to Information Commissioner
- 5 access requests (data protection) – data subjects
- 18 access requests (data protection) – third-party access.

Procurement

The following tender competitions were published on eTenders during October 2020:

Short description	Response deadline
Rehabilitation of Stonepark Bridge	23/10/2020
Refurbishment works to the Ennis Museum and Tourist Office	13/11/2020
Supply and installation of a fully supported Wi-Fi network of a minimum of 30 outdoor public access points, at designated locations around County Clare, under the WiFi4EU programme	13/11/2020
Establishment of Framework Agreements for Works Contractors for Clare County Council for Works Contracts in County Clare	23/11/2020
Traffic Calming Scheme at Abbey Court and Abbey Ville, Ennis, County Clare	20/11/2020
Supply of four new Fire Service vehicles	13/11/2020
Provision of services for fit-out of 4 no. Fire Service vehicles	13/11/2020

Records Management

The Records Management Team continues to facilitate daily requests from all departments for file storage and retrieval from the record centre.

- Records management is currently working with different departments in the destruction of files in line with the



national retention policy for local authorities.

- Works are progressing on the fit-out and layout of Quin Road records storage facility. A tender is currently being prepared by the General Design department for the purchase of storage shelving.

FINANCE

Restart Grant Plus

The Finance team have been facilitating the Restart Grant and Restart Grant Plus schemes announced by the Government in May. The Restart Grant Plus Scheme, including the top-ups, will close from midnight on Saturday, 31st October. A new Covid Restrictions Support Scheme (CRSS) was established as part of Budget 2021 on 13th October, 2020, and is being operated by the Revenue Commissioners.

To date, Clare County Council has paid €11.4m to over 1,700 applicants across various business sectors in the county. While the scheme closes on 31st October the final administration of the scheme will continue with potentially another €3m to be paid to businesses in the county before end of year 2020.

Nine-month waiver of commercial rates

A 100 per cent waiver, in the form of a credit in lieu of commercial rates, will be applied to the rate accounts of all businesses, for a nine-month period (27th March to 27th December), with a small number of categories excepted. This is in recognition of the fact that not only have many rate-payers been forced to close business due to the public health requirements, but many others who remained open have suffered significant reductions in turnover. This will be applied to commercial rate accounts in the coming weeks and funds to compensate for same will be issued by Government to Clare County Council.

COMMUNICATIONS



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

In October, the Council issued two Service Updates to inform the public about access to Council services under Level 3 and Level 5 of the Government's Plan for Living with Covid-19. On 21st October, the Chief Executive, Pat Dowling, was interviewed on *Morning Focus* on Clare FM to tell listeners about some of the changes under Level 5 of the plan.

There were 18 media releases during October, including: a warning to avoid bonfires and any Halloween activities that could spread Covid-19; Ennis Town's achievement of the highest cleanliness level in the Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) nationwide litter survey; as well as news from across the Council on a range of funding, cultural, health and safety, and strategic developments. Council news featured in stories published by *The Clare Champion*, *The Clare Echo*, *The Clare County Express* and *The Clare Herald*.

On 29th October, the Taoiseach launched the 'Keep Well' campaign which aims to support people and communities to mind their physical and mental health over the coming months.

There is now a 'Keep Well' wellbeing page on the Clare County Council website, which provides links to wellbeing supports and which will be updated with further resources over the course of the campaign: <https://www.clarecoco.ie/together/>

Social Media

The Communications Office continues to monitor and update social media channels with creative content to enhance engagement with the public and maintain awareness of the work of the Council. In October the Communications Office:

- Posted 75 times on Clare County Council's Facebook page with followers now 14,199. Posts reached 52,523 users with 13,283 engagements
- Tweeted 86 times on Twitter, with total followers now 6,645. Our tweets earned 118,000 impressions (number of times users saw our tweet)
- Posted 58 times on Instagram with followers now 1,738.

Print and Graphic Design

The print and graphic design service continues to provide services including layout and production of posters and signage, forms, certificates and booklets.

Irish Language Department

The Irish language version of the Council's Corporate Plan was reviewed and approved for publication in October, while a number of translations were completed for Covid-related signage. At the October Council meeting, Cllr Mark Nestor called for a review of the Scéim Teanga, a key document outlining policy and plans for the language. The current Scéim has been in operation since 2007. A new Scéim Teanga will be drafted and presented in 2021.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Work Area	Update
Recruitment	<p>The following recruitment competitions were progressed during October 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Officer (Open and Confined) • Acting (Temporary) Senior Executive Planner (Confined) • GO Driver II (Confined) • Assistant Engineer (Open) • Professionally Qualified Social Worker (Open)
Learning and Development	<p>Among the training programmes held in October were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe Pass (16 participants) • Manual Handling (8 participants) • Health and Safety for Managers (20 participants) • Abrasive wheels operation (12 participants) • Telescopic handler operation (4 participants) • Fire Warden (6 participants) • PHECC First Aid refresher (8 participants) • Roadworks SLG update (7 participants) <p>With the increasing level of Covid-19 restrictions the range of online learning is expanding, particularly noteworthy is the remote delivery by the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) of its programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government A-Z (22 participants) • Certificate in Local Government Studies (11 participants) • Diploma in Local Government Studies (3 participants) <p>On 15th October, 2020, Cllr Susan Crawford delivered Autism Awareness training on-line for Councillors and staff of Clare County Council. This online event was held to mark Social Inclusion Week.</p>
Employee Welfare	<p>World Mental Health Day took place on 10th October. A series of online resources was made available to all staff and included courses on Mental Health Awareness, Stress Awareness and Coping with Covid-19 Anxiety. A Mental Health Wellbeing Suggestion competition was also arranged and lots of excellent ideas were put forward and will be implemented in due course.</p> <p>Ennis Medical facilitated the roll-out of the flu vaccine to over 100 staff in October. Further appointments were planned and have had to be cancelled as unfortunately the Council was notified of a shortage of supply.</p>
Covid-19	<p>Covid-19 related documentation from the Department and the Local Government Management Agency was circulated and the Human Resources Department continued to liaise as necessary.</p>
Unions	<p>The HR Department continued to engage and consult with unions on various matters including the Return to Work Protocol and the appointment of Lead Worker Representatives.</p>

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Tullaheer Bog



Pictured (l-r) are: Deirdre O'Shea, Head of Tourism (Acting); John O'Malley, A/Senior Executive Officer; Pat Dowling, Chief Executive; and Cllr Gabriel Keating.

Following the completion of a pre-feasibility study on Tullaheer Bog as a biodiversity amenity and recent motion at the October Council meeting, a site visit was undertaken to review the feasibility study recommendation.

The pre-feasibility study completed for Tullaheer Bog highlighted the potential for recreational opportunities, with significant community, tourism and conservation benefits. Further analysis and comprehensive engagement with key stakeholders will be conducted in order to realise the potential for these opportunities and benefits, such as:

- Establish this site as a visitor experience in the West Clare area that could encourage a greater spread and longer dwell time of visitors to County Clare

- Encourage wellness tourism, with visitors experiencing the associated physical and mental health benefits of being in an environment closer to nature
- Protect the bog-based wildlife
- Conserve the biodiversity for future generations
- Preserve a sense of place and maintain a link to the social and cultural heritage of rural Ireland.

Clare County Council's Tourism Department and West Clare Municipal District Office are committed to this process of comprehensive engagement with key stakeholders and relevant State agencies having noted the potential opportunity for this site.

Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2020 – Accelerated Measure round 3 funding announcement



Crusheen Hall, which has received grant funding under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme.

Clare County Council has received further funding of €208,705 for seven projects under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme Accelerated Measure for 2020 for projects. The funding announced is in addition to the two previous funding announcements under the Accelerated Measure of the Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2020, bringing the total funding granted to date to €435,868 for projects in Clare.

The seven projects in Clare selected by the Department of Rural and Community Development under Round 3 of the Accelerated Measure are:

1. Miltown Malbay – Town centre enhancement works involving the painting of under/unused buildings and shop-fronts, and provision of street furniture, planters and soft landscaping. Grant funding of €40,000
2. Lissycasey – Structural improvements to existing Ecology Park to broaden its use for the entire community. Grant funding of €20,475
3. Inagh – Community multi-generational recreation space and playground. Grant funding of €39,600
4. Lisdoonvarna – Public meeting space incorporating native trees, pollinator beds, seating and a heritage focal point within an existing community park. Grant funding of €25,000
5. Crusheen – Repair and upgrade of community centre and extension of footpaths. Grant funding of €18,630
6. Scarriff – Refurbishment and enhancement of paths and seating in Scarriff Riverside Park to make it safe and accessible. Grant funding of €25,000
7. Ennis (Large Town Accelerated Measure) – To develop a 7km recreational trail from Ennis Town to the surrounding area that incorporates walking and cycling infrastructure. Grant funding of €40,000.

The specific Covid-19 focus of the accelerated measures under this year's scheme is now more important than ever to assist businesses and communities to address the challenges that Covid-19 has brought to the county's towns and villages. The funded projects have been identified by local community groups and businesses, in conjunction with the Rural Development Directorate and Municipal Districts.

A further announcement under the standard Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2020 is expected to be announced by Minister Humphreys in the coming weeks.

Illaunamanagh Burial Ground

Work is nearing completion on the extension to the Burial Ground at Illaunamanagh, Shannon. Illaunamanagh Burial Ground is one of six lawn cemeteries operated by Clare County Council. The other lawn cemeteries include Ballycannon, Quin, Scarriff (new), Ennistymon (new) and Drumcliff (Section E). In accordance with the Council's bye-laws, while headstones are permitted in these burial grounds, no kerbs or surrounds are permitted and all burial plots are maintained as grassed areas. The design of the lawn cemetery allows for easier maintenance and allows for easy and unimpeded access to the burial site.



Landscaping works at the Columbarium base wall, Illaunamanagh.



St Bridget's section at Drumcliff following tree thinning.



Plinths at Illaunamanagh Burial Ground.



The approach avenue to Ballycannon Burial Ground following tree surgery and replanting with native species.

Site visit to Inis Cealtra

A recent site visit to Inis Cealtra took place with a Waterways Ireland team. Pictured (l-r) are: Damien McSweeney, Paddy Harkin, Brian Treacy and Eanna Rowe, as well as Deirdre O'Shea and Leonard Cleary.



Clare Tourism Steering Group



Maurice Walsh and Cllr Cillian Murphy accepted a presentation on behalf of all members of the former Clare Tourism Steering Group. This group recently disbanded in preparation for the formation of the Clare Tourism Recovery Taskforce, which will become wider to form the new strategy advisory structure in early 2021. Pictured (l-r) are: Carol Gleeson, Burren Project Manager, Maurice Walsh, Joan Tarmey, Acting Tourism Officer, Deirdre O’Shea, Head of Tourism (Acting), Tim Madden, Leonard Cleary, Director of Service, Philomena O’Connell, Nicola Killeen, Tourism Department, and Cllr Cillian Murphy.

Burren Geopark – Citizen Science project, ‘Aille Engaged’

The Citizen Science project, ‘Aille Engaged’, supported by grant funding from Geological Survey Ireland, is up and running. This project is about having enough data to be able to predict river levels on the Aille River based on climate change predictions for rainfall in Ireland. The project encourages river catchment awareness (a key part of the EU Water Frameworks Directive) and enables local residents to collect real scientific data about their river catchment, which can be inputted directly onto www.burrengeopark.ie

This is, as far as is known, the first project of its kind in the country with the support of Earth and Ocean Sciences Department, National University of Ireland Galway, the Lisdoonvarna Historical Society and Geological Survey Ireland.

The rainfall graph can be seen at: <https://www.burrengeopark.ie/learn-engage/aille-engaged/rainfall-river-level-data/>

Tourism Department familiarisation trips 2020

In order to further engage with local tourism businesses and volunteer groups, the Tourism Department undertook a number of site visits in the north, west, south and east of the county during summer/autumn, 2020.



Going WeLL programme



A meeting was held with Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB), Clare County Council and Michael Cusack Centre Ltd to discuss the delivery of the Going WeLL programme in LCETB schools and local voluntary communities. Pictured (l-r) are: Tim Madden, Michael Cusack Centre; Donnacha O'Treasigh, George O'Callaghan, LCETB; Flan Garvey, Chairman, Michael Cusack Centre; and Leonard Cleary, Director of Service, Clare County Council.

