



COMHAIRLE | CLARE
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

TUARASCÁIL MHÍOSÚIL ÓN PHRÍOMHFHEIDHMEANNACH

MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Feabhra / February
2023



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT p29



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT p35



FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICE P2



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT p5

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

UKRAINIAN SERVICES DEVELOPMENT p4

RURAL DEVELOPMENT p18

FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

CORPORATE SERVICES

Freedom of Information & Data Protection

Previous years and 2023 to date - statistics to 30th January 2023

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Freedom of Information Requests	152	176	119	11
Freedom of Information Internal Review Applications	6	13	8	0
Appeals to Information Commissioner	1	4	2	4
Data Access Requests – Subject Access Request	5	6	10	2
Data Requests – Erasure Request	0	1	1	0
Data Access Requests – Third Party Access Requests e.g. Gardaí	20	27	27	1

Disclosure of Donations and Expenditure

Each member of the local authority were required to furnish a donation statement indicating whether a member received from the same person, a donation exceeding €600.00 in value during the period 1st January 2022 to 31st December 2022. This is a requirement under the Local Elections (Disclosure of Donations and Expenditure) Act 1999. Appendix 1 of this process is available for public inspection.

Communications

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

Media releases issued during January included:

- Clare County Council completes the repair and restoration of The Manchester Martyrs' Monument
- Healthy Clare launches its first health and wellbeing calendar
- Clare County Council launches two major funding initiatives for community groups and organisations in County Clare
- Launch of the Lisdoonvarna Heritage Plan and Design Guide
- Clare County Council announces funding for the Creative Ireland Project Award.

Social Media

The Communications Office monitors and updates social media channels with creative content to enhance engagement with the public and maintain awareness of the work of the Council.

In January, the Communications Office:

- Posted 38 times on Facebook with 2,080 post engagements. Total Followers: 17,673.
- Posted 29 times on Twitter with 895 post engagements. Total Followers: 7,934.
- Instagram Followers: 2,742.

(Statistics accurate as of 01/02/2023)

Print and Graphic Design

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

HUMAN RESOURCES

Work Area	Update
Recruitment	<p>The following recruitment competitions were progressed during January:</p> <p>Eligibility Exercises & Desktop Shortlisting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistant Planner (Eligibility Exercise) Climate Action Officer (Eligibility Exercise) <p>Interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative Officer (Final Interviews) Assistant Planner Retained Part-Time Fire Fighters, Kilkee & Kilrush <p>The following competitions were advertised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity Officer (3-year contract) Recycling Assistant Scarriff Part-Time Traffic Wardens (Summer Season 2023) Temporary Technician Grade I (Civil & Architectural Panel) Retained Part-Time Fire Fighters (Kilkee, Kilrush & Shannon) Clerk of Works Panel Beach Operatives (Summer Season 2023) Beach Lifeguards & Senior Beach Lifeguards (Summer Season 2023) Duty Manager, Active Ennis
Learning and Development	<p>Online Training programmes / Webinars / Information Sessions held in January include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-Day SLG at Roadworks Asbestos Awareness Talks for Water Crews - throughout January Courtroom Skills Training Junior Achievement Ireland Information Session for 2023 Volunteers Safe Pass Training Wellbeing & Blended Working – Half day Online Workshop <p>Essential Skillz on-line Courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cyber Security GDPR Health & Safety Induction Manual Handling as Refresher Slips, Trips & Falls as Refresher Working in a Covid Era <p>Health & Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online refresher of Slips Trips & Falls Online refresher of Manual Handling
Employee Welfare	Employee wellbeing supports continue to be made available to staff across a range of areas.
Unions	The Human Resources Department engages with Unions on various matters.

Procurement

The following Clare County Council tender competitions were published on eTenders in the period from 19th December 2022 to 25th January 2023.

RFT No.	Tender Name	Response deadline
229607	Proposed 15 Number Unit Housing Development at Ballyliddan West, Sixmilebridge, Co. Clare	27/01/2023
231270	The Provision of a Catering Franchise at The Woodland Bistro, Vandeleur Walled Garden, Kilrush, Co Clare.	24/02/2023
231323	SAQ - Refurbishment and Extension of Old Rectory Building into Inis Cealtra Visitor Attraction, Mountshannon, Co Clare	15/02/2023

UKRAINIAN SERVICES DEVELOPMENT

National Situation

A total of 71,200 temporary protection orders have been granted as of 13th January 2023. This is up from 68,200 in December and there is a rolling 7-day average of 130. There are 54,700 people accommodated and 14,100 children have been enrolled in school.

The prop of females remains at 63% of the arrivals and to date the number of employments is 15,298 and as per the trend the people in employment are working in their local communities – contributing locally. The figures remain consistent in their proportions on the previous month.

Unfortunately, the war in Ukraine does not look likely to end any time soon and the Community Response Forum in County Clare, coordinated by Clare County Council, continues to meet on a bi-weekly basis in order to respond locally.

County Clare

The national figures show that County Clare is now hosting 4,184 Ukrainian beneficiaries which is up slightly on last month but relatively stable. The county ranks 6th nationally with

At this point in the year County Clare now has 4,008 (approx.) displaced people from Ukraine with 3,876 being accommodated in 29 multi-occupancy properties.

‘Offer a Home’

To date, Clare County Council has received 69 offers of unoccupied accommodation under the ‘Offer A Home’ scheme with all 69 owners being contacted and 45 of those being assessed. 4 of those properties are not yet available with a further 4 requiring minor works and 8 being withdrawn. 15 homes have been successfully matched with 68 people being placed in those properties. WE are currently working through the matching of 28 homes.

There is a broad spread of accommodation locations but as expected there is a strong focus on the coast with few properties being offered in the larger urban centres such as Ennis and Shannon. The offers of unoccupied property continues to come in.

The Accommodation team, led by Deirdre Ryan, now also has James Connaughton (Relationship Manager) on board and is supported by Oisín O’Donnell. Property owners can offer homes at the newly created website: www.offerahome.ie or by contacting Clare County Council at offerahome@clarecoco.ie.

Community Recognition Funding 2023

On 25th January 2023 the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) announced the launch of the ‘Community Recognition Fund 2023’ targeted at projects in communities

hosting Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection and/or International Protection applicants: To recognize their contribution to the emergency response. Full details can be found on www.gov.ie.¹

The broad aim of this €50m fund is to develop or improve facilities that will benefit the broader community into the future. County Clare has been awarded a proportional amount of €2,925,549, the third highest in the country. Local Authorities have been asked to coordinate the application process and this is being jointly managed in Clare County Council between Ukrainian Services Development and Rural and Community Development.

In anticipation of potential funding being made available a workshop was held in the Woodstock hotel on 29th November 2022 to raise awareness and begin the thinking process. A briefing document has been presented to the Municipal Districts, Community Response Fora and Clare County Councils Senior Team.

Grant structure and Eligible Projects:

There will be two funding streams / two grant application forms (details on www.clarecoco.ie) –

A. Small Scale Capital Projects: Grants up to €2,000

- Purchase of equipment for local clubs, festivals, community events and organisations e.g. mu-sic, arts or sports equipment;

B. Large Scale Capital Projects: Grants over €2,000

- Development, enhancement or refurbishment of community or cultural facilities including play areas, walkways, parks, community/sensory gardens including communication boards, allot-ments, and recreational areas;
- Development, enhancement or refurbishment of local club and sports facilities including facilities such as community swimming pools, changing rooms, toilets, digital aids such as score / information boards etc.;
- Enhancement to school/parish facilities which are open to use by all of the community after school hours;
- Transport infrastructure such as the purchase of community vehicles, bus shelters and attendant information boards; and
- Purchase and refurbishment of buildings and/or the purchase of land for the development of community facilities such as play areas/ MUGAs or town parks/ community gardens, recreational areas etc. for community use where a clear need is identified.

¹gov.ie - Community Recognition Fund 2023 (www.gov.ie)

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Social Directorate is facing a challenging year ahead in 2023. While our Capital Team significantly exceeded our Housing Delivery plan targets for 2022 our plans for 2023 will bring its own challenges as the conflict in Ukraine continues with resultant effects on availability and cost of building supplies and other necessities. However we are confident that the team in the Directorate will continue to deal with all challenges and meet targets for the coming year.

The winter eviction ban is due to end on 31st March 2023 and this will potentially lead to an increased number of private

tenants receiving Notices to Quit their existing tenancies as landlords continue to exit the rental market. Our Homeless Action Team are preparing for increased activity as a result while our Acquisitions Team and AHBS are actively engaging with landlords to potentially purchase a number of these properties in order to reduce homeless situations.

Work on the new County Library continues at pace and great progress is now visible on site. This will prove to be a fantastic addition to the town and county when complete.

HOUSING

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

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

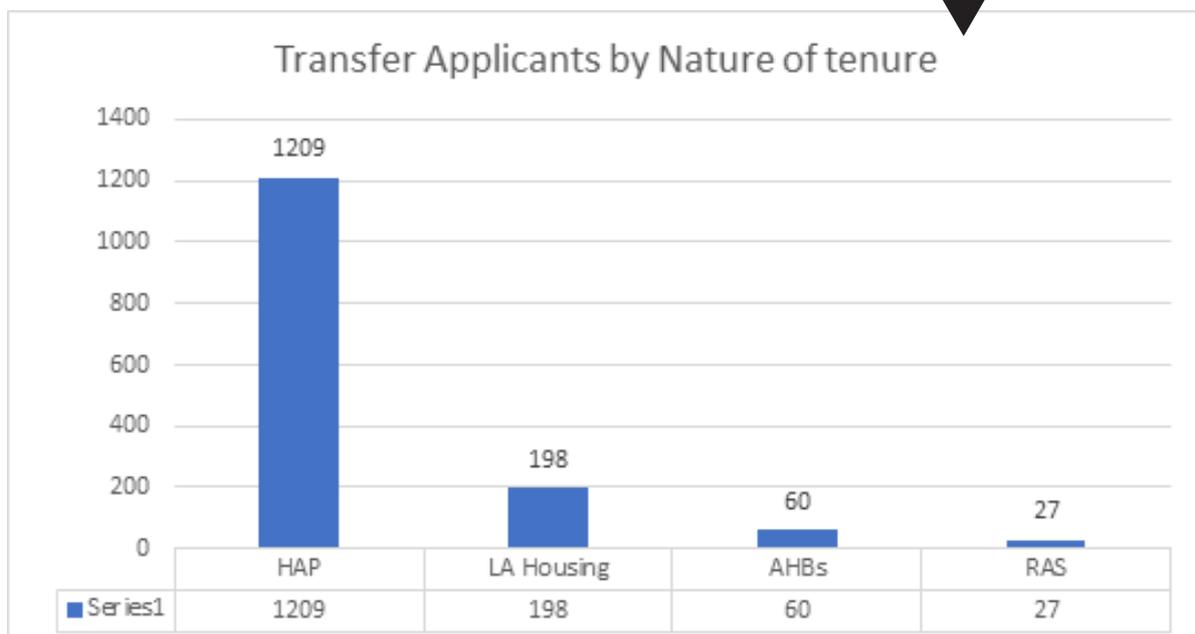
Social Housing Demand

The total households on the council waiting list is currently 2,755 with 1,494 of these currently receiving support in form

of existing council housing, HAP, RAS or AHBS. The 2,755 households are comprised of 3,799 adults and 2,062 children. This average of 2.2 people per household is reflected in large need for 1 and 2 bed properties in all areas.