Irish College, Carrigaholt



Council staff from a number of departments met on site in Coláiste Eoghan Uí Chomhraidhe to review the proposal for its development. Members of the board were present to lead a detailed site inspection, which led to a full appreciation of the potential that the Coláiste provided for the further development of the community across the peninsula.



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

HOUSING

October brought a second wave of Level 5 restrictions to counter the increasing numbers of Covid-19-positive cases in the country. The directorate continues to deliver essential services, with non-essential services closed. To protect the welfare of staff many are now equipped to work remotely, leading to reduced numbers in the office. All staff remain available and are committed to service delivery in this ever-changing environment.

The housing public counter is opened daily to the public from 9:00am to 1:00pm and by appointment from 1:00pm until 5:00pm (Monday-Friday).

Limited allocations can proceed during Level 5 and in this regard available stock is advertised on Choice Based Letting. It is anticipated that Co-Operative Housing Ireland will permit the advertising of the Gleann Cora development in Newmarket-on-Fergus in the coming weeks.

Construction activity is continuing during Level 5 restrictions. There are 132 social housing units under construction in the county at this time. We are endeavouring to meet delivery targets and allocate completed schemes before the end of the year.

Housing in numbers

Breakdown of tenancies by Municipal District (including RAS and leasing):		
	Social housing*	HAP
Ennis	1,146	653
Shannon	640	156
West Clare	903	390
Killaloe	338	166
Inter Authority HAP		51
TOTAL	3,027	1,416

2,521 LA tenancies	1,416 HAP tenancies	218 RAS tenancies
286 leased properties	2,630 LA properties	3,121 Rent accounts

Summary of activity

Level 5 Covid-19 restrictions continue to impact service delivery, particularly services in occupied properties. In this regard private rented inspections are stood down and the process for delivering private house grants is changed. The impact of the restrictions is reflected in the numbers hereunder.

Housing allocations	
Offers issued (from 26/09/2020 to 28/10/2020)	14
Offers refused	1
AHB nominations	2
Tenancies signed up	14
Tenancies terminated	2

Voids work programme	
Voids/casual vacancies	47
Acquired properties (works on-going)	15
Average vacancy period	132 days
Number voids returned to stock	6
Average spend	€42,128

Position at the end of October.

Housing maintenance calls	
October	345

Private rented inspections

There were 55 scheduled inspections – 8 were cancelled.

Private rented inspections *to 28/10/2020	
October	47

Housing grants

Grants approved for October		
Grant type	Number of approvals	Value of works (€)
Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability	4	26,650
Housing Aid for Older People	4	12,140
Mobility Aids Grant	4	15,095
Total	12	53,095

Rebuilding Ireland home loan

32 Applications	13 Approvals	2020 to date
84 Loans approved	55 Loans drawn down	Cumulative to date: 27/10/2020

Homeless

Homeless services are an essential service and remain available to anyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness. The Clare Homeless Action Team (HAT) office is open by appointment during office hours and can be contacted on 065-6846291. We continue to work on improving the service, particularly with respect to achieving successful long-term accommodation options for vulnerable clients.

Homeless presentations to 23rd October, 2020	
New presentations	33
Repeat presentations	167

Status as at 23rd October, 2020				
	Families	Adults	Dependents	Providers
Laurel Lodge	0	13	0	1
Cusack Lodge	5	6	9	1
Westbrooke	0	16	0	1
Ashford Court	4	13	6	1
EA families	5	6	7	2
EA individuals	0	14	0	10
TOTAL	14	68	22	16

Update on capital programme

SHIP capital	No. approved	Current stage	Start date	Completion date
Quilty	18	Under construction.	Q2 2019	Q4 2020
Sixmilebridge	2	Under construction.	Q1 2020	Q4 2020
Kilmihil	2	Under construction.	Q1 2020	Q4 2020
Shannon PPP	51	Under construction.	Q4 2019	Q3 2021
Ashline, Ennis	40	Construction commenced.	Q3 2020	Q4 2021
Milltown Malbay	27	Under construction.	Q4 2020	Q1 2022
Tulla	25	Under construction.	Q4 2020	Q4 2021
Newmarket-on-Fergus	18	Under construction.	Q3 2020	Q4 2021
Scarriff	18	Stage 1 approved by DHPLG. Design Team Appointed.	Q1 2021	Q1 2022
Roslevan, Tulla Road	8	Stage 2 approved. Part VIII approved.	Q4 2020	Q1 2022
Doonbeg Lands	8	Stage 1 approved by DHPLG. Design Team appointed.	Q1 2021	Q1 2022
Clarecastle	2	Single Stage approved by DHPLG. Contract ready to be awarded.	Q4 2020	Q4 2021
Drumcliff Road, Ennis	26	Stage 1 approved by DHPLG. Procuring Design Team.	Q2 2021	Q2 2022
Sixmilebridge	16	Stage 1 approved by DHPLG. Procuring Design Team.	Q2 2021	Q2 2022
Doonbeg Sites	2	Contract awarded.	Q4 2020	Q4 2021
Ballaghboy, Quin Road, Ennis (TA)	5	Stage 1 approved by DHPLG. Procuring Design Team.	Q3 2021	Q3 2022
Subtotal	268			
CAS - Cahercalla Phase 2 (Cuan an Chlair)	15	CAS Construction. Under construction.	Sept 2019	Q4 2020
Bruachlan, Westbury (CoOperative Housing Ireland)	22	CALF – Property transfer complete, reapply for planning permission	Q4 2021	Q4 2022
Gleann Cora, Newmarket-on-Fergus (CoOperative Housing Ireland)	31	CALF Acquisition approved. Under construction.	Q1 2020	Q4 2020
Edenvale (Newgrove Housing Association)	3	CAS – Stage 2 with Dept. for approval	Q3 2020	Q3 2021
Sycamore Drive, Ennis (Cluid)	2	Part V	Q4 2019	Q4 2020
Ballymacaula, Ennis (Cluid)	2	Part V	Q4 2019	Q4 2020
	2	Part V	Q3 2020	Q3 2021
Crusheen (Cluid)	2	Part V	Q4 2019	Q4 2020
Subtotal	79			
Total	347			

CULTURAL SERVICES – LIBRARY, ARTS, MUSEUM, ARCHIVES

Clare County Library

Clare Libraries will provide a home delivery service, e-resources and online material during Level 5 restrictions. Library staff have been tasked with the management and administration of the local Community Response Helpline (Freephone 1800 203600) from Saturday, 24th October.

Library Covid-19 Services

Delivery service

A total of 795 deliveries were completed comprising 12,106 items (from 27th April to 16th October).

Contact and collect service

2,097 collections of stock were picked up by the public (from 8th June to 16th October)

Online resources usage statistics

Online resource statistics reveal that e-magazines and online courses are highly popular.

	E-books	E-audio-books	E-magazines	Online courses
January	595	1,010	542	399
February	662	903	710	750
March	1,145	1,202	934	577
April	1,891	1,776	1,059	1,925
May	2,013	1,881	1,204	2,861
June	1,927	1,600	1,290	1,350
July	1,546	1,709	1,134	560
August	1,470	1,684	898	372
September	1,296	1,604	996	620
	12,545	13,369	8,767	9,414

Marketing

Please see below Clare Library social media activity for September.

September 2020	Posts	Likes	Shares/retweets	Comments
Facebook	96	489	99	13
Twitter	61	199	97	8
Instagram	53	485	13	9

Clare County Library is running a series of programmes with funding awarded from the Dormant Accounts. They include a play therapy programme with Cloughleigh NS from De Valera Library, a mindfulness programme with children from a DEIS school in Kilrush and a sensory programme in Scariff Library. Clare Library will also distribute Touch, Type, Read, Spell (TTRS)

licences, a literacy software programme, to schools over next few months, also funded through Dormant Accounts Funding.

The Library's Children's Book Festival in October included online readings and storytelling activities with some of Ireland's most popular and best-selling authors. While disappointed at having to scale back hundreds of visits from schoolchildren because of coronavirus, library staff were not deterred in connecting young readers with authors and book-related events at a time when the celebration of stories is more important than ever. Each branch library's programme was available to schools in their catchment areas.

Featured authors for Children's Book Festival 2020 included Muireann Ní Chíobháin, author of the prize-winning Irish language book, *Scúnc agus Smúirín*, and best-selling and award-winning writer and illustrator, Oisín McGann. Children's author Debbie Thomas also joined in event delivery to hundreds of children in Clare's primary schools. Alan Nolan, author and illustrator of *Fintan's Fifteen*, *Conor's Caveman* and the *Sam Hannigan* series for the O'Brien Press, connected with audiences in four different schools with his hilarious show for children, 'Furry Friends and Ferocious Foes – Favourite Animals Big and Small'.

The festival line-up also included live Zoom sessions by Agri-Kids, a leading voice in promoting farm safety in Ireland.

Children's author Judi Curtin joined children in their classrooms to talk about her latest books for children set at Lissadell House, *Lily at Lissadell* and *Lily Steps Up*. Multi-talented writer Patricia Forde was also part of this year's festival line-up, bringing tales of aliens, mysterious islands and dragons to children all over Clare.

The festival closed with four excellent participatory events for children and teachers in Tulla, Corofin, Kilmihil and Lisdoonvarna compliments of local library branches in collaboration with children's writer Caroline Busher. Reaching her audiences via Zoom, Caroline gave children top tips on how to write a book and read an extract from her latest novel from her writing hut in Wexford.

Storytelling and music was supplied by one of Ireland's finest traditional storytellers, Niall de Burca, who created and delivered special festival videos for Clare children in October. Clare County Library is extremely grateful to children's songwriters The Speks for this year's festival song for young children, which is still available on the Clare County Library website.

The publication of *Connections: Stories by Syrian Families in County Clare in 2020* was the result of a seven-week project shared by children of Ennistymon National School and their parents and siblings at Ennistymon Library. Under the expert guidance of author Debbie Thomas and illustrator Tatyana Feeney, and with assistance from Poetry Ireland, iBBY Ireland and Creative Ireland, the seven-week project was initiated and managed by Clare County Library.

Connections is a compilation of written and illustrated stories in which the authors, children and adults, recall real places and experiences and imagine a bright future in Ireland and,



Random Acts of Puppetry with Tommy Baker.

in particular, in County Clare. The participants' stories are enhanced by their own pictures co-ordinated by resident illustrator, Tatyana Feeney. This project has been shortlisted in the Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards 2020 under 'Best Library Service'. The awards ceremony is due to take place in November.

Healthy Ireland

Three chair yoga workshops and a talk on the 'Benefits of Walking' took place online. The Healthy Ireland co-ordinator is liaising with a mindfulness teacher and is planning to roll out a taster module of the Mindful Heart Curriculum to a number of schools throughout the county. Plans are being progressed to partner with the HSE, Mental Health Ireland and a musician/singer to deliver a country music concert to residents of four nursing homes in West Clare.

Decade of Centenaries History Week

Clare County Library hosted a Decade of Centenaries History Week from 19th to 23rd October based on the War of Independence in Clare. All events were online due to Covid-19 restrictions. The programme included lectures from historians such as Dr Joe Power and Joe Ó Muircheartaigh. Pat Shannon gave a talk on Peadar Clancy, and Rita McCarthy spoke about social life in Clare in 1920. Mike Hanrahan continued his 'Clare: Songs of Independence' project with three online performances. John Rattigan, Curator of Clare Museum, described artefacts from the War of Independence held in Clare Museum.

An online exhibition on 'The Banner in Turmoil: County Clare and the War of Independence' was launched. The physical version of this exhibition will tour library branches. Participants also enjoyed an online Zoom tour of a National Library photographic exhibition and a reading from Dermott Petty's new Clare play, *Two Days in September*.

All online content was available through www.clarelibrary.ie and its social media. All content is still available to access

online. The initiative formed part of the Decade of Centenaries Programme 2012-2023 under the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.

Clare Arts Office

Two exhibitions were held in Cultúrlann Sweeney, Kilkee, and the County Museum, Ennis, prior to lockdown.

One new artist entered the Tulla Stables maintaining its 100 per cent occupancy rate prior to Covid-19 restrictions. Three online tutorials were commissioned to assist artists in using digital technology and are available on the Arts Office YouTube Channel.