Current Housing need as of 31/01/2023

Total Households on Waiting List	2755
Transfer Applicants (see below)	1,496
Nett Need	1262



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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

HOUSING AUTHORITY BEDS APPROVED				
FIRST AREA OF CHOICE	1 and 2 beds	3 beds	4 and 5 beds	Grand Total
ENNIS	890	176	78	1144
SHANNON	178	26	14	218
CLARECASTLE	126	25	11	162
INAGH/ENNISTYMON/LAHINCH	127	25	4	156
KILRUSH	101	31	7	139
FEAKLE/SCARIFF/WHITEGATE	107	21	3	131
MEELICK/PARTEEN/WESTBURY	73	36	10	119
MILTOWN MALBAY/MULLAGH/QUILTY	68	10	5	83
KILKEE/CROSS/CARRIGAHOLT	68	9	1	78
NEWMARKET-ON-FERGUS	56	14	5	75
COROFIN/RUAN	53	18	2	73
KILLALOE	55	12	2	69
LISDOONVARNA/BALLYVAUGHAN	41	9	3	53
SIXMILEBRIDGE	36	7	7	50
COORACLARE/DOONBEG	36	8	2	46
TULLA/KILKISHEN/BROADFORD	35	7	3	45
KILDYSART/BALLYNACALLY	22	4	2	28
CLONLARA	17	7	2	26
QUIN	17	6	1	24
KILMIHIL	9	5	2	16
KILMALEY	10	2		12
KILFENORA	7	1		8
Grand Total	2132	459	164	2755

Newly Qualified Applicants

New income limits became effective on 1st January 2023. We have yet to see what impact this will have on our housing list. However we expect to see an increase over the coming months. In January we issued decisions on 51 applications with 36 qualified and 15 deemed not to qualify. In addition 27 applications were rejected, either for having submitted incomplete applications, or because they were deemed ineligible for assessment.



New Income Limits from January 1st, 2023

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

Housing Allocations

The new social housing development at Cluain Greine, Drehidnagower Road, Ennis which comprises 61 units is now fully occupied. This development is now home to 85 adults and 57 children. In addition, a total of 12 households accommodated in this development were exiting from our homeless services.

Phase 1 of the Clúid social housing development, located at Hogans Place, Limerick Road, Ennis which comprises nine units, 7 no three bedroomed two storey houses and 2 no two bedroomed level access bungalow type accommodation is also fully occupied.

Pre tenancy meetings are currently being held for the applicant households who are in the process of moving into their new homes at Clós an Eidhneáin, Tulla Road, Ennis. This 8 unit development comprises 5 no three bedroomed two-storey houses and 3 no specially adapted two bedroomed bungalow type properties.

Extensive refurbishment works were recently completed to three no 3 bedroomed houses located at Nagles Terrace, Kilrush. These properties which are located within walking distance of Kilrush town and local amenities have been allocated to 3 families and are now home to 4 adults and 10 children.



Ann O Dea, Estate Manager, handing over keys to Marinela Dike to her home in Nagles Terrace, Kilrush. Marinela stated “ I wish to express my sincere thanks from the bottom of my heart to all in Clare County Council, Housing Department for receiving keys to my new home. I love this house and I am delighted to have my own home”.



Nagles Terrace Kilrush



John Hayes and Bolanle Ojulari receiving the keys to their new home at Clós an Eidhneáin, Tulla Road, Ennis from Máirín Hill Housing Department. “We are delighted to receive this offer of accommodation from Clare County Council. Our family is so thankful to all of the staff in the Housing Department who have made this happen for us.”



Tenant Purchase Incremental Scheme

There remains significant interest in the LA Tenant Purchase Incremental Scheme. In 2022 we disposed of 10 properties to tenants under this scheme. We currently have 12 open cases at various stages of the legal process which are expected to complete in 2023.

Housing Tenancies:

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

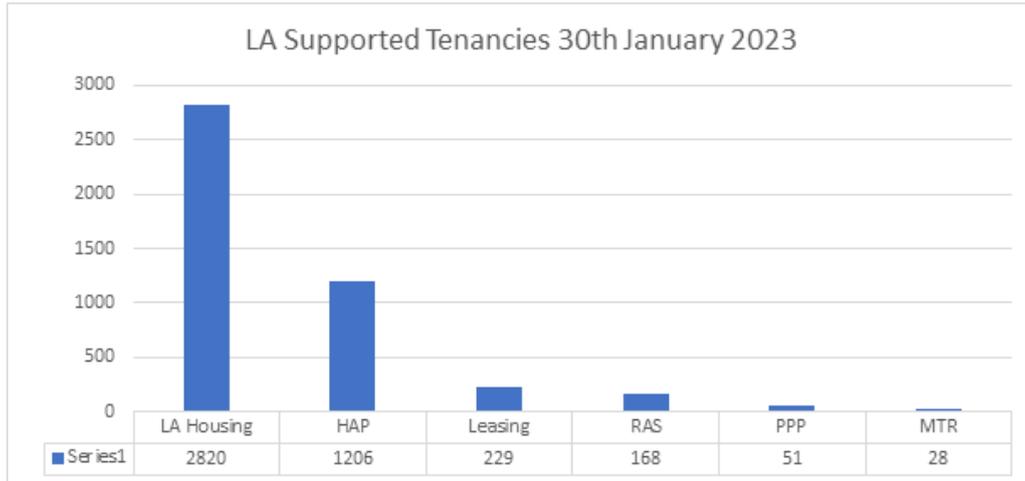
30th Jan 2023			
Municipal District	Allocated	Occupied	Total
Ennis MD	7	1274	1281
Killaloe MD	2	952	954
Shannon MD	2	752	754
West Clare MD	0	360	360
Grand Total	11	3338*	3349

Vacancies by Municipal District

Vacant Stock*	Ennis MD	West Clare MD	Shannon MD	Killaloe MD	Total
Traveller accommodation	2	8	2	0	12
Derelict properties	0	0	0	0	0
Projects	2	9	1	0	12
Casual vacancies	26	19	3	6	54
TOTAL	30	36	6	6	78

*3,338 households comprises of 5,681 Adults and 3,093 children. Total people 8,774, or 2.7 per household average

Tenancies:



Estate Management

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

Any matters that need to be brought to the attention of the Estate Management unit can be done so by emailing asb@clarecoco.ie.

	1st to 25th Jan	Total year to date
ASB Complaints recd	25	25
Housing Inspections	86	86
Referrals to TSS	2	2
Tenancy Notifications/Warnings issued	7	7

Abandonment Notices issued	2	2
Keys collected from Casual Vacancies	11	11
TEO Call Outs	652	652

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

Private Rented inspections:

84 inspections carried out up to 19th January 2023. These inspections were carried out on HAP, RTB, RAS and Leased properties, as well as in response to complaints that were received. The team continue to follow up where properties do not meet the minimum rented standards.

Housing Grants:





Local Authority Home Loan

Full details on the Local Authority Home Loan (LAHL) and eligibility criteria including the Loan Calculator and Information Booklet can be found on www.localauthorityhomeloan.ie
Loans data for 2023 up to 24/01/2023: There are currently 29 Loans Approved in principle and awaiting possible drawdown from applicants. This 4 new approvals in January 2023

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

29 Local Authority Home Loans Approved 4 in Jan '23

5 Local Authority Home Loans Drawn Down in 2022

12 Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans Drawn Down in 2022

The Housing Finance Agency (HFA) has advised that the fixed interest rate for all new loans drawn down under the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan (RIHL) and Local Authority Home Loan (LAHL) schemes have increased from 10 December 2022. The fixed rate payable by new borrowers after this date will be 3.35% annually for loans up to 25 years and 3.45% for loans between 25 and 30 years.

Homeless Services [Homeless Action Team HAT]

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

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

Presentations to Clare Homeless Action Team [HAT]

29 new clients presented to HAT during January 2023, with a further 164 repeat engagements. This figure of repeat engagements has increased significantly over this current timeframe. The needs and requirements of these presentations varied and included

- The need of immediate Emergency Accommodation,
- Discharge from Medical Settings,
- Discharge from Women Refuge services
- Release from Prison.

A number of these presentations availed of advice and prevention works and supports from the Social Care Team in HAT. As a result they avoided entering a homeless situation due to early intervention by the team. Advice regarding legislation on NTQ's, support from the HAP Place-finder, allocations in advance of homelessness situations, and other supports offered by the team ensured many of these clients avoided actually seeking emergency accommodation and shows the positive effect the prevention measures taken by the HAT team can have when people engage at an early stage.

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

The Council continues to pursue additional emergency accommodation options. However, this is proving challenging due to competing demands for accommodation in the County.

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

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Exits from Homeless Services:

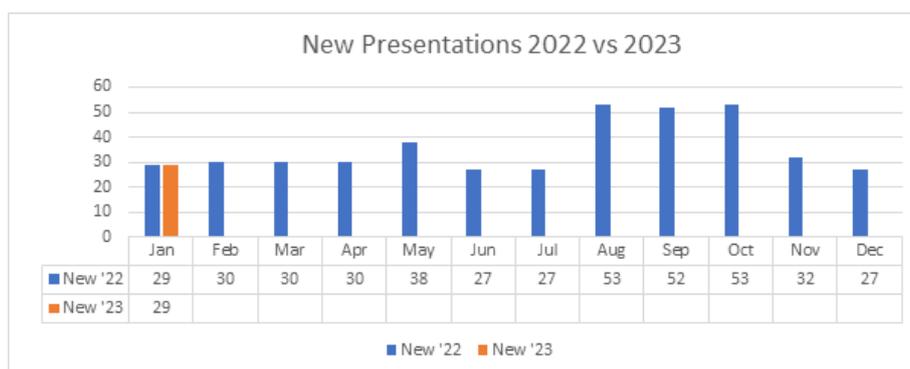
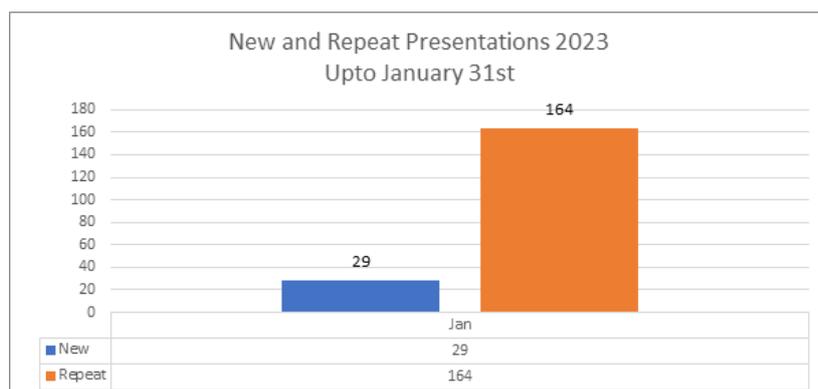
Clare Homeless Action Team continues to focus on exits from homeless services and during the period of the 9th to the 31st December 2022 a total of 5 households exited from homeless services:

- 1 to H.A.P. Accommodation
- 1 A.H.B. Accommodation – Housing First
- 2 to OFD
- 1 Discharged to Hospital
- 1 from OFD to Housing First

During the period of the 01/01/2023 to the 19/01/2023, a total of 6 households exited Emergency Homeless Services.