A site visit took place in Ennistymon for the public art commission in association with the Ennistymon Streetscape project. The visit was filmed and is on the website for those who were unable to attend due to travel restrictions.

The Arts Office commissioned Tommy Baker, puppeteer, to develop a Zoom puppet show for small children, 350 children (junior and senior infants) experienced a 'Random Act of Puppetry' in 15 schools, supported by Creative Ireland funding. Two-hundred-and-sixty children in a further 13 schools experienced the Zoom Art Room, whereby eight artists delivered online workshops in music, dance and visual art.

Clare Museum

Clare Museum received two grant awards this month. One grant is from the Heritage Council and is for camera and studio equipment to allow the museum to photograph the museum collection for placement online, to create videos/livestream museum activities, and for the purchase of a museum showcase. The showcase has now been ordered and the camera equipment has been purchased. A staff member has been tasked with photographing the collection.

The second grant is from the Department of Heritage, Culture and the Gaeltacht and is intended to aid the museum in providing support for the local economy. The plan was to



A view of the Power section of the Riches of Clare exhibition at Clare Museum, featuring a coat once owned by Daniel O'Connell in the centre.

provide public talks to midweek-breakers staying in local hotels, employing local heritage experts. The museum is currently in negotiations with the Department with regard to the drawing down of this grant, as the move to Level 5 restrictions has disrupted the timeline for this programme.

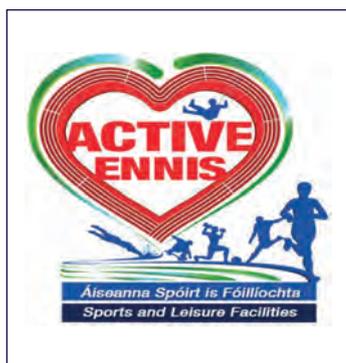
The curator has confirmed with the Heritage Council that it will allow submission for maintenance of the Museum Standards Programme for Ireland (MSPI) accreditation in June, 2021. The initial award was in 2018. Work has been delegated to staff to update documents and collate data required for the application.

The museum has provided three videos for the library's Heritage Week initiative and these are being promoted on the museum's social media.

Clare Archives

The Archive Digitisation Project is continuing with scanning of the older District Electoral Registers.

SPORTS & RECREATION



In line with Government guidelines, Active Ennis is closed. The outdoor facilities at John O'Sullivan Park, Lees Road and Time Smythe Park remain open for individual use within the 5km radius.

The pitches are available for training for:

- Non-contact training for school-aged children (U-18), outdoors in pods of 15
- Professional, elite sports and senior inter-county Gaelic games behind closed doors.

All other training activities should be individual only.

Full details on www.activeennis.ie

On 19th October, Ireland Active opened applications for the Covid-19 swimming pool grant scheme to support facilities that have been affected by the Covid-19 restrictions. This €2.5m funding scheme was announced as part of the July Stimulus package, with the aim to support publicly accessible swimming pools.

Tim Smythe Park

There is increased activity in the park with construction of the dressing rooms continuing at pace and additional foot-fall as people utilise this recreational amenity during Level 5 restrictions.

John O'Sullivan Park, Lees Road

There is a slow increase in demand from clubs for non-contact training for U18s. Those looking to book pitches must adhere to strict return-to-play protocols.

As expected, there is increased usage of the facility although with winter time now upon us activity is broadly around the walking track rather than the woodland walkways. In general, a great degree of respect for social distancing is being demonstrated by the majority of users.



Tim Smythe Park.

Clare Sports Partnership

Clare Local Sports Partnership continues to support active engagement in sport during October with many activities online in recognition of the current restrictions.



School Programme

The community sports development officer, Marian Rodgers, is providing ongoing support to schools in order to ensure that the teachers have the capacity to deliver activities which promote physical literacy to their pupils can be continued – sports hall athletics.

Inclusion

- The sports inclusion development officer, James Murrphy, of Clare Sports Partnership is working towards the bronze award for the accessible project as promoted from the Cara centre, Tralee
- The community sports hub development officer, Pat Sexton, has been supporting the work in Killaloe and Kilrush to ensure that disadvantaged sports clubs have access to training and education during these times.

Governance

The CEO of Clare Sports Partnership, John Sweeney, along with Chairperson, Tim Forde, have been leading a national project with the Institute of Public Administration, to ensure that governance arrangements within the company LSPs is of the highest standard. This is a €39,000 project which has been funded through Sport Ireland.

Men Only

We are launching a man-only programme in November called 'Man on the Move', which will run for four weeks and is part of a larger national campaign for men over 45 who are inactive. #YourPersonalBest.

Recruitment

We have also completed a recruitment process for a new sports development officer, who will have direct responsibility for club development, asylum seekers and ethnic minorities.

Healthy Clare

We have commenced a Healthy Clare project, working with the Kilrush Inter Agency Committee, to address the needs of those who are in recovery from addiction. This project is worth €37,500 and will be completed by end June 2021.

KILLALOE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Works are on programme in relation to Schedule of Municipal District Works 2020. Notable projects completed in recent months are as follows.

Estates upgrade

Millbrook, O'Briensbridge, is complete. Riverview in Scarriff and Plunket Drive, Kilkishen, are currently being resurfaced as the final phase of the upgrades. These have been funded through a combination of General Municipal Allocation (GMA) and roads grants.

Grants

Active Travel funding

Works on the Tulla and Ogonelloe projects has commenced. Funding of €220,000 was secured to complete three projects in these locations.

Climate change

Killaloe MD's submission was successful for funding to the amount of €162,000. Works aimed at the alleviation of flooding have commenced in Crusheen, Whitegate and Killaloe, while works in Tulla have been awarded to MI Cotter Ltd.

Accelerated TVR:

Works in Killaloe to reinforce social distancing measures have commenced.

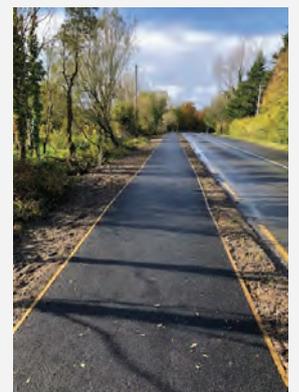
ORIS 2018:

Works are progressing to complete the Beakelly-to-Tuamgraney walkway.

Timelines for delivery set by Government are extremely challenging with the Municipal District staff working to achieve these timelines.

GMA

Works on a footpath in Kilmurry has commenced, following a tendering process.



Completed Section of ORIS 2018 path.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

TRANSPORTATION

Roadworks Programme and Operations

Work is ongoing on the Roadworks Programme for 2020 with significant progress being achieved in each area under the Restoration Improvement, Restoration Maintenance, Drainage and Discretionary Maintenance grant categories. Work is also progressing on the Local Improvement Scheme (LIS) and the Community Involvement Scheme (CIS) approved for 2020.

Level 5 Covid-19 restrictions allow for the continuation of the delivery of the Roadworks Programme.

Following a submission made to the Department of Transport, additional grant funding has recently been allocated in respect of Active Travel (€1.264m) and Climate Change Adaptation (€0.581m). These welcome grant allocations will facilitate significant additional works being carried out in each Municipal District before the end of the year.

Each Municipal District is working to close out outstanding projects before the November 2020 grant deadline.

Strategic Transportation

Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy

The Draft Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS) document was approved by the National Transport Authority (NTA) board during the summer and the draft Report and the Executive Summary have been published. The supporting documents have been developed. The LSMATS public consultation, to which all Members were invited, was launched by the NTA on 2nd September and it will be on public display for an eight-week period up to 30th October. The NTA presented the draft Report to the Physical Development Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) on 28th September.

Public lighting

At the April meeting of Clare County Council the Members approved a Section 85 (of the Local Government Act 2001) agreement between Clare County Council and Cork County Council for the Public Energy Efficiency Project. This will entail Cork County Council managing the relevant statutory procedures, procuring the necessary design, and managing the carrying out of the construction works for the project within County Clare.

Also at the April meeting of Clare County Council the Members approved the raising of a loan facility to fund the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project in County Clare.

Regarding the contract itself, Cork County Council have published the tender on 1st October, 2020, with a return of tenders to be submitted by 8th December, 2020. It is anticipated that a contractor will be appointed and on site early in 2021.

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

- Internet: Direct reporting on the website – www.airtricitysolutions.com

[airtricitysolutions.com](http://www.airtricitysolutions.com)

- Phone: Airtricity Utility Solutions dedicated call centre – 1850 372 772
- Local Authority Identification – via Local Authority’s website or contact number.

Road Design Office

Current projects – monthly update

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

TII road safety projects – monthly progress

Project	Update – October 2020
HD15 and HD17 site inspections, with TII Regional Road Safety Officers, were conducted on 29th September.	
TII HD15 Sites	<p>For the N85:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Traffic and speed counts including a traffic simulation for an alternative design has been requested by the TII for Clareabbey Roundabout. In this regard a revised design, focusing on reducing speed with pedestrian crossing points, has been submitted to the TII for approval.• The TII is reviewing additional design proposals for the Lahinch Rd/Shanaway Rd. <p>For the N68:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Derrycrossaun junction design and feasibility report is completed and has been submitted to the TII for approval. Further to a Notice of Motion from the West Clare MD an alternative design has been also submitted for consideration by the TII.
TII HD17 Sites	<p>For the N68:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Further to on-site inspections at Cranny, Crag and Parknamoney junctions the TII has requested the RDO to progress detailed site surveys, conceptual designs and an option feasibility report. <p>For the N67:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Topographical surveys of the identified junctions for phase 1 is now complete, i.e. Galway border to Ballyvaughan. Design and feasibility report for phase 1 is progressing. Land acquisition will be required at these two junctions.• A revised design for Minster Place, Kilkee, has been approved by the TII.

Low-cost safety schemes – monthly progress

Project	Update – October 2020
R463 junction at Westbury	<p>Proposal to upgrade the existing signalised junction to MOVA system and add an additional exit lane from the Westbury estate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 38 process complete. Adopted by the Elected Members of Shannon MD on 24th July, 2020. Drawings and pricing document completed and circulated to MD. Limerick City and County Council has completed Road Safety Audit. Construction works commenced on 20th October, 2020, with the laying of ducting for the MOVA traffic signalling system.
R352 Hurlers Cross Junction	<p>Topographical road surveys are completed. Survey of adjacent lands has also been carried out. Horizontal and Vertical Alignment design is completed. A preliminary design for various design options has been completed and the feasibility options report is near completion. Land owner contact has initiated and the Valuer has been instructed. A specific improvement grant application, to continue the project, will be submitted to the Department of Transport this month.</p>
L2034/L2032 Moanmore Crossroads on the Kilrush to Doonbeg road	<p>Construction stage has commenced.</p>
R474, Mahonburg	<p>Construction stage has commenced.</p>
R483 Cree Bridge	<p>Construction stage has commenced.</p>
Low Cost Safety 2021	<p>A list of projects, across all MDs, was submitted to the Department of Transport for approval on 9th October, 2020.</p>

Other projects – monthly update

Project	Update – October 2020
Larkins Cross/ Gillogue Bridge Specific Improvement works	<p>Traffic signals at Larkins Cross</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The detail design is completed and has been updated with modifications based on feedback from the TII. AA screening is completed. Section 38 process complete. Adopted by the Elected Members of Shannon MD on 24th July, 2020. Limerick City and County Council has completed Road Safety Audit. Drawings and pricing document completed. Construction works commenced on 14th September, 2020. The road surface overlay has been completed with the civil works near completion. Installation of traffic signals and revised signage to follow.
EuroVelo 1	<p>Funding of €182,000 has been secured from DTTAS for development of the EuroVelo route in County Clare. Drawdown of the grant is by the end of November 2020. Tenders have now been awarded for supply of EuroVelo signs, bike racks, bike repair stations and mapboards. EuroVelo signs have now been delivered to all Municipal Districts for installation. Location points for the signs are being marked out on the ground in North and West Clare Areas. Self-service bike repair stands and bike racks have been received. A specification is being prepared for the map design for outdoor mapboard displays. Marketing and promotion of the route is being examined in conjunction with Sports Ireland.</p>
Liaison with NTA regarding bus stops	<p>Wheelchair-accessible bus stop on Bothar Linne, Shannon Town:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The design is completed and issued to the Shannon MD. The projects received NTA funding approval for €30,733. A Preliminary Safety and Health Plan has been issued to the Shannon MD with works programmed for December this year.

Liaison with NTA regarding bus shelters	NTA has assessed proposed locations. Six new bus shelters (Kilkee, Lisdoonvarna, Crusheen, Newmarket, Limerick Road [Ennis] and Westbury) and upgrading five existing bus shelters in Shannon. Prior to formal application NTA requested costings on civil works. Drawings and pricing documents are completed. Documents near completion and will be tendered via eTenders shortly.
Road Schedule & Queries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Search requests from the public and Municipal Districts regarding the road schedule are being carried out on an ongoing basis. Updates to the roads schedule is carried out as updates are being received.
Circular RW 10/2020 – Active Travel Measures Allocations 2020	Clare County Council received an allocation of €1,264,340 from DTTAS for Active Travel Projects submitted for funding consideration in August. Projects identified for completion in 2020 are well advanced. Awaiting Department approval for the transfer of allocations into 2021.
Circular RW 09/2020 – Climate Change Adaptation Allocations 2020	Clare County Council received an allocation of €580,900 from DTTAS for Climate Change Adaptation Projects submitted for funding consideration in August. Projects are well advanced for completion in 2020.
Circular RST 04/2019 Safe Overtaking Width for Cyclists Signs	Clare County Council has received an allocation of funding from DTTAS of €29,350 for the provision of safe overtaking width signs for cyclists. Tender has been awarded for the supply of signage with delivery expected shortly.
Cycle counts	Ongoing monitoring of cycle counts at four locations in Ennis and one in Lahinch.
Planning Reports	Planning reports are being provided for the Planning Department on a continuous basis.
Cliffs of Moher Strategy 2040	A review of the strategic transportation element of this strategy has been carried out in conjunction with Roughan & O'Donovan Consulting Engineers.

2020 Bridge Rehabilitation monthly update – October 2020

- Carrownisha Bridge: Works completed.
- Sixmilebridge: Works 80 per cent completed.
- Mountievers Bridge: Works commenced 15/10/2020.
- Bunratty Bridge: Tenders returned. The award will be issued shortly subject to a remaining consideration with National Monuments being resolved. National Monuments have confirmed that they will issue a formal response shortly.
- Gilloge Bridge: Construction works 90 per cent completed.
- Breaghva Bridge: Works completed.
- Stonepark Bridge: Tenders returned on 23/10/2020 and are presently being assessed.
- Kilmacduane East Bridge: Works completed.
- Carron Bridge: Works completed.
- Agouleen Bridge: Repair works completed 30/09/20.
- Carrowduff Bridge: Repair works completed 20/10/20.
- Smithstown Bridge: Contractor appointed with works to commence early November.
- Riverstown Bridge: Contractor on Site works 80 per cent completed, works suspended due to high water levels.
- Drumanure Bridge: Contractor appointed with works to commence after Sixmilebridge and Mountievers bridges are completed.
- Ballyalla Bridge: Contractor appointed, works to commence early November.
- Doonsallagh and Kildema South: Contractor appointed.
- Annagh Bridge: Site works completed, snagging to be carried out.
- Latoon Masonry Bridge: Tender for Consulting Engineer completed, appointment process completed.
- A list of bridge rehabilitation projects seeking funding for 2021 has been submitted to the Department of Transport for approval since 9th October, 2021.

Health and Safety

During the past month the Health and Safety Team continued to provide support and guidance in the format of Covid-19 risk assessments to the Crisis Management Team and all Departments of Clare County Council in the delivery of essential services and in accordance with the Government's National Framework for Living with Covid-19. In addition, the Health and Safety Team continued to review and assess national, sectoral and operational Covid-19 guidance documents in order to revise and update the Council's Covid-19 Response Plan. A schedule of Covid-19 inspections were completed to check compliance with the Covid-19 Response Plan. The Health and Safety Team continued to progress their schedule of workplace risk assessment reviews and programme of health and safety inspections.

General Design

Part from normal day-to-day work the General Design Office are delivering the following projects across the organisation.

DigiClare hubs – site selection, design, tender, contract management

- Carron, Corofin, Cross, Flagmount, Kilkee, Kilmihil, Kilrush, Killaloe, Sixmilebridge, Ennis.

Economic development and property

- County Museum refurbishment
- Quin Road Campus development
- HQ and libraries (space remodelling)
- Council property management
- Beach huts and refurbishment
- Feasibility study for Enterprise Centre
- Property acquisition for Ennistymon parking.

Rural development and tourism

- Ennistymon Hub basement unit
- Cliffs of Moher Walking Paths
- Burren Discovery Trail and Burren Signage Plan
- George's Head, Kilkee
- Lough Derg Amenity Trail
- Loophead Lighthouse Visitor Centre
- Burial grounds parking and access upgrade works.

Project Management Office and Municipal Districts Mapping Services

- Capital projects – Ennis Flood Relief, Killaloe Bypass
- Beach byelaws update.

Roads and Transportation

- Traffic management plans
- Funding applications for footpath works
- Public lighting condition survey.

FIRE & BUILDING CONTROL SECTION



National Fire Safety Week took place from 5th to 12th October, 2020.

Recent training courses

The following brigade training course was held during October: Emergency Services Driving Standard (ESDS) 2 Day Theory Training Course.

National Fire Safety Week

National Fire Safety Week took place from 5th to 12th October, 2020. This year's theme was 'STOP Fire – Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives'. Clare County Fire and Rescue Service participated in highlighting the importance of fire safety throughout the week. An interview with Denis O'Connell, Senior Assistant Chief Fire Officer, was aired on Clare FM's *Morning Focus* show. Fire Safety Week was highlighted on all of the Council's social media forums and in the local press.

Major Emergency Management – Severe Weather Preparedness Workshop

A Severe Weather Preparedness Workshop was held on Tuesday, 13th October, 2020. The objective of the workshop was to ensure Clare County Council and all the Municipal Districts were ready for severe weather incidents during the winter of 2020/2021.

Topics covered in the workshop included: overview of Clare County Council's Severe Weather Plan; Civil Defence capability; health and safety; media arrangements; inter-agency arrangements; and co-ordination arrangements. Tom Mellett, Senior Executive Engineer, gave an overview of the Council's response to the flooding event at Springfield, Clonlara, in early 2020.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Fire and Building Control Section Main Activities	September 2020	October 2020	Year to Date
Number of Emergency Calls Attended	53	50	816
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Received	6	4	74
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Granted	7	8	79
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Invalidated	0	0	3
Number of Disability Access Certificates Received	4	6	63
Number of Disability Access Certificates Granted	8	4	56
Number of Commencement Notices Received	49	22	308
Number of Dangerous Structures/Places Complaints	0	0	19

(Note: In the October Monthly Report, the September figures related to 1st to 28th September due to timing of report.)

CAPITAL DELIVERY / PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

Despite October's escalation to Level 5 due to Covid-19, work continued on our Capital Project portfolio due to construction-related works being exempt from the current restrictions. The following is the up to date position on the key projects.

Access to UL/upgrade to walkway along the Errinagh Canal

The Contract Documents are complete and specification for the works is being finalised with the preferred contractor. Detail relating to particular aspects of the work has taken place with Waterways Ireland and the University of Limerick, following which, construction works are due to commence in mid-November.

Doolin Pier Visitors Services Building

Having been reactivated in September, the Project Team is currently working on a revised programme and scope of work to progress this much needed infrastructure. This will result in the Council being in a position to submit a Planning Application at the earliest juncture possible and to advance the delivery of the scheme.

Ennis South Flood Relief Scheme

Work is almost complete on the sheet pile flood defence works along the riverbank. The defences are sub-divided into four different sections for piling and design reasons.

- Section 1, Section 2 and Section 4 are now all complete
- Section 3 is programmed to be complete in mid-November
- In parallel, work continues on the cutting and capping of the

installed sheet piles and on the installation of sluices at the various outfall locations along the defence.

The project is on course to be completed in August 2021.

Ennis Lower Flood Relief Scheme (Rowan Tree to Bank Place Section)

In collaboration with the OPW and the Ennis MD Engineers Office, we have been progressing the final section of the Town Flood Defences and are pleased to advise that work has commenced on the remaining section of flood protection infrastructure along the River Fergus bank between the Club Bridge to Bank Place. The scheme includes the construction of a sheet piled wall and associated works and will complete the Ennis Flood Relief Scheme. This is hugely significant in that it will provide protection to appropriate design levels for a number of areas within the town. Following a recent tender competition, contractors Ward and Burke have been appointed and are currently mobilising on site.

The works are programmed to be completed in April 2021.

Ennistymon Inner Relief Road and Bridge Crossing (Blake's Corner)

An Bord Pleanála is currently reviewing the submissions received following the publishing of the Compulsory Purchase Order for this project.

Killaloe Bridge and By-Pass

The Project Team continue to meet virtually on a regular basis to

progress the delivery of this important piece of infrastructure for the Mid-West region. We are now nearing the stage where we will be in a position to finalise the detailed design and sign off on technical compliance through independent checking which will enable us to publish the Tender for the Main Scheme works before the end of the year.

To achieve this, the following elements are being carefully managed:

- Assessment of the recently received Suitably Assessment Questionnaires (SAQs) for the main works contract is currently ongoing where expressions of interest were received in late August 2020 from a number of national and international contractors. An assessment board has been established for the qualitative assessment of the submissions which is due to take place on 4th and 5th November, 2020. A shortlist of suitably experienced contractors will be drawn up and subsequently invited to tender for the Main Works Contract.
- In parallel with the procurement of the Main Works Contractor, Clare County Council are also progressing a number of advance works contracts. These consist of:
 - Invasive Species Treatment, which has been completed for 2020
 - Rubicon Heritage Services Ltd have commenced archaeological investigations on site
 - Letters of Intent and Regret will be issued for the Enabling Works contract in the coming days. This work includes site clearance, fencing, demolition, sewer diversions and access road construction, to commence late November/early December 2020 subject to Department approval. These works, once commenced, will progress over the winter months and into the spring/summer of 2021.
- Prior to issuing the Notice to Enter (the intention by the Statutory Authority and its agents to enter and take possession of the lands as confirmed by the CPO) an advance notification letter was issued to all landowners last week, updating them on the current status of the project and advising them of the Council's intention to issue a Notice to Enter across the entire scheme in order to facilitate the completion of the Advance Works contracts, as outlined above.
- Significant progress continues to be made in completing Land Acquisition deals, with the majority of agreements anticipated to be in place by the end of 2020. These will be concluded in the main by agreement, with a small number through the arbitration process.

Kilkee Flood Relief Scheme

A steering committee meeting was held by video link on Tuesday, 20th October, between consultants JBA/JB Barrys, Office of Public Works and Clare County Council. Recent progress includes the appointment of a specialist survey company to carry out a bathymetric survey of the Moore Bay and appointment of specialist coastal engineering consultant to interpret

this information. A specialist subcontractor has completed the first treatment to the areas where invasive species were identified. This will continue in accordance with a multi-annual plan designed to eradicate invasive species on the site. A tidal gauge has been installed at Doonbeg Pier to gather information to help understand the coastal processes affecting the area. Rain gauges have also been installed at suitable locations and flow meters are due to be installed shortly, all of which providing the necessary data to inform the most appropriate design.

To allow for maximum levels of public engagement in the process, we have extended the period for public consultation and all interested parties are encouraged to respond to our online information video and radio requests for feedback via the scheme website, www.kilkeefrs.ie

Limerick Northern Distributor Road (LNDR)

Following recent meetings/discussions with the Department of Transport (DoT), the National Transport Authority (NTA) and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), the Project Team are close to finalising the Project Appraisal Suite of documents to include: the Project Brief; the Traffic Modelling Report; the Cost Benefit Analysis Report and the Project Business Case. It is expected to have these completed in early November, after which they will be submitted to the DoT for their review and approval to progress to the next stage.

Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF)

Ground Investigation works are expected to commence in mid-November which will inform the final detailed design for the proposed link road. At that stage, we will be in a position to enter negotiations with affected landowners regarding the necessary land acquisition and consequent accommodation works for the new road. It is hoped that these will be concluded by agreement where possible.

In regard to the Housing element, various options are being explored in terms of the optimum development of the lands to be serviced by the road and associated infrastructure in order to deliver much-needed housing for Ennis and its environs.