- 4 of these households moved to Local Authority Housing
- 1 to Cluid Housing
- 1 returning to his family

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



A total of 17 households availed of Homeless HAP in 2022. A further 117 families were prevented from entering Homeless Services due to securing HAP or housing through the Local Authority and Voluntary Housing Bodies.

Note: There is a slight decrease in families/individual numbers from December 31st to Jan 19th 2023. The primary reason for this is due to families/individuals being housed or leaving Emergency Accommodation. It is envisaged that this figure will rise again in the coming weeks due to the increased presentations and demands on the services.

Emergency Accommodation Status as of 19th January 2023:

	Families	Adults	Dependents	Providers
Laurel Lodge	0	13	0	1
Laurel Lodge Weather Initiative	0	3	0	
Cusack Lodge	4	6	6	1
Westbrook	0	14	0	1
Westbrook Weather Initiative		2		
Ashford Court	9	14	16	1
EA Families	5	6	12	2
EA Individuals	0	5	0	3
TOTAL	18	63	34	9

Vacant Properties

The Vacant Homes Section continues to tackle vacant properties throughout the towns and villages of County Clare with a strong focus on suitable properties which can be delivered as social homes through the Capital Investment Programme.

The Vacant Homes Officer role has moved to the Derelict Sites function under the Economic Directorate since early January 2023. The Croi Conaithe Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant is now part of the Economic Directorate remit while the Ready to Build Scheme under Croi Conaithe remains with the Housing Capital Delivery team in the Social Directorate. Engagement will continue between the Economic and Social Directorates in relation to vacant properties suitable for social housing solutions.

Traveller Accommodation

Pilot Caravan Loan Scheme.: The Scheme provides preferential loans to Travellers to purchase their own caravan/mobile home on halting sites for use as their primary residence. 16 applications were received. Works are ongoing on preparing bays on a small number of approved applications.. The Scheme closed on 31st December 2022 for review by Department and until we receive further update from the Department there will be no further applications processed.

Affordable Housing Schemes for County Clare

Clare County Council has launched an Expression of Interest survey on all media formats to ascertain levels of interest and eligibility in the county to access potential affordable housing schemes in Ennis and Shannon. Under the eligibility criteria for Affordable Housing Clare does not qualify at a county level to deliver Affordable Housing as the HNDA(Housing Needs and Demand Assessment) conducted as part of the Development Plan process does not meet the affordability constraint threshold as set by the DHLGH.

Recent flexibility introduced by the DHLGH in relation to urban centres in excess of 10,000 population has enabled the Council to commence an application process seeking inclusion of Ennis and Shannon as eligible locations to deliver Affordable Housing subject to satisfying the established criteria for access to the Affordable Housing Fund including demonstrating that the necessary affordability constraint prevails in both towns and that an appropriate demand exists.

The closing date for completion of the survey is February 17th following which the Council will lodge a detailed submission to the DHLGH seeking access to the scheme.

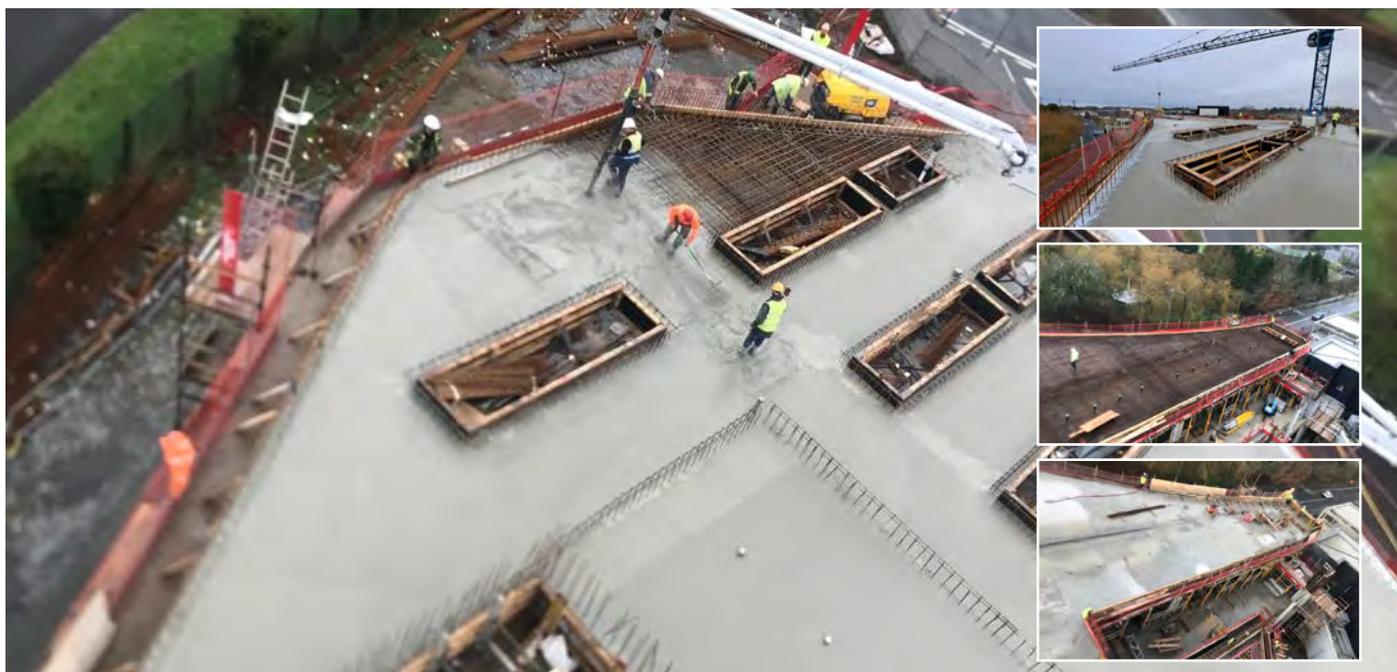
Defective Concrete Blocks Grant Scheme

Clare County Council continue to engage with the Department of Housing in relation to the Enhanced Defective Blocks Grants Scheme. Staff from the Department visited County Clare in late November to meet with our technical team and while here also took the opportunity to visit a number of sites where we have identified affected properties. Clare County Council also met with the (CPAG) Clare Pyrite Action Group in early December to keep them updated on progress with the scheme. Clare County Council received a controlled copy of the draft regulations and provided technical feedback to DHLGH in early January. The DHLGH had advised that wider engagement by the Minister's appointed Liaison Officer is to commence in January with all stakeholders

New County Library Construction Project

Construction commenced on the new library building on Thursday 28th April 2022. All substructure works are now complete and all vertical works between ground floor and first floor are complete. First floor beams are also complete. Columns, beams and lift shaft concrete pours will continue up to Christmas. Preparation for 2nd Floor Slab pour was ongoing in early January and 180m3 concrete pour was carried out on 23rd of January 2023. Techrete Concrete panels to façade of building to commence in early February, due to concreting delays with current cold spell.

The project involves the construction of a 2,321m2 building on the glór site, comprising two floors of public library space. The local studies centre will be accommodated in this building, along with a separate art gallery. Additionally, the County Library HQ will be located on the third floor. The state-of-the-art new build will provide a key resource for research, study, recreation and art in a centralised location adjacent to the well-established glór theatre.



New County Library Construction Project

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Update on capital programme:

SHIP Capital	No. approved	Current stage	Start Date	Completion Date
Scarriff	18	Stage 4 approved. Contract to be awarded on the 02nd February 2023.	Q1 2023	Q3 2024
Doonbeg Lands	8	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH. Design recommenced.	Q3 2023	Q3 2024
Clarecastle	2	Stage 3 approved. Tender assessment underway.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023
Drumcliff Rd. Ennis	26	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH. Part VIII Withdrawn. Determination issued to ABP and awaiting outcome.	Q2 2023	Q4 2024
Sixmilebridge	15	Stage 3 approved. Tender Assessment underway.	Q1 2023	Q2 2024
Ennistymon	30	Stage 2 approved. Stage 3 application currently being prepared.	Q2 2023	Q4 2024
Gort Rd. Ennis	20	Stage 2 approved. Public consultation held in January 2023. Planning application being prepared for submission to ABP.	Q3 2023	Q4 2024
Subtotal	119			
Bruachlan, Westbury (Cooperative Housing Ireland)	22	CALF - Property transfer complete, reapply for planning permission in due course when site assessment completed	Q2 2022	Q2 2024
Limerick Road, Ennis (Cluid Housing Assoc)	15	CALF Acquisition – Under construction	Q3 2022	Q3 2023
Limerick Road, Ennis (Inis Housing)	18	CALF Turnkey – construction in progress	Q1 2022	Q2 2023
Market Street, Ennis (Peter McVerry Trust)	14	CAS Turnkey – Department approval received	Q4 2022	Q4 2023
Cluain na Laoi, Kilkishen	16	CALF Turnkey – Department approved 6 units to be delivered in Q4 2023 10 units to be delivered in Q1 2024	Q4 2022 Q1 2023	Q4 2023 Q1 2024
Church Road, Tulla	2	CALF Turnkey (Part V) – under construction	Q1 2022	Q1 2023
Ballyminogue, Scarriff	4	CALF Turnkey	Q1 2023	Q2 2023
Dooneen Park, Kilrush	2	CAS Construction	Q4 2022	Q2 2023
Kincora Park, Ennis	1	CAS Construction	Q4 2022	Q2 2023
Subtotal	94			
Total	213			



CULTURAL SERVICES - LIBRARY, ARTS, MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

Clare County Library



Conservation talk in Scariff Library

	New Followers	Total Followers	No of Posts & stories (Insta only)	Likes	Shares/ Retweets/ Reach	Comments
	31	6709	69	529	19400	34
	11	2077	36	33	2889	0
	8	1772	69	529	76	34

Total number of live events	69
Total attendances at live events	516
Total number of outreach events	3
Total audiences at outreach events	63

A number of Clare Libraries are finalising Age Friendly objectives so that they can obtain Age Friendly recognition. Objectives include programming, resources, and Age Friendly parking.