N19 Shannon Airport Access Road

The Project Team led by Clare County Council and consisting of Midwest Regional Road Design Office, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, Shannon Airport Authority along with our consultants Fehily Timoney & Associates and Clandillon Civil Consulting, continue to meet virtually every month. Apex Surveys has recently completed the non-intrusive utility survey works on site and the survey results are expected in the coming weeks.

Phase Two (Options Selection) is currently ongoing. In light of recent Covid-19 restrictions, stakeholder engagement through public consultation is currently being progressed using the project website, in combination with local media advertisements and the publication of a project brochure which will be available and on display within the study area. Associated with same, a

public notice in local media and a 'go live' date for the project website is expected in mid-November. Prior to the launch of the Public Consultation stage, a virtual briefing session to update the Shannon MD Councillors in advance has been arranged for the morning of Wednesday, November 11th.

N85 upgrade at Kilnamona

Members will be aware that we have formally requested Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) approval to appoint technical advisors to progress the proposed extended 4km section to be upgraded and their response is awaited. In anticipation of a favourable response, we have sought a significant allocation of funding in their 2021 budget which is currently being prepared.

Shannon Town and Environs Flood Relief Scheme

The steering group led by Clare County Council and comprising of the OPW, Shannon Airport Authority and scheme consultants RPS continue to meet virtually for monthly progress meetings with technical meetings also being held on a monthly basis. RPS's geotechnical section is currently preparing the scoping document for the Ground Investigation contract and their Environmental Section is preparing an Appropriate Assessment Screening in parallel. An environmental walkover has been carried out by the consultant's ecologists and works are now underway in scoping the environmental/ecological surveys required at this stage in the project. Work has also begun on the preparation of documents for third-party works to include topographical and CCTV surveys, installation of flow monitors, wintering birds surveys, etc. The initial content for the project specific website has been prepared and is currently under review prior to going live.

Asbestos remediation programme

Following the temporary works required to render the sites safe, ongoing monitoring continues as required while various funding streams are being explored to carry out the permanent remediation works necessary. To this end, a meeting was held recently with the Southern Region Waste Management Office and additional meetings/discussions are planned with other relevant stakeholders in order to progress this matter towards a successful resolution.

Springfield, Clonlara

While we await a decision from An Bord Pleanála following the lodgement of the Planning Application by Clare County Council in July of this year, a consultant hydrologist has been engaged to provide a report on karst features in the location and their impact if any on the design. Work is also continuing by our consultants, Byrne Looby & Partners, on the final design.

West Clare Railway Greenway

Following the completion of the feasibility study, work continues on completing the Preliminary Strategic Assessment Report (SAR) which is a requirement of the Department of Transport (DoT). The SAR is a critically important document as it will inform how the project develops from feasibility stage to planning stage. It will be one of the main documents in the upcoming tender package for the engagement of technical advisors for the planning phase of development between Kilrush and Kilkee, currently being prepared. We expect to advertise this tender before the end of November. As always, we would welcome engagement and correspondence from landowners along the proposed route and indeed from other interested parties that may be affected or impacted by the proposal.



ENVIRONMENT

Covid-19

The Covid-19 pandemic continues to affect operations in the Environment section but the effects are mitigated by our adaptable business continuity planning. To date, all services in the Environment section have continued uninterrupted. The Level 5 restrictions will affect our output in terms of inspections, interaction with the public, businesses, contractors and other agencies. As previously seen in earlier restriction periods the level of activity tends to increase in the Civic Amenity sites.

Environmental Awareness

October Reuse Month

October was Ireland's National Reuse Month. Reuse is about valuing our possessions by using and reusing them for as long as possible.

Clare County Council supported this national campaign by delivering a video series of 'Top Tips For Reuse' over six days. These were promoted on Greener Clare and Clare County Council social media channels. The video featured Cathaoirleach Mary Howard (reusable face coverings); Raquel Noboa, Fifty Shades Greener (keep water and cups); Peter Jackson, Armada Hotel (food waste prevention); Cormac McCarthy, Ennis Tidy Towns (repair); Mairead Mannion, Clare Haven Horizons (charity shops, upcycling, repurposing).

Campaigns

Media campaigns using both social and print media (Clare County Council and Greener Clare social media channels), during October included:

1. Illegal gathering of waste for bonfires during Halloween
2. Managing your waste responsibly during the current Covid-19 pandemic – article in *The Clare Echo* Green Page
3. Free Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day
4. Prohibition on burning smoky coal in Ennis, Clarecastle and parts of South East Clare
5. School Bikes for Africa ADI initiative
6. Food waste recycling (social media only).

Laboratory & Technical Support

River Monitoring Programme 2020

Clare County Council is required to collect 295 river water samples in 2020. The calendar for sampling was agreed with the EPA in December last with the sampling spread evenly over the 12 months. The October sampling run took place as normal with all monitoring points sampled.

IW SLA

Clare County Council is required to sample and analyse all public water supplies. The level of monitoring required is agreed with Irish Water and is based on the population served. All monitoring points were sampled as required and in compliance with the Irish Water SLA.

IN ADVANCE OF HALLOWEEN DID YOU KNOW?

Burning of any waste material in BONFIRES and other waste burners is illegal

Burning of waste releases toxic pollutants into the air, which are known to be damaging to our health and environment

Clare County Council urges the public to be mindful of the current Covid - 19 restrictions and to help prevent the spread of the virus during the Halloween period

If you see material such as **pallets, tyres, old furniture, other combustible materials or waste being hoarded** please contact our Waste Enforcement Team on:

Email: enviroff@clarecoco.ie
Anti Litter Hotline: 1800 606 706
Tel: 065 6846331

For more information on how to manage your household waste
www.mywaste.ie

mywaste GREENER CLARE

@GREENERCLARE

Advertisement on the illegal gathering of waste for bonfires during Halloween.

Group Water Schemes (GWS) and Small Private Supplies

The sampling and monitoring of group water schemes and small private supplies continued this month. Procedures have been put in place where the secretary or caretaker of the scheme is contacted a number of days beforehand so that an appropriate sampling location can be identified which complies with all Covid-19 guidance. This has significantly increased the time and resource allocation to each scheme.

Wastewater Treatment Plants

Laboratory staff in conjunction with area-based technicians monitor all licensed and certified discharges for compliance with their discharge limits. In Clare, monitoring varies from monthly to twice-yearly, based on population served. Monitoring is spread throughout the year.

Section 4 Discharge Licences

Section 4 licence monitoring continued this month. However, with Covid-19 restrictions, a number of tourism-related facilities were either closed or not operating to capacity. In these cases, an inspection was undertaken but no sample obtained.

Kilrush Historic Landfill

An application for a Certificate of Authorisation for the old Kilrush Landfill was lodged with the EPA this month. The application process has been progressed over a number of years through grants from the Department of Environment. The process involved a considerable amount of monitoring of surface water, groundwater and landfill gas in the vicinity of the landfill and the compilation of this data into a number of specific reports. The majority of the work was done in house by the scientific and technical staff with external expertise sought where required.

Bathing Waters

All data for the 2020 bathing season, has been uploaded to EDEN and approved by the EPA. Along with monitoring results, reports on any bathing prohibition and restrictions throughout the season have been prepared and uploaded to the EPA portal by the deadline of 15th October. These reports and monitoring results are forwarded to the European Union and will be used as part of the assessment for determining if a bathing area maintains its blue flag status or not. Blue flags and Green Coast flags will be awarded to qualifying bathing areas in late spring 2021.

Water and Scientific Services

Water Pollution Complaints

A total of 130 complaints (Section 4 licensed sites, wastewater and agriculture) have been received and investigated to date in 2020. Eighty-nine of the investigations are closed and the remainder are open until re-inspections are carried out or requested information received. Enforcement notices/letters were issued where required under the Water Pollution Acts and the Good Agriculture Practice Regulations 2017 as amended.

National Inspection Programme of Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems (DWWTS-Septic Tanks)

A total of 39 inspections are required in 2020. Up to the end of this month, 19 inspections have been carried out in West, East and North Clare catchment areas. The remaining inspections will be carried before the end of the year subject to Covid-19 restrictions. The EPA will be notified of the inspections.

Planning referrals from Planning Department

Compliance is achieved through inter-department referrals of planning reports. To date this year, 277 reports have been prepared and submitted by environmental staff to the planning section. Assessment and recommendations were made in order to minimise potential water pollution. In addition, 45 forestry applications have been processed. Three staff from the team have completed the Site Suitability Training course in compliance with the EPA Code of Practice for Single Houses 2009.

Lake Sampling Programme 2020

TMS Environmental are continuing the Water Framework Directive (WFD) lake monitoring programme. All samples are transported to the EPA laboratory, Castlebar, for analysis.

Water Framework Directive and River Basin Management Plan

Staff from this team liaised with LAWPRO staff in September/October in finalising the proposed Areas for Action water bodies list for the county which has been submitted to the EPA Catchment Unit for assessment in preparation for the next River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) 2022-2027. On 23rd October, LAWPRO hosted a virtual workshop for the South Western Region where the catchment manager for the Region (Clare, Limerick, Kerry, Cork) presented the proposed lists to all stakeholders. The list for County Clare includes 130 water bodies. The EPA will prepare the draft RBMP plan which is due to be complete in December 2020. This will be followed by a public consultation process until June 2021.

At the October Physical Development SPC meeting the EPA gave a presentation on the findings of *The Water Quality Report 2015-2018*. This was followed by an Environment Team presentation on water quality as it pertains specifically to County Clare.

Ballyduffbeg Waste Landfill Licence Monitoring Requirements

Environmental contractor continues to carry out monitoring at site to comply with EPA licence conditions. There are no non-compliances to report. Clare County Council staff carry out weekly sampling of surface water ponds. A weekly update on green waste processing at the Central Waste Management Facility (CWMF) was submitted to Cré (Composting Association of Ireland).

Gardening

Site clearance and preparation works continue for the Remembrance Garden at Áras Contae an Chláir when time and resources permit.

Waste Management

Inagh Central Waste Management Facility CRAMP

As part of the facility licence Clare County Council is required to prepare a Closure, Restoration and Aftercare Management Plan for the Landfill section of the site. A preliminary design was previously approved by the EPA, with the detailed design proposal now required. The main elements of the project involve the creation of a Wetlands Area to help promote biodiversity along with the installation of a clay capping area on the landfill liner.

Following a stage 1 tender process a number of qualifying consultants have now been invited to stage 2 of the process through the eTenders website.

Forestry

A forestry management plan has been created for the site at Ballyduffbeg. This plan divides the site into a number of plots and identifies areas where tree growth has reached maturity. A consultant has been engaged by Clare County Council to prepare and manage the tender for felling and replanting approx 4.7 hectares of forestry in the coming weeks. Approximately

9,600 trees will be replanted and will consist of a mix birch and additional broadleaves.

Doora Landfill

Foothpath improvement works have begun on site and involve the resurfacing of approx 690m of existing paths that surround the Clare Camogie's pitches. There will also be a number of picnic bay areas created providing picnic benches for the public to use.

A Children's Fairy Trail has been designed and work has begun on the various elements of this part of the project.

Bring Banks

Glass collection at bring banks continues to see increased usage with 23 per cent more glass collected compared to the same period last year.

Waste Enforcement

Anti-Dumping Initiative:

A total of €94,615.46 in Anti-Dumping Initiative funding was received from the DCCA in 2020. This has now been spent on a variety of projects listed below:

- A Household Hazardous Waste Amnesty Day
- School Bikes to Africa project in conjunction with Rotary Ireland,
- Site security/ fencing at Kilcornan Estate, Ennistymon, and St Michael's Place, Kilmihil
- Clean-ups/removal of waste at sites throughout the county including the removal of a large quantity of tyres from the 12 O'Clock Hills popular walking trail,
- Clean-ups/removal of additional waste from bottle banks throughout the county, during a period of increased use in August and September 2020
- Extension of two back gardens into a laneway at Oak Park, Ennis, where persistent dumping had been a problem, thus eliminating the laneway as a place for unauthorised waste disposal.

Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Day

The Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Day was held in the CWMF, Ballyduffbeg, on 10th October. The event was advertised on local and social media, advising the public that they could dispose of their household hazardous waste for free on this date. The event elicited a huge response with over 300 householders availing of the opportunity to do so. Large quantities of paint, ink, empty oil cans, detergents, medicines, pesticides, aerosols, oil filters, vegetable oil, and mixed fuels were removed from site by the hazardous waste disposal company, Enva. The layout of the site lent itself well to traffic management on the day. Assistance in dealing with the large volume of traffic was received from Ennistymon MD staff, as well as from the Community Wardens. Feedback on social media and from

Enva was very positive. It is hoped to run a similar event again next year, possibly at a different location in the county.

Bikes to Africa project

Ennis Rotary Club has stated that the overall response to the Bikes to Africa project has exceeded their expectations with well over 200 bicycles brought to the CWMF. Over half of these meet the criteria to be worth repairing and shipping to Africa; the rejects are scrapped. In its latest press release the Rotary Club praised County Council staff at the CWMF for doing an excellent job of sorting and storing the donations awaiting pick-up by the army.

This project is a great example of multi-agency collaboration between Clare County Council, the Defence Forces, Rotary Ireland and the Irish Prison Service. Senator Roisin Garvey has donated a complete set of repair tools to the project. Local bicycle repair mechanic and businessman, Noel Tierney, has donated 50 unclaimed bicycles. Ennis MD staff transported the bicycles from Tierney's to the CWMF.

Environmental Monitoring (Illegal Dumping/Litter)

The Waste Enforcement Team continued to respond to waste and litter-related complaints in October. A total of 182 complaints relating to litter and waste were received in October, of these complaints 88 have been closed already. Two litter fines were issued in October, as a result of evidence found in dumped waste. Both are still within the allotted timeframe for payment.

RMCEI Plan

In line with the RMCEI plan, the Waste Enforcement Team continues to carry out planned inspections.

Enforcement Notices

Two Section 9 Notices were issued under the Litter Pollution Act and one Section 14 Notice was issued under the Waste Management Act during October. The Section 14 Notice has already been complied with and the Section 9 Notices are being monitored.

Irish Business Against Litter

Results of the most recent Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) survey showed Ennis retaining its classification of 'Cleaner than European Norms'.

Shannon Estuary Anti-Pollution Team (SEA-PT)

A modified training exercise has been organised by SEA-PT. Due to restrictions in place as a result of Covid-19, the training exercise will be a hybrid of virtual and limited on-site presence. Preparations for this exercise with desktop surveys, response planning commenced in October. The exercise will involve an incident in the Shannon Estuary which will impact on Port and Local Authorities.

ENNIS MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Most Enterprising Town

Ennis had the major achievement of winning the Bank of Ireland Begin Together Award 2020 in the category 'Population Over 14,001'. The judges acknowledged the fantastic response of Ennis to the many unprecedented challenges of Covid-19. The town demonstrated a powerful partnership between businesses, the local authority and the community. The passion and ambition for the town impressed the judges, who were equally impressed with the town's vision and its plans for the future.



Ennis was found to be 'cleaner than European norms' in the 2020 IBAL survey.

Ennis in the top six litter-free towns

The 2020 Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) Anti-Litter League was announced on 12th October. The first nationwide litter survey by business group IBAL since the Covid-19 crisis shows a dramatic fall in the number of towns and cities deemed to be 'clean', to its lowest level since 2007. However, due to the continued hard work by the Ennis Municipal District Street Cleaning Crew, other CCC staff along with Ennis Tidy Towns and other stakeholders, Ennis came in at sixth position and is 'Cleaner than European Norms'.

Traffic calming at Abbey Court and Abbey Ville

Section 38 Traffic Calming Public Consultation for proposed works at Abbey Court-Abbey Ville is under way with submissions due on November 4th

The works shall involve:

- Installation of new Traffic Calming Speed Humps
- Adjustment to kerb radii at entrance to estate
- Provision of uncontrolled crossing with refuge island at entrance to estate
- Narrowing of carriageway width using kerbed central islands
- Provision of all associated signage and road markings.
- Provision of new lighting column and associated works.



Daniel O'Connell Monument. The Council are in the process of awarding the contract for restoration works.

Daniel O'Connell Monument

The Council is in the process of awarding the contract for restoration works to INSP Stone Ltd t/a Irish Natural Stone. An on-site commencement date has yet to be agreed. The structural design, certification and approval of the self-supporting bespoke scaffolding structure will be the contractor's first priority.

Roadworks programme

The road recycling plant was delivered to the Ennis MD in mid-October and the remaining Road Restoration Improvement works are underway and should be completed by mid-November, weather permitting.



The replacement of the traffic light units at Coote's Cross on the Kilrush Road from Discretionary Maintenance Grant funding and the installation of a pedestrian-cyclist crossing at Ashline from NTA Active Travel funding are due to be completed in November.

Footpath access works at An Sean Dún is due to commence in the next few weeks. Section 38 consultation was carried out earlier in the year.

Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2020 – Accelerated Measure, Round 3, Large Town

Ennis MD was successfully awarded €40,000 under the Town and Villages – Round 3 Accelerated Measure for the development of the Ballyalla Loop Trail. Ballyalla Loop Trail is a 7km loop walk from the outskirts of Ennis Town out towards Ballyalla Lough and back into the town centre Ennis MD are currently reviewing the installation process and works will be completed by 1st March, 2021.

WATER SERVICES



Annual Service Plan

The Covid-19 pandemic continues to be a challenging time for the delivery of essential front-line water services across the county, especially with the current Level 5 restrictions.

The Water Services Department of Clare County Council continues to deliver the water services function as per the Service Level Agreement with Irish Water. The monthly key performance indicators (KPIs) continue to be monitored by all of the water services teams to achieve required targets.

Water and waste water operations

The following statistics provide an indication of the level of activity/work being carried out by the water and waste water teams throughout the county from 30th September, 2020, up to and including 21st October, 2020. The figures do not, however, reflect the time invested by the teams which is required to resolve each complaint/issue.

- 10 Customer Complaints were dealt with and closed out
- 0 Emergency Work Orders were received during the timeframe
- 175 Reactive Maintenance Work Orders were dealt with and closed out
- 1 Customer Asset Flooding Work Order was received
- 84 Service Requests (SRs) were raised for Field Requests and Follow On Work Orders for Reactive Maintenance work
- 19 Outage Notices were placed on the IW portal during the period.

Water operations

Up to 23rd October, there were 23 outages placed on the Irish Water reporting portal, which generates a notice to consumers of both planned and unplanned interruptions to their water supply.

There were 21 unplanned outages primarily consisting of emergency water main burst repairs at the following locations:

East Clare Area – 6 outages	Burst repairs at O’Briensbridge, Tuamgraney, and a number of locations in Shannon repairs were required at Tullyglass Hill, Cronan Lawn and Fergus Road.
Mid Clare Area – 6 outages	Burst repairs undertaken at various locations in Clarecastle and in Ennis, at Beechpark and Ballymaley, and a number of repairs were required in the Corrofin Supply Zone at Ruan.
West Clare Area – 9 outages	Burst repairs at various locations in North Clare at Bellharbour and Tullygarvan, Lehinch. Again, there were again repeated repairs undertaken at Tullabrack, Mountrivers/Doonbeg and at Bansha/Lismuse.

There were two planned water supply outages to facilitate the following works:

Find & Fix Programme – Leak Detection works	Kilkishen DMA Ennistymon DMA
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Maintenance works

A raw water pump was replaced by Area Operation Crews at Corrofin WTP, while also deploying diving contractors to Lake Inchiquin, Corrofin, to replace non-return valves. At New Doolough WTP, works were undertaken by Area Operations Crews which included reservoir and settling tank cleaning. At Castl lake WTP, clarifier cleaning and lamella plate rehabilitation works were completed. At both Kilkeedy Borehole WTP and Bridgetown Pump Station, roofing upgrade works were completed.

RAL Upgrades

Ward & Burke Construction Ltd have been appointed by Irish Water to undertake the Clare Remedial Action List (RAL) Upgrade contract. As required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), milestones for the completion of the projects at the individual sites have been set as follows:

- Corrofin WTP – 30th November, 2021
- New Doolough WTP - 30th February, 2022
- Ballymacravan WTP – 30th January, 2023

During October, Ward & Burke Construction Ltd, in conjunction with Clare County Council Area Operations staff, began site visits and design surveys at both Corrofin and New Doolough WTPs.

Water conservation

In October, the Find Crews continued water conservation activity throughout the county reacting to various increases in demand primarily in Ennis (Clarecastle Bridge and Knox's Bridge) and Shannon areas (Tullyglass and Shannon Town) district metering areas (DMAs).

The Find & Fix Crews concentrated activities in East and North Clare with leaks repaired in Bellharbour and Tuamgraney district metering areas. Leak detection find works are currently taking place in Ennistymon DMA.

Waste water operations

The current sludge landfill site at Tradaree in Shannon has now reached capacity and Irish Water will be making alternative arrangements to dispose of sludge from the waste water treatment plant.

Irish Water capital programme Shannon Waste Water Treatment Plant interim upgrade

Ward & Burke commenced work on site on 1st January, 2020. Construction work is continuing on the WWTP with works to 4 No pump stations also scheduled to commence in early November 2020. All flow has now been diverted to the new industrial stream. Works are continuing on the domestic stream. The full project, including testing and commissioning, is scheduled for completion in March 2021. The issue of sludge storage/disposal may be resolved as part of this contract and proposals are currently being considered by IW/consultants/contractor.

Kilrush Waste Water Treatment Plant upgrade

A new waste water treatment plant, rising main and upgrade of the existing Frances St pumping station are proposed in Kilrush. EPS were awarded the contract under the IW Early Contractor Involvement framework to design and build the works. A Site Investigation Contract (to determine ground conditions and locate utilities) is substantially complete. Detailed design is ongoing. A new planning application is to be lodged by IW before year end to deal with necessary alterations to the design of the WWTP. Construction is expected to commence mid-2021 with completion late 2022.

Clarecastle Agglomeration upgrade

Under Irish Water's UTAS the waste water collected at Quay Rd pumping station will be diverted via a new waste water pipeline to Clareabbey WWTP.

Workshop No 4 was held on 25th September, 2020. Further site investigation is to be carried out on Quay Road, Clarecastle, at the end of October. The design is being finalised and IW expects to issue a tender for the full project before the end of 2020. IW plans to commence construction of the advance section of the rising main early in 2021 with the remaining works following on during 2021. Works at Clareabbey WWTP are required before flows can be diverted from Clarecastle.

Liscannor Waste Water Treatment Plant upgrade

A new waste water treatment plant, pumping station, rising main and gravity sewer are proposed for Liscannor. The design/build contract was awarded to EPS in January 2020 under the IW Early Contractor Involvement framework.

A Site Investigation Contract has been completed at the WWTP site, the pump station site and on public roads. Detailed design is on going. The project is expected to go to construction in mid-2021 with completion late 2022.

Ballyvaughan Waste Water Treatment Plant upgrade

A new waste water treatment plant, pumping station including pipework extensions are proposed in Ballyvaughan. Detailed design process is ongoing by EPS. Site investigation and on-site surveys at the WWTP site, pump station site and rising main route have been completed. No date for an Oral Hearing into the CPO has been set as yet. It is proposed to lodge a planning application by mid-2021. The expectation is to go to construction late 2021 with completion mid-2023.

Kilkee Waste Water Treatment Plant upgrade

A Design Summary Report has been prepared by the consultants in June 2020 in relation to construction of a WWTP. Drafting of a Project Brief has commenced and will to be issued to EPS, the design/build contractor. The Site Selection process is not yet finalised. A planning application is expected to be lodged in late 2021. IW/CCC are to agree on the pumping of flow from the Victoria Stream which is done to protect the Blue Flag status of the beach during the summer months. The project is expected to go to construction in late 2022 with completion late 2024.

Ennistymon and Lahinch Waste Water Treatment Plant upgrade

The Feasibility Study Report was produced by Mott McDonald Consulting Engineers for various options including combining Ennistymon and Lahinch treatment and the report was reviewed by Irish Water. The project constraints were discussed at a meeting in mid-September and the consultants were asked to include the West Clare Railway and the infrastructure safeguards on the constraints mapping for both Ennistymon and Lahinch. Constraints mapping has been completed and issued to Irish Water for comment. The Site Selection Report is underway and potential sites are being evaluated. It is anticipated that a draft site selection report will be issued to Irish Water during November.

Newmarket-on-Fergus Waste Water Treatment Plant upgrade

It is proposed to construct a new pumped rising main which would outfall to the Rine River thereby ceasing discharge of primary effluent from the existing WWTP to Lough Gash. A Design Inception Report and outfall route selection have been prepared. In the next phase of the project site investigation, ecological studies, licences, wayleaves and planning application documents will have to be undertaken/prepared. A Foreshore Licence and Discharge Licence review will be required. A site investigation is required along the rising main route which includes the R458. An AA Screening was carried out for the Site Investigation and it has been screened out. The Site Investigation contracts will be issued for tender in late October. Ecology surveys are to commence in the coming weeks. It is anticipated that the planning application will be lodged mid-2021. Construction is anticipated to commence in early 2023 with completion by early 2024.

Kilfenora WWTP upgrade

It is proposed to upgrade the existing Kilfenora WWTP, reuse the existing treated effluent rising main to the current discharge point and construct a new percolation area at this site. Planning permission has been granted. Land owner negotiations are ongoing. The CPO was published in *The Clare Champion* dated 14th August, 2020. Site Investigation is substantially complete and detailed design is ongoing. Construction is planned to commence in June 2021.

Asset Transfer

A total of 375 water and waste water assets, in County Clare, have been identified for potential transfer to IW to date. Of these 50 are non-operational assets (prior to January 2014) and as such will not be transferring to Irish Water leaving 325 for transfer. Of these 325 assets, 188 have now been transferred to IW.

The remaining 137 assets are broken down as follows:

- Pending – 17 assets are being prepared for transfer to Irish Water in the coming months. Some of these assets will have to be subdivided by map/plan. Once a consensus has been reached on the remaining assets with both IW and Clare County Council, a CE order will issue thereafter.
- National Special Projects Office (NSPO) – This is a department within Irish Water dealing with special projects which includes facilitating the Asset Transfers from Local Authorities – four assets are with the NSPO for investigation to ascertain if they are to be considered as underground assets. Underground assets are transferred by S.I. No. 13 of 2015. When they are approved IW will issue a letter to Clare County Council confirming their approval. Note that underground assets, i.e. all water mains and sewers (other than storm water sewers) and any related accessories, and all pipes, waterworks and waste water works that are located under land, along with any related accessories, were vested in IW by S.I. No. 13 of 2015.

- Property Registration Authority Ireland – No assets have gone to the PRAI to be subdivided.
- Third-party/unregistered assets – Of the 137 assets, 116 have been identified as third-party registered lands (99) and unregistered lands (17).

4 No. third-party assets located in the Ennis Municipal District have transferred to Irish Water and others are under review. Surveys are underway on third-party assets in West Clare MD.

A second draft of a first registration application is currently being prepared. The Asset Transfer Team met with Irish Water and its legal team following feedback from the PRAI and is following up on the recommendations made.

Rural Water Programme

Under the 2019-2021 Multi Annual Rural Water Programme works have recently been completed on the Dough GWS in Lahinch and the Castlequarter Ballinphonta GWS in Cratloe in the form of the installation of booster pumping stations. The provision of power to these stations is awaited to allow for commissioning of the works.

The Feenagh GWS continue to proceed with the replacement of their full network of 4.6km of mains with approx 2.2km of mains replaced to date. Works are due to carry through to mid to late November although this may be impacted further by the current Covid-19 restrictions.

The Noughaval Kiltan GWS are currently carrying out works on the upgrade of their pumping station.

It is hoped to publish the tender of works on the full replacement of the Tullaheer GWS mains in late October/early November and progress to construction in early January.

All of the above works are being carried out under Measure 5 of the Programme (Transition of Existing Group Water Schemes to Public Network) which entails the works are funded at 100 per cent and the Clare Rural Water Programme shall be submitting taking in charge applications on behalf of the schemes on completion of the aforementioned works.

The Rural Water Programme continues to endeavour in encouraging schemes approved under the programme to undertake works at the earliest opportunity.

While 7 No. schemes were taken in charge by Irish Water in September an additional 5 No. schemes submitted by Clare County Council have not been progressed by Irish Water at this current time due to funding constraints. Irish Water has confirmed it will not be progressing some schemes due to their large geographical size until mid-2021.

Following on from new grant conditions for the 'Grant for the Improvements to a Private Water Supply to a House' there has been a marked increase in the number of applications being submitted. To date in 2020, there have been 77 applications which are assessed under the Rural Water Programme.

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

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Clare Economic Taskforce

Action items from the Clare Economic Taskforce meeting on 25th September are being done. Work is ongoing in relation to the Shannon Town Centre Master Plan, assisting the work of Shannon Group executive in relation to the Airport and the Free Zone, and the Shannon MD submission on the draft Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS) has been completed. The next Taskforce meeting is scheduled for December. Updates on the work of the Taskforce will be presented at regular briefings to full Council.

Future Mobility Campus Ireland

The Council is a partner in the Future Mobility Campus Ireland (FMCI) initiative. This Enterprise Ireland-funded project is Ireland's first future mobility campus which will act as a test bed facility for autonomous vehicles. Updates on the FMCI project will be presented to the Economic Development SPC.

STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PROJECTS

Ennis 2040 Economic and Spatial Strategy



Now more than ever, in the face of the economic impacts of Covid-19, Clare County Council's role in economic development, and supporting our local economy, businesses and communities, is vital. Clare County Council has identified our largest urban centre as a key economic driver in the county. The Ennis 2040 Spatial and Economic Strategy will guide the development of Ennis and highlight opportunities that will deliver competitive advantage over the short, medium and long term.

The Strategy has a town centre first focus while also looking to prioritise sites outside the town centre that will support compact growth and realise economic opportunities for Ennis and Clare into the future.

In order to deliver on the objectives set out in the Ennis 2040 Strategy, an Ennis 2040 Strategic Development Designated Activity Company (DAC) is being set up and will focus on

delivering a programme of targeted investment and property development. A report to Council is on the agenda for the November Council meeting.

It is intended that the Ennis 2040 Spatial and Economic Strategy will be officially launched by An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin TD, when that is possible. In addition, the Council will be launching an Ennis 2040 website and releasing a short video online to engage and communicate the vision and strategy to all. The Mayor of Clare, Cllr Mary Howard, the CE and President of the Ennis Chamber of Commerce, Allen Flynn, both contributed to the video.

University of Limerick (UL)/South Clare – Strategic Development Zone

During the month of October Clare County Council is working through SDZ DAC legals. The DAC will be the SDZ applicant. In the coming month further engagement will take place to prepare for the making of an application to seek the designation of the UL South Clare SDZ by the new Government.

Spatial and Economic Masterplan for Shannon Town Centre

This Masterplan, which is funded under the Urban Regeneration Development Fund (URDF) and Clare County Council, will drive the economic future and spatial pattern for the centre of Shannon Town, and is now three-quarters through the master planning exercise. It is anticipated that the plan will be finalised by year end.

Roche (Clarecastle) Masterplan

The Council continues to work with Roche management on the development of a masterplan for the future use of this strategically important Clarecastle site, which is also one of the sites identified in the Ennis 2040 Strategy.

FORWARD PLANNING

Clare County Development Plan 2022-2028

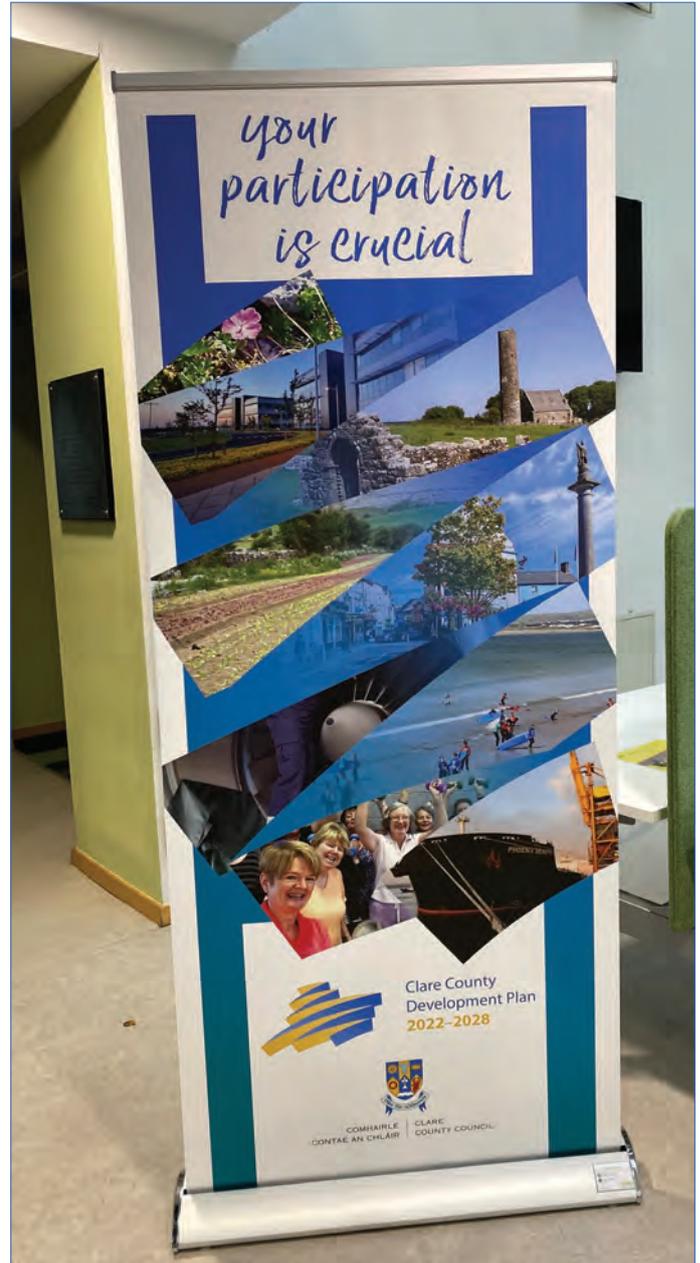
Following the start of the eight-week pre-draft public consultation period from 18th September to 16th November, engagement with the public, communities, schools, businesses and stakeholders has commenced in order to hear their views and opinions and to encourage them to become involved at the earliest stage in the plan-making process by making written submissions and observations to the Planning Department.

To date all primary and second-level schools have been contacted seeking their students' participation in the process and materials have been provided to them in the form of workbooks, maps etc. to facilitate and stimulate their thinking. A number of schools have already responded positively in terms of participating in the project. In the absence of being able to visit schools for a workshop due to Covid-19, some schools have been consulted virtually with very positive feedback from those involved, including second-year geography students at Scarriff Community College.

Social media has been of enormous importance in this public consultation and is playing an essential role in reaching out to encourage participation in the process. Similarly, it has been used by participants to post their own social media messages urging others to participate as well as to give feedback on their consultation experience.

A public consultation event was held in the atrium of Áras Contae an Chláir on the afternoon and evening of Thursday, 1st October, by appointment only. A Clare FM radio interview by A/Senior Planner, Helen Quinn, raised awareness of the public consultation process and generated a very positive response to participation in the event and there was a good attendance at the event.

A presentation was made to the Economic Development SPC, and a virtual presentation was given to the Public Participation Network. Virtual meetings have been held with key stakeholders including the Office of the Planning Regulator and Transport Infrastructure Ireland, and many more are ongoing and planned during the remainder of the consultation process.



DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

The table below summarises the activity in relation to planning applications and planning enforcement during the month of October and also gives the year-to-date totals..

Development management	October 2020	Year to date 2020
Planning applications		
No. of planning applications received	92	797
No. of planning decisions made	87	925
No. of decisions notified by An Bord Pleanála	1	34
No. of pre-planning enquiries received	18	238
No. of Section 5 applications	0	44
No. of Section 97 Exemption Cert applications	2	41
Submissions received regarding compliance	36	370
Planning enforcement		
No. of new complaints received	19	168
No of files opened	10	114
No. of Warning Letters issued	14	112
No. of Enforcement Notices served	0	8
No. of Legal Cases initiated	0	0
No. of Enforcement files closed	0	106

TAKING IN CHARGE

The Taking in Charge Team continue to progress remedial work contracts on a number of housing estates, several of these have now been completed and there are others with minor works to be carried out, as outlined in the table below. It is planned that all these contracts will be completed before year end.