Clare Libraries are also participating in the *Reduce Your Use* campaign.

There were 5 deliveries to housebound members of our public this month.

Online Resources usage in previous month as follows: e-audio-books and access to Press reader are the highest sought after resources.

1431 E-Books	2581 E-Audiobooks	658 E-Magazines
289 Online courses	2053 Press Reader	84 Transparent Languages

Marketing & social media

New marketing materials has been circulated to all branches including a new Clare Libraries Online Resources brochure and material to promote Library online resources for Ukrainians.

A representative from Clare Libraries spoke on Morning Focus, Clare FM, about the One-to-One Digital Smartphone Classes which are ongoing in libraries.



Librarian visits Active Retirement group in Kilmihil.

Right to Read

Event scheduling is under way to celebrate Ireland Reads, a public libraries initiative, in partnership with Healthy Ireland, publishers, booksellers, authors and others, ending on the 25th Feb when people of all ages will be invited to take the pledge to get reading. <https://www.irelandreads.ie/> In the designated lead up from the 7th to the to the 25th Feb, Clare libraries are planning events for young people from pre-schoolers to teens. Children's Book Clubs resume in branches of Clare County Library for the coming year including a new graphic novel book-club at Scariff Library beginning in February. Chess classes for children have begun in Shannon and Kilrush libraries. Scéalta agus Rannta le Chéile takes place for young children and their parents every Wednesday at Miltown Malbay Library. All are welcome to attend this celebration of story and rhyme in Irish from 10.30 to 11am.

Baby and Toddler Group Meet events with stories and playtime are running in Newmarket on Fergus and Scariff libraries. My

Baby and Me classes have begun at Kilrush Library in partnership with “*Right to Read Network stakeholders*”, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB). Ennistymon Library is also collaborating with the LCETB on a weekly family reading programme and the “Hug Your Book” project for parents of young children enrolled at Scoil Mhainchín, Ennistymon.

Healthy Ireland

Three Healthy Ireland at Your Library online events will take place this month - online chair yoga classes. These classes are accompanied with music, taking participants on a trip down memory lane with Doris Day and Andy Williams and are facilitated by Trish Cleary. Twenty people have attended the first 2 classes, including residents from Nursing Homes throughout the County as well as people attending the Brothers of Charity. Chair yoga helps to keep the body supple and healthy, reduce stress and improve mental health.

Creative Ireland

The Clare Creative Ireland Project Award is open for submissions. As part of Clare's 2023 Creative Ireland programme, Clare County Council are inviting applications for project awards that will develop bodies of creative work in the community with a public interface/engagement. Individuals and groups are invited to make applications to creatively explore the following themes:

- Well-being of communities (geographical or communities of interest)
- Heritage (which may include historical exploration, sense of place and traditions)
- STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics)
- Climate change and biodiversity
- Irish Language

The Project Award is one of the core activities of the Creative Ireland programme in Clare and has funded projects in previous years that include film, dance, music, archaeology, heritage and visual art, all with a community focus.

Decade of Centenaries

The Decade of Centenaries programme for 2023 will start once national funding has been determined by the Commemorations Unit of the Dept of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. The DOC Project Award grant scheme will be advertised in February for local commemorative and historical groups interested in marking events of the revolutionary period in Clare. 2023 is the final year of the Decade of Centenaries.

Clare Archives

The Barrett collection continues to be catalogued and processed. An inventory of Chief Executive Orders has been updated; new material has also been sent for binding to ensure permanent preservation. An article describing The Dwyer Papers has been published in the History Ireland Publication for January 2023. Each month the archives' service continues to deal with queries from the public wishing to view the material from the Archives'

collections. Our Lady's collection continues to be the most sought-after archive each month relating to queries. The scanning project is continuing following the repair of the hardware. Data is being inputted into the Digital Repository of Ireland's system to allow a new digital collection to be added to the repository each month. This month will see the addition of the Corofin Board of Guardian Records.

Clare Arts Office

Arts in the Community

Five “Artists in Schools Scheme” residencies began in primary schools in Labasheeda, Kilbaha, Kilfenora and in St. Clare's Special School in Ennis. A residency also began in Tulla Secondary School. The KeyStone commission with Coláiste Muire, Ennis and Scoil Mhuire, Ennistymon continued. Two Embrace “**Arts & Disability**” residencies began with St. Anne's Special School and with Brothers of Charity, Fergus Park, Ennis. The Brothers of Charity residency in Avonlea finished.

Hospital radio continued twice a week in St. Joseph's Hospital, Ennis. Arts activities resumed in Raheen Hospital. Clare Youth Theatre continued to meet in glor and the Kilkee Youth Theatre re-started.

Support to Artists

The Arts Officer conducted two “*Arts in Clare*” slots on Clare FM in January.

The Arts Officer assisted with the filming of the feature film God Spy and House Hunters Ireland in Fanore, Kinturk, O'Brien's Bridge, the Burren and Killaloe. The Arts Officer also met with a production company for a major drama to be shot in Killaloe. Shortlisted entries for the Engine Shorts film opportunity were announced. A webinar on Making Funding applications took place in conjunction with Visual Artists Ireland. Follow up support and advice was provided in one to one meetings with 13 artists in advance of funding applications to Clare County Council and the Arts Council.

Working with First Music Contact a Regional Development Plan to support the Mid-West Music Industry began with an online survey. Evaluation of the partnership “Music in Healthcare” programme with Limerick and Tipperary Arts Offices was completed. Evaluation of the “River Residency” partnership programme with Cavan, Limerick and Tipperary Arts Offices was completed.

The Arts Office newsletter was issued. Culturlann Sweeney, Kilkee, held an Irish language film screening – Róise and Frank and 3 exhibitions took place in Ennis, Scariff and Kilkee.

Social Media Stats

Facebook groups had a combined membership of 4,347. Facebook and Instagram pages had a following of 5,149 and a reach of 8,477 in the last month. Facebook profile has 2,804 friends. There are 2,241 Twitter followers.

Clare Museum



The Ó Siocháin letter” at Clare Museum

Ten photographs were added to the new website, staff photographed 200 objects and they will be posted online once they are resized and edited. An exhibition of the last letters written by Patrick Hennessy on the eve of his execution were placed on display to mark the centenary of his death. An article, on how

the Hennessy letters in the collection became ‘social objects’ that brought people in the Clooney area together to talk about civil war executions, has been posted online.

There were six social media posts relating to artefacts.

The museum has achieved another one of its goals as outlined in its strategic management plan and is in the process of integrating itself into the LCETB’s ‘Reading Your Local Landscape’ course. This will commence in the boardroom of the museum from 28th February until the end of June. The course is held weekly and will be able to avail of objects and an archive of objects on loan from the national museum to County Clare as part of their course.

The museum has been approached by the University of Galway to provide a place for interns from a new Masters programme which will commence in September. This will provide the museum with a staff resource for projects, in particular the selection and interpretation of objects for display in the museum exhibition. This will help the museum update its showcases and freshen the exhibition.

KILLALOE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Active Travel:

- Drumandoora – 95% complete, road markings and signage to be completed in February.
- Clarisford – 40% complete – Substantial completion on southern section between Clarisford and Bypass crossing. Drainage works complete at northern end adjacent to secondary school



Clarisford

- Tulla – Works on pedestrian crossings and footpath upgrades to re-commence in February.

IPB/GMA:

- Footpath works completed at Whitegate.
- Footpaths works ongoing in January at Feakle, Crossroads – Killaloe, and O’Reilly Park – Tulla.
- Village welcome signage installed at Broadford.

Low-Cost Safety:

- Kilkishen – 75% complete – road markings and signage to be completed
- Henchy’s Cross – 95% complete – road markings to be completed

Road Maintenance:

- Drainage repairs at Cloonfadda completed.
- Spot flooding relief measures including temporary warning signage, gully clearance and outlet opening.



Spot Flooding

- Frost/ice salting measures – as per routes designated in the CCC winter maintenance plan.
- Widespread pothole repair works throughout MD following separate high rainfall and low temperature periods.

Rural Regeneration Development Fund - Scariff Regeneration Plan

Progress continues on this Category 2 project with the conclusion of an important element of the work at the February Meeting with the consideration by the Elected Members of the Part VIII proposal for the proposed development comprising the refurbishment of the former Supermacs and Merriman Tavern buildings and their change of use to Digital Hub (Office) and Enterprise Centre/Community Spac and construction of a public car park on the adjacent green field site and connection to existing on-site services. Planning consent for these elements are a significant requirement to enable an application for Capital funding under any subsequent RRDF funding be sought. The overall project also includes proposed public realm improvements to Market Square and in that regard, surveying work eg undertaking levels, survey existing service layouts are underway of the existing square to enable plans for any future design be further developed and considered.



Broadford Sign

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

IPB Pride of Place Awards 2022



The community of Loop Head in West Clare has been announced as a winner in the 2022 IPB Pride of Place Awards, with the support of the Rural Development Directorate of Clare County Council. The Loop Head Together Project was named the overall winner of the "Coastal Community" category, and also won the Climate Action Special Award for their regenerative farming experiment, Hemp4Soil. The Hemp4soil project involves exploring how growing HEMP on the land, could not only improve the overall quality of the soil and benefit local biodiversity, but could also provide sustainable income streams to the farmers in the future – and provide a product, from which the offshoots could potentially be used within local industry.

In addition, Scariff was named as Runner-Up under the "Population – 1000 to 2000" category in recognition of the vibrant local community activity in the town. Many of the projects and initiatives have been spearheaded by Scariff Community Council, including the development of the Riverside Community Park and the local Community Tourist Office in Scariff.

The Pride of Place awards are all about recognising and celebrating the extraordinary, inspirational and tireless work being undertaken by local communities in Clare as they strive to make their local area a better place in which to live.

The other nominated projects from Clare include the Shannon in Bloom project which was nominated under the "Population over 5,000" category, and Mountshannon Community Council which represented Clare in the "Creative Place Initiative" category.

The Rural Development Directorate played a significant role in helping these communities achieve success by providing support and resources in areas such as community engagement and planning, and their nomination to participate in the competition.