Estate	Update regarding remedial works
Mount Clare, Claremount, Clarecastle	Remedial works complete.
Craglands/Crag Ard, Ballynacally	Remedial works complete.
Boheraroan, Newmarket-on-Fergus	Remedial works complete.
Gort na mBláth/Rathban/Lios Ard, Tulla Rd, Ennis	One minor issue to be completed.
Dun Aras/Cluain Alainn/Dun Aras Ave/Ballycasey Ave, Shannon	Remedial works are ongoing.
Gort Leamhan, Ennis	Remedial works 90 per cent complete.
Tir an Fhia, Kilkishen	Remedial works 70 per cent complete.
Clochan na Mara and Blackthorn Drive, Liscannor	Remedial works are ongoing.
Woodstock View and Woodstock Hill, Shanaway Road	Contractor appointed to carry out remedial works which are due to commence early in November 2020.
Cluainin, Shannon	Closing date for receipt of tenders for remedial works was 5th October 2020. A contractor is currently being appointed.

The statutory process in relation to the Taking in Charge of three estates commenced on 23rd October, 2020: two estates in Ennis MD and one estate in West Clare MD.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

Covid-19 supports

LEO Clare continues to support our local businesses through the month of October. A very high uptake of these supports is in evidence:

- Of the 397 approved Business Continuity Voucher applications, approximately 227 (worth over €466,000 in support) have been completed (the appointed consultants have completed their work and submitted their report), with the balance expected to conclude in the coming months.
- The enhanced Trading Online Voucher Scheme which provides grant support to small businesses to develop an e-commerce website has seen strong interest. To date, 314 applications have been approved, with clients working to complete a further 152 applications. We continue to assess applications and progress to approval as quickly as we can. The Department of Business Enterprise and Innovation has provided additional funding to meet demand.
- 164 clients registered in the month of October to partake in our range of online webinars and training courses, including webinars on preparing for dealing with customs in a post-Brexit world. All of these webinars were provided free of charge to applicants.
- There were 33 applicants in October for a free three-hour mentoring session, where a member of the LEO Clare mentoring panel is assigned to an applicant to mentor them in areas ranging from financial review to starting a food business to digital marketing, among others.
- Local Enterprise Office Clare continues to provide the popular Microfinance Ireland loan facility for eligible businesses. Clients can also avail of mentor support to assist with completion of applications

We continue to provide our range of grant supports (including Feasibility, Priming and Business Expansion and our TAME grant for micro-exporters) to eligible businesses.

As new supports are announced, these will be advised through our social media channels, website and in local media.

Me, My Business and Covid-19 Facilitated Outdoor Workshop

LEO Clare hosted a workshop for local business owners on 18th September. The outdoor workshop allowed for physical distancing and was facilitated by Fergal O’Farrell and Daniel Burge. The 12 participants were able to network and share their experiences during the current crisis while enjoying a relaxing walk along the trails and paths around Lough Derg. An emphasis was placed on wellness and maintaining good mental health among the participants.



National Women’s Enterprise Day

LEO client Aine Gleeson of WowWee.ie was chosen as a ‘Leading Light’ for Local Enterprise Office Clare for National Women’s Enterprise Day on 14th October. This year’s NWED was an online event and attracted a large number of attendees from across the county and country. Aine, who founded the bespoke gifting service, WowWee.ie, gave useful advice to the attendees on the importance of networking and building relationships in business.

Podcasts

LEO Clare commissioned the production of 10 #MakingItHappen podcasts to showcase our diverse range of clients and their achievements to date. The podcasts, each an interview with a selected client, are being released weekly via our Facebook page and have proven popular among our followers.



HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY

Heritage Week Awards

Clarecastle and Ballyea Heritage and Wildlife Group was awarded the Clare County Heritage Week Award 2020 for its project, 'Clarecastle on film in the 1950s'. The film entailed the discovery and restoration of old cine-film taken in Clarecastle in the 1950s. The project organisers established a website, and Facebook and Instagram pages.

Projects from County Clare also received recognition at the Awards as runners-up in two categories. Labasheeda Projects Group was named as a runner-up in the 'Heritage of Education Award' category for the project, 'Labasheeda Ar Scoil – An Educational Journey.' This project told the story of education in the Labasheeda area throughout the ages from describing how locals overcame many challenges during the penal days right up until the present day, with the opening of a new school in 1975.

Shannon Town Community Wetlands was a runner-up in the 'Water Heritage Award' category for the 'Shannon Town Community Wetlands Project', an initiative to develop an attractive amenity within the town that promotes biodiversity and enhances the community value of the site, while making it user-friendly and accessible.

The National Heritage Awards took place virtually and were hosted by the Heritage Council, the Awards recognise the efforts of individuals, families and community groups across Ireland to ensure the preservation, protection and promotion of Ireland's built, natural and cultural heritage.

Irish Community Archive Network

The Irish Community Archive Network (iCAN) has been awarded the 'Best Network of Archives Award' at the highly competitive UK and Ireland Community Archive and Heritage Group (CAHG) 2020 Annual Awards. Established by the National Museum of Ireland's Education Department in 2008, the iCAN initiative works to encourage and support a network of communities in collecting, preserving, and making accessible their local history and heritage online. Clare County Council is a partner in iCAN, including the Heritage Officer working with Roundabout Shannon (Shannon Archaeological and Historical Society and Duchas na Sionna), Clarecastle and Ballyea Heritage and Wildlife Group, Kilkee Heritage and Scattery Island Heritage Group, Our Island Story. For more details please see <https://heritage.clare-heritage.org/>

'Reading Your Local Landscape' courses

Due to the Covid-19, two 'Reading Your Local Landscape' courses, which had commenced in February, were postponed. While it was planned that both courses would recommence in September/October, they had to be postponed again due to Level 5 restrictions. Options to develop the course as a blended learning course will be explored.

Clare Holy Wells Audit

Most of the known Holy Wells in Clare and all on the Record of Monuments and Places have been surveyed at this stage.

Michael Houlihan and Tony Kirby continue to populate the Holy Well Survey 123 and database for County Clare. The next phase of the work will involve making the information available to the public and the project will continue raising awareness and knowledge of the rich heritage associated with Holy Wells and their settings in 2021.

Clare Biodiversity Best Practice Staff Manual and Training Project

The draft Manual (including the Environmental Procedures on Hedgerow, Drainage, Grassland Management and Trees Management and the Use of Herbicides) will be updated in line with feedback from Roads Department. Concerns were raised in relation to cost implications and resources at Municipal District level. A training element on the use of the Manual will be delivered by the end of 2020.

Biodiversity Demonstration Sites

The final reports and recommendations on the management of 10 sites in public amenity/recreational areas throughout County Clare have been completed and will be distributed to the relevant people involved including Clare County Council staff, community groups/Tidy Town groups and rural social schemes, for example. This project has received further funding from the National Parks and Wildlife Service and additional actions will continue until end of this year. Follow-up advice is being provided to the communities undertaking management of the existing 10 biodiversity sites, in particular dealing with outstanding issues in Miltown Malbay Church Car Park, Two Mile Gate, Ballycuggaran and Riverside Park in Scariff. The additional work will involve a preliminary biodiversity survey and plan for O'Sullivan Park, Ennis, review of grass-cutting regimes in four areas managed for biodiversity in Shannon and online biodiversity webinars for community and Tidy Town groups in association with the Rural Community Directorate.

The Clare Swift Survey 2020

The final results of this survey shows that there is a very small population remaining (56 Swift nests) located around the County. Clare County Council is encouraging communities, schools and public buildings to erect Swift nest boxes in their buildings to provide suitable nesting sites for Swift, as they are losing their nest sites due to building renovation.

Building Space for Nature: Wildlife and Buildings

Clare County Council is partnering with Laois, Kerry, Donegal and Tipperary County Councils to fund the production of a video and publication with Bird Watch Ireland for *Building Space for Nature: Wildlife and Buildings*. A draft of the video and publication has been prepared and is now under review to be finalised in 2020.

Clare Biodiversity Programme 2020

A presentation given on the Clare Biodiversity Programme 2020 to the Physical Development SPC in September has been updated.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Harvest time at the Shannon Allotments

The Shannon Allotments project was completed earlier this year. During October, two of our staff who were very involved in getting this project completed and who engage regularly with the allotment holders visited the site to look at the great work done and especially to see the Year 1 harvest. Our photos show Ailish McMahon getting ready for Halloween and Emer McMahon checking out the various planters. One of the features of the allotments is that the large allotments have concrete bases for their sheds and this has proven to be very popular with the allotment holders.





Facilities management

We continue to ensure that the workplaces and arrangements for staff and elected members in Áras Contae an Chláir and Waterpark Campus meet the requirements of the Council’s Response Plan and the national and HSE guidance on Covid-19. During October, we transitioned these two main buildings and other buildings to a new cleaning contractor, following a national tender process.

The Facilities Team arranged for Clare County Council to light up Áras Contae an Chláir on the evening of 15th October in the colours of pink and blue to mark Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day to assist in raising awareness of the cause and the need for supports for families affected by miscarriage and infant death. The Council was delighted to create this platform for those who wish to acknowledge their loss and show a sense of solidarity with those who have experienced loss and to mark the important day of remembrance.

A commitment was made by the Chief Executive in recent years to create a space at Áras Contae an Chláir for staff and elected members to take time out to sit in a new Remembrance Garden, to think of colleagues and councillors who have passed away. This project has now commenced under the leadership of Cyril Feeney and it is hoped that, when completed, it will be a place of restful calm to reflect on friendship and memories. The project group also includes staff from Human Resources, Environment and crews from various departments.

Property transactions

The Table below shows the number of property transactions

completed by Property Management Unit in October, together with the totals for 2020 to date.

Transaction	October 2020	Year to date 2020
Lease of property/building	0	4
Licence to use property/building	1	8
Grazing agreement for lands	0	18
Deed of transfer signed	1	7
Deed of rectification/assent signed	1	3

County Museum upgrade

Following completion of detailed design, the tender stage for the upgrade works to the County Museum has commenced. The project involves investment in the museum offering by increasing the proportion of space for the County Museum to incorporate the de Valera 1949 Dodge car, by improving the space for the tourist office to make it more inviting and improvements to the upstairs areas with an upgrade to the meeting room, office space and canteen/break-out space.

Casual trading

During October 2020, the level of casual trading activity was much reduced due to the need for compliance with the Covid -19 restrictions. The annual Kilrush Horse Fair which was due to be held in October did not go ahead.

Derelict sites

A review of the sites and properties on the Derelict Sites Register is ongoing. Inspections are being carried out on new complaints with reports prepared recommending actions to be taken. The team is focused on engaging with owners to develop solutions for bringing sites and properties back into economic use. The level of activity in this area will take account of the current economic situation due to Covid-19 and the resources of the team while trying to address complaints from the public. The table below provides a snapshot of the activity in September and October and the year 2020 to date.

Derelict Sites	September 2020	October 2020	Year to date 2020
No. of new Complaints	15	4	19
No. of Section 8(2) Notices issued – Intention to enter site on Derelict Sites Register	0	0	0
No. of Section 8(7) Notices issued – Entry onto Derelict Sites Register	0	0	0
No. of Section 11 Notices issued – Measures required to render the site non-derelict	0	0	0
No. of files closed/property removed from Register	1	0	1
No. of Compulsory Purchase Orders	0	0	0

SHANNON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

The following is an update on key road works projects.

Works are progressing on the installation of traffic lights and associated junction works at Larkins Cross, Gortatogher. Works have commenced on the construction of a junction widening scheme at Westbury Estate, Athlunkard.

Preparation works now completed for all aspects of the restoration improvement works with overlay works currently nearing completion at Derryfadda and Srawickeen.

All scheduled grant funded drainage projects have now been completed.

All scheduled grant funded surface dressing projects have now been completed. Footpath construction works at Bóthar Mór, Shannon, are now nearing completion to provide a new Sli Na Slainte route around the central shopping area in Shannon.

Shannon Municipal District was successful in obtaining funding for a number of projects under the Active Travel scheme. Contract for the construction of a section of footpath in Meelick village has been designed, tendered and awarded with the assistance of the General Design team and construction will commence shortly.



The Tir na Óg playground in Shannon reopened following resurfacing works and the introduction of a new piece of play equipment has been well received.





Coronavirus
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