Clare County Council launches two major funding initiatives for community groups and organisations in County Clare



Pictured at Áras Contae an Chláir for the launch of the grant schemes were (l-r): Paul Patton, Chairperson of the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC); Kathy Coleman, Rural Development Directorate, Clare County Council; Brendan Boyce, Rural Development Directorate, Clare County Council; Cllr Tony O'Brien, Cathaoirleach, Clare County Council; Leonard Cleary, Director of Rural Development, Clare County Council; Bernadette Haugh, Chief Officer, Clare LCDC; and Cllr PJ Ryan, Chairperson of the Working Group for the Action Plan for Rural Ireland. Photo: Eamon Ward.

Clare County Council has launched two grant schemes aimed at providing funding opportunities to community groups and local organisations throughout the county.

Clare County Council's Local Area Grant Scheme 2023, together with the Community Support Fund 2022 under the Department of Rural and Community Development's Community Enhancement Programme (CEP), will see a combined funding of €728,325 allocated to County Clare, providing significant financial support and benefit to groups and organisations throughout the county.

Welcoming the launch of both schemes the Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr Tony O'Brien, noted that "in these times of financial uncertainty it is hugely beneficial to be able

to provide this level of funding support and assistance to the various groups and organisations that are the lifeblood of communities across the county".

Acknowledging the launch of Clare County Council's Local Area Grant Scheme and the Department of Rural and Community Development's Community Support Fund, the Chief Executive of Clare County Council, Pat Dowling, welcomed the timing of these funding supports for community groups and organisations in County Clare, which, he said, "will provide them with a much-needed injection of funds allowing them to meet their ongoing operational costs and plan for projects and initiatives to improve the quality of life for communities in Clare."

Clare Local Area Grant Scheme 2023

The Clare Local Area Grant Scheme, previously known as the Community Support Scheme, is a Council-led grant scheme that provides funding for local communities to assist them with various projects that fall within the relevant categories of the scheme. In addition to local community projects, the scheme also includes funding to support artists and organisations who stimulate public interest in, promote knowledge, appreciation and practice of, or improve standards in the arts.

For 2023, applications are being invited under 9 separate grant support categories as follows:

1. Support Scheme for Public Realm Initiatives and Amenity Projects (Max Grant €2,000)

Applications are invited from community groups for small-scale projects that will enhance the appearance of outdoor public amenity areas and public spaces. See scheme guidelines for further details.

2. Support Scheme for Maintenance of Open Spaces in Private Housing Developments

Applications will be accepted from private resident associations/groups for funding towards grass-cutting and landscaping works within private housing estates. See scheme guidelines for further details.

3. Support Scheme for Community Playgrounds (Max Grant €3,000)

Applications are invited from Community Playground Committees for funding to assist them in the operation of community playgrounds. See scheme guidelines for further details.

4. Support Scheme for Burial Ground Maintenance and Provision (Max Grant €600 for maintenance and €8,000 for provision of extension)

Applications are invited from community groups to assist them in the upkeep of burial grounds, e.g. grass-cutting costs.

5. Support Scheme for the Best Kept Local Authority Estate (Max Grant €500)

Applications are invited from social housing residents' associations for funding to assist with the upkeep and appearance of their estate.

6. Support Scheme for the Arts

Applications are invited from artists and arts organisations for funding for arts events and projects/organisational support. See scheme guidelines for further details.

7. Support Scheme for the Irish Language (Max Grant €800)

Applications are invited from community groups for exhibitions, projects or other events which stimulate public interest in the Irish language, provide a knowledge, appreciation and practice of the Irish language or improve the standard of the Irish language.

8. Support Scheme for Tourism Marketing and Promotion

Applications are invited from new and established Tourism Networks for projects that market and promote Clare as a destination. See scheme guidelines for further details.

9. Support Scheme for Sustainable Tourism

Applications are invited from community-based Tourism Operator Networks for projects that contribute to the continuous improvement in sustainable tourism practices.

Online applications can be made from 9:00am on Friday, 13th January, 2023.

The online application system and scheme guidelines can be accessed from the Clare County Council website at: <https://www.clarecoco.ie/services/community/grants/clarelocalareagrantscheme/>

The closing date for submission of online applications is 5:00pm on Friday, 3rd February, 2023. Enquiries can be made by email to: clags@clarecoco.ie



Community Support Fund 2022

The Community Support Fund 2022, under the Community Enhancement Programme funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development, is focused on supporting groups in disadvantaged areas with a provision of €10 million being made available in grant funding nationally towards energy and running costs and enhancing the facilities available to communities. The Community Support Fund is open to groups and organisations in County Clare seeking assistance towards their energy/ operating costs, and capital funding towards repairs and improvements to their facilities. There is also a support fund for Women's Shed groups.

Welcoming the funding, the Chief Executive of Clare County Council, Pat Dowling, acknowledged that "the Community Enhancement Programme has a focus on supporting groups in disadvantaged areas and is aimed at addressing disadvantage as identified in the Clare Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP). Delivered locally by the Clare Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), this programme allows flexibility for each LCDC to decide on local priorities in administering the fund."

Chairperson of the Clare LCDC, Paul Patton (Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board), speaking about the funding, highlighted that "the 2022 Programme provides vital support to community groups in order to help them with their day-to-day running costs and improve their facilities, especially at this time with mounting energy costs and other challenges that they are facing". The Community Support Fund supports small-scale funding for projects which range from assistance with operational and energy costs to larger-scale projects including necessary

improvements or repairs to their facilities. Mr Patton acknowledged that this is a significant funding scheme and encouraged community groups and organisations to avail of the funding this year.

Bernadette Haugh, Chief Officer of the Clare LCDC, stated that "this year's funding is a welcome addition to help support community groups and organisations to carry out their day-to-day activities and improve existing facilities to allow them to continue the invaluable work they do in their respective communities across the county".

The 2022 round of funding allocated to Clare by the Department of Rural and Community Development is €301,325. Online applications can be made from 9:00am on Friday, 13th January, 2023.

The closing date for submission of online applications under the Community Support Fund is **4:00pm on Friday, 31st March, 2023**, and further details can be found at:



<https://www.clarecoco.ie/services/community/grants/communityenhancement>

Enquires can be made by email to: cep@clarecoco.ie or by telephone: 065-6846498.

Rural & Community Staff Facilitate Countywide Voluntary and Community Group Information Clinics

The Rural & Community Development Officers and Rural Grants Staff facilitated Countywide walk-in information clinics to provide advice and assistance to over 100 Community Groups and Organisations who were considering making an application under the Community **Support Fund 2022** and/or Clare Local Area Grants Scheme 2023, which were both launched on 13th January 2023 providing a combined funding allocation of €728,325 for Clare.

The walk-in clinics provided a great opportunity for staff to meet and engage with community groups many of which welcomed the opportunity for face-to-face engagement which was not feasible during Covid and the opportunity to seek advice and discuss their proposals with the Rural & Community Development Officers and staff. It also provided groups with the unique opportunity to network and engage with groups from neighboring parishes, towns

and villages, to share and learn from each other's experience on projects and funding.

Guidance was sought in relation to projects seeking support under the CSF 2022 and the CLAGS 2023 funding schemes as well as a wide range of medium to long term projects. Rural & Community Development Staff also noted the challenges for Community Groups in terms of rising costs and inflation in maintaining facilities and the impact that Covid has had which has resulted in a natural decline in community group numbers and the need for groups to reinvigorate and animate Community involvement with the support of the Rural & Community Development Officers.

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The following Clinics were held throughout the County:

North Clare Clinics: were held in both Lisdoonvarna and Corofin with attendance of over 15 community groups, covering a geographic reach from Liscannor, Ballyvaughan, Kilfenora, Lisdoonvarna, Corofin and Ruan.

East Clare Clinics: were held in both Scariff and Tulla with attendance of over 15 community groups, covering a geographic reach from Feakle, Bodyke, Ogonnolloe, Crusheen, Tuamgraney, Loughgraney, Killaloe, Tulla, Scariff, Quin and Clooney.

Shannon Clinic: was attended by over 30 community groups, covering a geographic reach of Parteen, Shannon, Sixmilebridge and Newmarket-on-Fergus.

Ennis Clinic: was attended by over 20 community groups from the environs of Ennis Town, Clarecastle, Toonagh, Crusheen and Ruan.

West Clare Clinics: were held in Kilrush and Lissycasey with attendance of over 20 community groups, covering a geographic reach of Kilrush, Moneypoint, Doonbeg, Cooraclare, Cross, Kilbaha, Mullagh, Cranny, Coolmeen, Lissycasey, Ballynacally and Kilmihil.

The groups who attended the information clinics ranged from Graveyard Committees, Tidy Towns groups, Residents Associations, Historical and Music Societies, Men's Sheds, Sporting Groups, GAA, LGFA, Rugby Clubs, Soccer clubs, Scout's Clubs, Festival & Art Committees, Community Hall Committees & Community Development Groups. This reflected the wide and diverse range of Community Groups actively working throughout the County to improve their local area, which is to be commended. Elected members from the four Municipal Districts were also in attendance in their respective MD's.

All attendees welcomed the informal walk-in format of the information sessions and thanked the Clare County Council for taking the time to host this event. Given its success and how well it was received it is intended to hold similar events at MD level in the future.



Caption: Niamh Wiley, Rural & Community Development Officer and Frank Cullinan, Staff Officer with members of Lisdoonvarna Failte and Rooska Local Residents Association.



Caption: Niamh Wiley, Rural & Community Development Officer and Frank Cullinan, Staff Officer with a member of Kilfenora Community Centre Group

Community Recognition Fund

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

The broad aim of this €50m fund is to develop or improve facilities that will benefit the broader community into the future. County Clare has been awarded a proportional amount of €2,925,549, the third highest in the country. Local Authorities have been asked to coordinate

the application process and this is being jointly managed in Clare County Council between Ukrainian Services Development and Rural and Community Development.

Type of Project Eligible for Funding

- Development, enhancement or refurbishment of community or cultural facilities including play areas, walkways, parks, community/sensory gardens including communication boards, allotments, and recreational areas;

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

- Development, enhancement or refurbishment of local club and sports facilities including facilities such as community swimming pools, changing rooms, toilets, digital aids such as score / information boards etc.;
- Enhancement to school/parish facilities which are open to use by all of the community after school hours;
- Purchase of equipment for local clubs, festivals, community events and organisations e.g. music, arts or sports equipment;
- Transport infrastructure such as the purchase of community vehicles, bus shelters and attendant information boards; and
- Purchase and refurbishment of buildings and/or the purchase of land for the development of community facilities such as play areas/ MUGAs or town parks/ community gardens, recreational areas etc. for community use where a clear need is identified.

Applications for funding is required to be submitted to the Rural Development Directorate by **Wednesday 22nd February, 2023**. Full details of the scheme are available on the Councils website.

Healthy Clare 2023 Calendar



The Healthy Clare team created a Healthy Clare 2023 Calendar. The theme of 'health and wellbeing' flows through each month by highlighting:

- National and international health awareness dates;
- Tips on ways of 'keeping active', 'switching off and being creative', 'minding your body', 'minding your mood' and 'eating well' in 2023; and
- Signposting to local and national health and wellbeing supports and services.

The calendar was created by Healthy Clare in partnership with Clare Sports Partnership and Clare County Council's Visit Clare, Creative Ireland and Clare Libraries teams.

Over 900 copies have gone out across the county with requests coming in from the public following promotion on social, print and local radio media platforms. Copies were also distributed to communities across Clare via Clare Libraries, the local MD offices, reception at the Áras, the Age Friendly Clare's cultural companions' network, Mid West- Connecting for Life and Healthy Clare network committees.

To get a copy mailed to you please email healthyclare@clarecoco.ie
View the **Calendar online** www.clarecoco.ie/services/community/healthy-clare/healthy-clare-2023-calendar-50299.pdf
Press Release: www.clarecoco.ie/your-council/%5bnews%5d/healthy-clare-launches-its-first-health-and-wellbeing-calendar.html

Clare FM Radio Interview: www.clare.fm/featured-2/healthy-clare-launch-first-health-wellbeing-calendar/

Healthy Clare 'Health and Wellbeing' Page in the Clare Echo

From November 2022 to January 2023 Healthy Clare procured a 'Health and Wellbeing' page in the County's FREE Local Newspaper, the Clare Echo, to increase awareness of existing 'Health and Wellbeing' activities in County Clare with a focus on the 6 Healthy Ireland themes of (1) Mental Health, (2) Physical Activity, (3) Sexual Health, (4) Healthy Eating, (5) Drugs and Alcohol Related Harm and (6) Tobacco Free.

As part of the initiative the Clare Echo also did an online editorial piece reflecting the contents of the page, expanding the reach to include online readership too.



Important young people know GOSHH exists



STUART HOLLY



community could relate to young people, adults, migrant communities, teen parents, also practitioners and professionals who are working with those community groups to build their capacity.

SEXUAL health experts have warned how critical it is that young people are aware of support services available. It comes amid a steep increase in almost all STIs (sexually transmitted infections) this year in the MidWest and Ireland as a whole.

The most recent statistics show that so far this year, there has been a 50 per cent increase in the rate of chlamydia, a 90 per cent increase in reports of gonorrhoea, a 127 per cent increase in reports of HIV cases, along with significant increases in herpes simplex (22 per cent) and syphilis (24 per cent).

GOSHH (Gender, Orientation, Sexual Health and HIV) is an organisation based in Limerick which serves the Midwest area of Clare, Limerick and North Tipperary. Its vision is to create an environment where the mental, emotional, physical and social wellbeing of everyone is promoted and sexual rights are respected, protected and fulfilled.

One crucial element of their work is to provide a rapid testing service which tests for a range of STIs including HIV at their premises on Davis Street in Limerick, while there is also a drop-in or postal service where condoms, lube and dams are provided free of cost.

Grainne Woulfe, a Sexual Health Project worker with GOSHH tells The Clare Echo that the organisation's remit is much broader than this, offering emotional support for people and providing education across the spectrum of gender, orientation, sexual health and HIV in schools and companies in the Midwest.

"We provide a counselling service, we offer one-to-one personal support, and we also provide educational training workshops and information," says Grainne, who has worked in her role since 2011. "Training programmes within the

An increasingly important role for GOSHH is the support and education around orientation along with gender, an area which has been highlighted increasingly in the public domain in recent years with more discussions around gender expression, the transgender community and non-binary individuals.

Grainne continues, "There's always been a service supporting LGBTI people in the community, it has expanded and grown over the years and we have a number of staff working in that area so people's awareness is increasing as society has changed. We are finding that more people are reaching out to avail of our training and people are also availing of our counselling and support services too."

She adds that it's important to many people within the Midwest community that support services around these areas exist. "There would be - as well as training - social and leisure groups for the LGBTI community, so that might be a range of sporting and leisure activities, book clubs, hill walking, it's a way of making connections within the community."

"We provide a range of services for young people and their families. We have a counselling service for young people and a peer support group for young people. We also provide supports for parents and carers to help support them in supporting their young person through their issues."

"It's important for young people to know we exist as a service. We work with people of all ages but we work with young people mostly. That's changing as society is changing and we're having more and more discussions around our areas of work, so we support all ages, older people, adults and young people. Sexuality is for everybody."

For more information on GOSHH services, phone 061 314 354 or visit the website at goshh.ie.

The HSE free home STI (sexually transmitted infection) testing service is available to anyone aged 17 or older who lives in the Republic of Ireland.

- You can:**
- order a home test kit online
 - return your samples to the lab by post
 - get your test results by text message or phone call

- If you have symptoms of an STI or need urgent support, you should contact your local STI clinic or GP.

- The Home STI test kits test for:**
- Chlamydia
 - Gonorrhoea
 - HIV
 - Syphilis

www.sexualwellbeing.ie



Scan the QR Code to visit GOSHH's website



I-PARC conference on promoting physical activity in UCD

Age Friendly Clare was invited by Age Friendly Ireland to include examples of good public realm accessibility as part of their presentation at the I-PARC conference on promoting physical activity in UCD on 18 January.

The session Age Friendly Ireland took part in was entitled 'Improving access to spaces and places for physical activity'. They spoke about Age Friendly Towns and public realm processes.

Age Friendly Clare submitted examples from the Ennis Age Friendly Town project that related to access to spaces for physical activity, which was included in the overall presentation. The Clare Age Friendly programme and the public realm work carried out by Ennis Municipal District were acknowledged at the conference.



9th January celebration - Mayor's Invitation of promoting Clare internationally post-pandemic



Mayor's Evening of Refreshments to acknowledge the international promotion Of Clare Tourism During 2022

On the 9th January, the Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Councillor Tony O'Brien hosted a special reception in recognition of Clare people who contributed to the successful international promotion of the County post lockdown and during 2022. The domestic tourism sector was fully reopened to international visitors last year, two years on from the introduction of restrictions on international visitors to Ireland.

In attendance were members of the Clare Tourism Advisory Forum, the Council Twinning Committee and key representatives of the Clare tourism business and community sectors as well as musicians Mike Hanrahan, Socks in the Frying Pan and Oliver and Blackie O'Connell.

Fáilte Ireland Regional & Festival Funding

Clare County Council is pleased to announce that the Regional Festival & Participative Events Funding Support Programme 2023, funded under Failte Ireland, is open for online applications.

The aim of this Scheme is to support festivals and participative events in County Clare. The supported events must help to drive domestic and international tourism arrivals to Clare, win bed nights, stimulate local economic activity, and help to improve the visitor experience in the county.

Qualifying Conditions & minimum Eligibility Thresholds for 2023:

- The project must have a minimum expenditure of €10,000.
- The Festival or Participative Event should help to attract domestic and international visitor arrivals to County Clare.
- The festival/events must generate a minimum of 300 visitor bed nights in paid accommodation.
- The festival or event must take place during 2023.
- The Festival & Events Programme must include high-quality content and design.
- The event must have appropriate insurance cover.
- The Festival/Event must have an online presence with up-to-date information.
- Be fully compliant with current regulations and requirements for holding such an event.
- The Festival/Event will take into account the actions needed to minimise the impact on the Environment (e.g. minimising / eliminating single use materials etc).

The Closing Date for submission of online applications is 4:00 p.m., on Thursday, 9th February 2023



New Developments For Vandeleur Walled Gardens Experience



2023 is set to herald a new era for Vandeleur Walled Gardens Experience in Kilrush with a new interpretative museum opening at the popular West Clare visitor attraction in advance of the summer season 2023.

Works have been ongoing since 2021 to extensively restore and renovate the old stable block at the site, which also will feature a new gardeners' building. The project is funded by the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, Project Ireland 2040,

under the Department of Rural and Community Development with match funding by Clare County Council.

Clare County Council is funding the development of a new café / restaurant on site with qualified applicants this week invited to operate the new facility, which is presently known as The Woodland Bistro. The design team for the Café project comprises Tom McNamara (Quantity Surveyor), P Coleman & Associates (Architects/ Engineers), Moloney Fox Consulting Engineers (Mechanical & Engineering) and Ruth Minogue (Ecology).

Site Visits for Shannon & Shannon Erne Interpretation project



Pictured (L-R): Damien McWeeney (Waterways Ireland), Joan Tarmey (Tourism Officer, Clare County Council), Richard Weston (Tandem Partners Ltd), John Jones (Waterways Ireland) during a site visit at Beál Bóru near Killaloe.

Waterways Ireland is leading a new project which arises from its Shannon Tourism Masterplan - the Shannon & Shannon Erne Interpretation project. Having recently commenced the project, Waterways Ireland is working in collaboration with the Tourism Department of Clare County Council as well as all the Local Authorities along the River Shannon.

Research work is underway to identify potential compelling stories at a number of locations along the Shannon and Shannon-erne Waterways. Site visits are being conducted to consider if potential sites can be included in this ambitious project. Tandem Partners Ltd has been commissioned by Waterways to research and present proposals for a number of locations.

While the project is very much in its infancy, the project is expected to deliver creative and compelling interpretation for visitors and locals alike, bringing stories of the River Shannon to life.

WEST CLARE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT- KILRUSH LEA

Works in January 2023 were dictated by weather. The cold snap in early December followed by a prolonged period of wet weather did an enormous amount of damage to road surfaces in West Clare. Large numbers of potholes formed in many roads and our roads crews were fully occupied patching and repairing these potholes.

The cold & wet conditions were not ideal for road repair works and many of the repairs will be temporary in nature as a result.

Our 2023 roadworks programme will be impacted as a result. If central funding to repair the affected roads is not forthcoming our RWP will have to concentrate on repairing the badly damaged road surfaces. Roads that would otherwise have been resurfaced this year may consequently fall off the 2023 RWP.



TII made funding available, and a section of the N68 in Lissycasey (near Talty's shop) is being repaired. This section was particularly badly affected by the weather. Potholes prior to repair. Pavement overlay repair.

N68 IN LISSYCASEY.

West Clare MD (Kilrush LEA) received 2 small claims in 2022. These are claims seeking compensation for damaged caused to a tyre, alloy wheel, shock absorber or similar due to the condition of the road surface. 9 small claims have been received to date in 2023. Velocity patcher in action in West Clare. Road Planer at work on the N68, Lissycasey.



Crews have also been carrying out drainage works in January. Opening drains to ensure that surface water makes its way from finished road surfaces, and in preparation for the 2023 RWP. Drainage works on the R483 near Cooraclare. We also dropped some kerbs on footpaths in Kilmihil. The works were carried out following a request from a local resident and wheelchair user. Dropped kerbs in Kilmihil.



WEST CLARE MD

2023 began with a continued trend of challenging weather conditions this necessitated a sustained period of demand for staff in the MD. The staff did trojan work in responding to the prevailing weather condition challenges and undertook a significant number of resultant repairs on impacted roads during this month.

The team in the MD are preparing the roadworks programme for 2023 in conjunction with the Roads department within the budgets available from the relevant funding authorities. In addition, the team are scoping out the capital projects planned for delivery during 2023.

SPORTS & RECREATION



Januaries 2023 is no different with many setting New Year's resolutions. This is very positive for Active Ennis where we welcomed many new and returning customers to the leisure centre. The team are available to provide guidance and assistance to those reticent to return to activity and as the days begin to lengthen this will see increased activity at our outdoor facilities.

We welcome the couch to 5k group who are utilising the facilities at John O'Sullivan Park, Lee's Road, this initiative is a way to ease back into exercise at your own pace.

Active Ennis Leisure Complex

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

- There is maximum participation in the schools' swimming program with 18 schools bringing children to lessons
- The swim lesson programme is full providing weekly lessons to children to learn this vital life skill.
- The morning Body Blast and Lunch Crunch classes are catering to up to 60 participants per week
- The morning Aqua Fit class caters for up to 40 people per class.
- The Cardiac unit program back, where we get referrals from the cardiac unit in the hospital and in conjunction

design fitness/recovery programs for clients.

- We have introduced Active Hands Aids to assist people with limited mobility or strength deficiency in gym workouts.

Full details of all classes and programmes are available on www.activeennis.ie

Look out for our new Yoga programme which is commencing in February.



Active Ennis Lees Road / Tim Smythe Park

Activity in the park is sustained with a notable increase in traffic accessing the park up from 11,450 vehicles in December to 13,452 in January to date (26.01.2023). In addition:

- 287 hours of booked activities so far in January
- Pedestrians' numbers are increasing with 1,200 pedestrians so far in January.

Facilities are open and available for booking via the website www.activeennis.ie

All clubs and patrons are requested to leave facilities as they find them.

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

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGIC PROJECTS

Roche Masterplan

Clare County Council continues to work with Roche Ltd on the development of a Masterplan for the Roche site in Clarecastle, feeding in to OMP Architects as project managers. A strategic market demand assessment has almost been completed which will further inform the development of the Masterplan.

Town Centre First / Croí Conáithe

A Town Centre First Cross-Directorate team has been established to ensure a co-ordinated and co-operative approach to town regeneration in Clare and the implementation of the Town Centre First Policy. Led by the Economic Directorate, the team is made up of senior staff from each of the Municipal Districts, Housing, Planning, Property Management, Rural and Finance, and is chaired by the Town Regeneration Officer. The first meeting was held on the 24th January 2023.



Sixmilebridge Masterplan:

Following on from the success of the public consultation process carried out before Christmas, the Town Centre First team arranged a workshop with the 6th class pupils of St. Finnachta's National School in Sixmilebridge on Friday 20th January 2023. Sixty two students attended along with their teachers. The pupils were informed on the issues of their town and provided significant feedback of how they envisage the town centre could be improved. Using maps and aerial photos the students were able to identify areas, facilities and services they liked/disliked and made proposals for project they felt could be considered as part of the Masterplan. Work on the draft masterplan continues by the design team Allies & Morrison and a Town Team information evening is due to be held in early February to formally establish a town team to act as a steering group feeding into the Masterplan development and to lead the implementation of the Masterplan going forward. It is anticipated that a draft masterplan will be ready for public consultation in April, with stakeholder engagement in

March. A key intervention already identified through the consultation process is the need for additional car parking spaces in Sixmilebridge Town Centre and the Town Centre First team is committed to delivering this and working in close collaboration with the Shannon MD team to advance



Shannon Town Centre Masterplan:

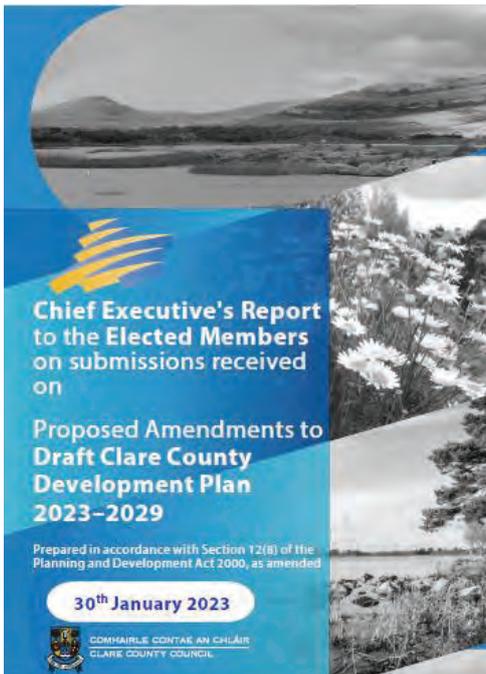
The Town Centre First team is working closely with the Shannon MD team to engage with stakeholders and landowners in the regeneration of Shannon Town Centre to deliver upon the objectives of the Shannon Town Centre Masterplan. Funding streams are being identified to enable delivery of the One Shannon Hub and we are currently reviewing projects/properties that have potential to align with the next URDF Call.

FORWARD PLANNING

Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029

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

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



Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2022

The Forward Planning were successful in securing funding for public realm enhancement projects under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2022, as follows:

- A public space initiative at Parliament Street, Ennistymon- This project was identified in the Ennistymon Enhancement Plan as an area with high potential to contribute positively to the streetscape of Ennistymon town centre. This planned project proposes to enhance the public realm offering at Parliament Street to make it a more pedestrian friendly,

age-friendly, and accessible street. The brief development stage is underway and tenders will be sought for consultancy services in the second quarter of 2023.

- Project at Cappa Village, Kilrush - This Project follows on from the formulation of the Cappa Enhancement Strategy which identified key sites to sustainably develop the village while preserving its maritime character and scale. The funding provides for a new connection to be made from an existing recreational amenity to the adjoining coastal walk. This will further usage and increase connectivity with adjoining residential areas while opening up views to the Shannon Estuary. Universal design and inclusivity underpin the proposal, which will open up a valuable recreational amenity to all who wish to use it. The proposed amphitheatre seeks to create a social space in the village which can accommodate day to day, as well as special outdoor events. The brief development stage is underway and tenders will be sought for consultancy services in the second quarter of 2023.



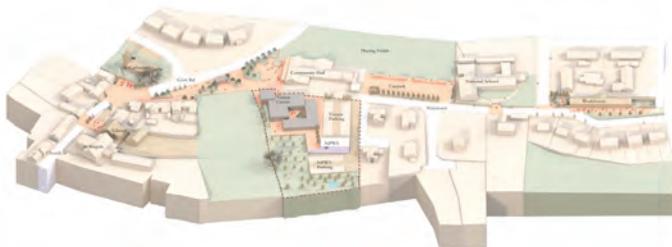
Caption: Proposed public realm project at Parliament St, Ennistymon. Image extracted from the Ennistymon Enhancement Plan.



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

Corofin Enhancement Strategy

Clare County Council and National Parks & Wildlife Services (NPWS) are working in partnership to prepare an Enhancement strategy for the village of Corofin. A multi-disciplinary design team led by Hall McKnight Architects has been appointed to prepare the plan. The design team have issued a draft public consultation report to the steering group and they have started adapting the design proposals based on the feedback from the second stage of consultation. This work will continue in February and it is envisaged that a display of the final proposals will be exhibited in Corofin in early 2023.



The Manchester Martyrs’ Monument

The Manchester Martyrs’ Monument in Kilrush was recently restored by Clare County Council with grant aid from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage under the Historic Structures Fund and with the support of Cllr. Ian Lynch. The fully restored monument was visited by Cllr. Ian Lynch and Pat Dowling, Chief Executive of Clare County Council on 6th January 2023. The project was managed by the Planning Department with input from Kilrush and District Historical Society and Kilrush Town Team. The works to the monument were completed by Mid-West Lime Ltd in collaboration with heritage blacksmith Brendan St. John and involved the full restoration of the stonework and wrought iron railings. All works were guided by conservation best practice. The repair and restoration of the Monument is a significant step in safeguarding the heritage of Kilrush Town Centre and is a further continuation of heritage-led works in Kilrush, for which the local and visiting community will greatly benefit.



Caption: Official visit to The Manchester Martyrs’ Monument following restoration. Pictured above: Paul Gleeson, Kilrush & District Historical Society; Charlie Glynn, Kilrush Town Team; Cllr. Ian Lynch, Clare County Council; Pat Dowling, Chief Executive of Clare County Council; John O’Malley, Senior Executive Officer at Clare County Council; Tomás Prendeville, Executive Architect at Clare County Council.



Caption: Aerial view The Manchester Martyrs’ Monument, Kilrush. Photography by Paschal Brooks, Brooks Video

Flexible Outdoor Structures

Clare County Council has received funding under the Outdoor Public Space Scheme as promoted by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. This funding stream asks us to reimagine how we use our outdoor public spaces and proposes a series of flexible outdoor structures which can be erected in outdoor locations during one-off events. The project team concluded the tender process in early December and Alan Meredith Studio Ltd have been appointed to fabricate the structures. The fabrication process initiated in January and will conclude in mid-2023.



Hastings’ Farmhouse, Shannon

With funding from the Heritage Council’s Heritage Stewardship Fund, Clare County Council and Dúchas na Sionna have done works in relation to Hastings Farmhouse, Shannon, which is a protected structure of historic and architectural significance. The partnership between the Council and Dúchas na Sionna is a key step in safeguarding the heritage of Hastings’ Farmhouse. With this funding, we have put in place key structures and frameworks which will guide the future of this protected structure and a cost plan for proposals has been developed. It also funded training in vernacular construction for adult learners with a view to increasing inclusivity in heritage initiatives. This training was delivered in partnership with the LCETB and Dúchas na Sionna and was attended by members of the local community as well as members of the Ukrainian community. The grant also covers site works which look to increase accessibility to the site and they got underway in November and will be concluded in early 2023.

HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY

Lisdoonvarna Heritage Plan and Design Guide

The Lisdoonvarna Heritage Plan and Design Guide was launched at Clare County Council in January, the Plan sets out proposals to inform and guide the town's future development and ensure



the conservation of its rich heritage.

Pictured to mark the official launch of the Lisdoonvarna Heritage Plan and Design Guide were (left to right): Ailish Drake, Drake Hourigan Architects; Cllr Joe Garrihy, Clare County Council; Helen Quinn, Senior Planner, Clare County Council; Congella McGuire, Heritage Officer, Clare County Council; and John Hehir, Lisdoonvarna Historical Society.

Shallee Castle Information Board

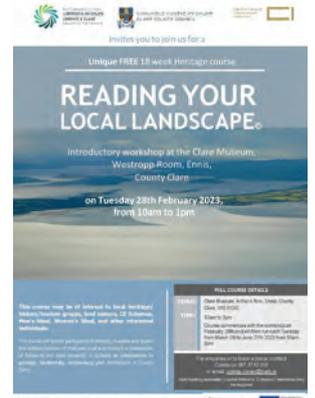
An information board has been installed at Shallee Castle along the Mid Clare Way under the assistance of the Clare Community Archaeology Scheme and with funding from Clare Creative Ireland



Shallee Tower House information board

Reading Your Local Landscape

Clare County Council and Limerick Clare Education and Training Board are seeking students for the 10th Reading Your Local Landscape course, which will be held in the Clare Museum, Ennis. The course will enable participants to identify, examine and record the heritage features of their own local area through a combination of field work and desk-based research. This includes an introduction to archaeology, geology, biodiversity, and natural heritage in Clare. The course commences with an introductory workshop on February 28th and will then run each Tuesday from March to June.



Clare Cillíní Survey

There is an estimated total of 140 known Cillíní in Clare, of which 75 sites have been surveyed to date and the remaining ones will be surveyed in 2023. All of this information has been uploaded to the Clare Heritage website. It is planned to finalise and launch the survey in 2023.

Heritage Grants

Three applications were made under the Clare Heritage Plan funding scheme from the Heritage Council for 2023 as follows:

1. Funding was sought for the drafting of the 4th Clare Heritage Plan 2024-2030
2. Heritage risk assessment because of coastal erosion due to Climate Change off the Clare Coast
3. Continuation of the Clare Community Archaeology Scheme

Assistance and support have been given to others to apply for the following:-

- Heritage Capacity Fund 2023 – to support operational costs for not-for-profit heritage NGOs.
- Heritage Stewardship Fund 2023 – to support public body employees to deliver heritage projects.
- Community Monument Fund

Communities are being supported to make applications for the Heritage Council Community Heritage Grant scheme with deadline for application on Monday the 20th of February 2023

CONSERVATION AND BUILT HERITAGE

Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS)

The 2023 round of the Built Heritage Investment Scheme was announced on 16th November 2022 and closed on 27th January 2023. The Built Heritage Investment Scheme is designed to assist with the repair and conservation of structures that are protected under the Planning and Development Acts. In certain cases, the scheme also supports the conservation of structures within Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) where, in the opinion of the local authority, a need for works to enhance the character and appearance of an ACA has been demonstrated. The primary purpose of the scheme is to support privately owned properties in need of repair and conservation. Projects that incorporate a traditional skills training element may also be supported by this fund. Any such projects must be agreed in advance by the Department.

The grants scheme operates on a 50/50, grant/match funding basis. The minimum funding awarded for successful projects will be €2,500 (works value of €5,000) up to a maximum of €15,000 (works value €30,000). Clare County Council are currently undergoing an assessment process to determine which applications are eligible to go forward for funding. Successful applicants will be notified. Priority will be given to small-scale, labour-intensive projects. Projects should demonstrate a range of conservation skills, and will not be concentrated in a particular geographical area or on a particular type of structure.

It should be noted that the 2023 Built Heritage Investment Scheme includes ring-fenced funding of €500,000 for conservation repairs to thatched structures to maximise the availability of financial assistance to such owners, helping them offset other costs.

Historic Structures Fund

Phased works to St. Flannan's Cathedral are ongoing and are due for completion in March 2023.

The 2023 round of the Built Heritage Investment Scheme was announced on 16th November 2022 and closed on 27th January 2023. The primary focus of the Historic Structures Fund will be on conservation and enhancement of historic structures and buildings for the broader benefit of communities and the public. There are four streams of funding under the HSF:

Stream 1 will offer grants from €15,000 up to €50,000 and is aimed at essential repairs and smaller capital works for the refurbishment and conservation of heritage structures. The grant can cover up to 80% of eligible cost.

Stream 1, Historic Shopfronts sub-stream – As in 2021,

to incentivise the conservation of historic shopfronts each Local Authority is invited to submit an additional application under Stream 1 for eligible essential repairs and small capital works for the refurbishment and conservation of historic shop facades, windows, signage and other associated details to safeguard them and keep them in use. Local Authorities are also invited to make an additional application for Irish-language shopfronts. The grant can cover up to 80% of eligible cost.

Stream 2 will offer a small number of grants from €50,000 up to €200,000 for larger enhancement, refurbishment or reuse projects involving heritage structures, where:

- a. A clear community or public benefit has been demonstrated, or
- b. A clear residential benefit has been demonstrated (such projects must be advanced through the planning process as necessary)

A grant of over €200,000 may be awarded in exceptional circumstances where a case is made by the applicant in relation to the significance of the project and the works proposed. The grant can cover up to 50% of eligible cost but up to 80% in exceptional circumstances.

Stream 4 Vernacular Structures Stream - In the context of the forthcoming strategy for built vernacular, the pilot stream of funding for vernacular structures introduced in 2021 will be retained, with funding of €50,000. The purpose of the stream is to support conservation repairs and small capital works to vernacular structures that are not listed in local authority Records of Protected Structures or otherwise legally protected. Such structures may be located within an Architectural Conservation Area. All local authorities can apply for funding for specific projects of between €5,000 and €10,000 for eligible projects. The grant can cover up to 80% of eligible cost.

The closing date for both the HSF and BHIS for applications was Friday, 27th January 2023 with successful applicants to be notified in late February/early March, date TBC.

Community Monuments Fund 2022

Total funding available nationally for projects under Community Monuments Fund 2023 will be €6,000,000. The Fund is investing essential capital in our archaeological heritage to help owners and custodians of archaeological monuments safeguard them into the future for the benefit of communities and the public. The Fund is available for structures on the RMP (Record of Monuments and Places). It must be noted that the CMF covers 100% of the cost and requires no match funding.

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Stream 1- Grants up to €100,000 for essential repairs and capital works for the conservation of archaeological monuments.

Stream 2- Grants of up to €30,000 for the development of Conservation Management Plans/Reports and detailed Specification of Works aimed at identifying measures for conservation of archaeological monuments and improving public access.

Stream 3- Grants of up to €30,000 for the enhancement of access infrastructure and interpretation (including virtual/online) at archaeological monuments.

Further details are available at <https://www.clarecoco.ie/services/planning/news/community-monuments-fund-2023.html>

Irish Georgian Society Grant

The Irish Georgian Society is now inviting applications for its Conservation Grants Programme 2023 with submissions accepted until Monday 20st February. A total of €45,000 will be available which will comprise €35,000 from IGS.

Structures of architectural interest from across the country are eligible for funding from IGS London. Since 2014 the Irish Georgian Society's Conservation Grants Programme has been funded by IGS London during which time support has been given to over fifty conservation projects. These have included country houses, thatched cottages, townhouses, architectural follies, and churches with grants awarded for repairs to roofs,

windows and rainwater goods, support for conservation plans and building appraisals, and for other essential conservation works.

Applications for the 2023 grants programme must be submitted by **5pm on Monday 20th February** with forms available to download at <https://www.igs.ie/updates/article/irish-georgian-society-conservation-grants-programme-2023>. Decisions on the allocation of grants will be made by mid-April at which time applicants will be informed.

Section 57 Applications

Section 57 Declarations are issued to owners of buildings or structures that wish to conduct works to their structures. The Declaration determines whether works would be considered exempt from the requirement to obtain planning permission. A Section 57 Declaration can also be used to clarify the curtilage of a protected structure, or what elements are to be protected. There is no fee for a Section 57 Declaration.

Section 57 Declarations	January 2023 up to & including 31/01/2023	Total (Valid) Year to date 2023
No. of Section 57 Declaration Requests received	3	3

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The table below provides a summary of the levels of activity in the Development Management Section in 2022.	
Total planning Applications Received	1173
Number of planning Decisions Issued	1044
Part 8's applications received	11
Pre-Planning Enquiries received	235
Section 5's Received	85
Part V Exemptions Certificates	58
Article 10 Change of Use Notifications (Commercial to Domestic)	6
Notifications of appeals to An Bord Pleanála	61
Appeal Decisions Received from An Bord Pleanála	25

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

PLANNING APPLICATIONS	January 2023	Year to date 2023
No. of planning applications received	55	55
No. of Planning Decisions made	63	63
No. of decisions notified by An Bord Pleanála	1	1
No. of pre-planning enquiries received	18	18
No. of Section 5 applications	6	6
No. of Section 97 Exemption Cert applications (in respect of Part V of the Planning & Dev Act 2000)	3	3
Submissions received regarding Compliance	18	18

E-PLANNING PROJECT

The National Online Planning Portal was launched in Clare County Council on December 15th 2022. An information webinar for planning agents was hosted by the LGMA on January 19th 2023. The introduction of E Planning will streamline the planning process with the documents automatically uploaded to the document management system reducing the volume of scanning and storage of paper files. This will also be of benefit to the Agents who will be able to log on and accumulate a draft application over time, or upload and pay for an application on the portal in 15 minutes reducing the need to visit the Planning Office. Members of the public can also make a planning submission online. To date we have received nine electronic applications, one in December and nine in January.

TAKING IN CHARGE OF HOUSING ESTATES

The following Housing Estates were Taken in Charge during 2022.

- Cluain Liag Ard, Miltown Malbay
- Churchfield, Doonbeg
- Dergview, Scarriff
- An Cregg Ard, Lahinch
- Deerpark, Minister Cross, Shannon
- Slí Lag Ard, Miltown Malbay

The following Release of Bond Applications were processed in 2022.

- Cluain Gréine, Ennis 61 houses and apartments. Insert Picture Cluain Greine
- Luí na Gréine, Kilkee 10 Houses

Design and Supervision of Remedial Works 2022

2022 saw significant progress being made on a number of large housing developments that had not been completed by the developer to a satisfactory standard. Over €1 million was spent by the Council in this area during 2022.

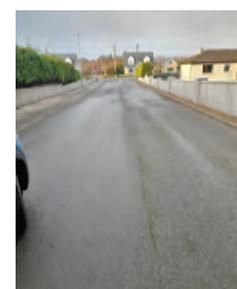
Remedial works were carried out at the following locations:-

Cappahard: Remedial Works to carry out major upgrading to roads, footpaths, foul and storm water drainage, and water infrastructure were required. A contract of €600,000 was awarded in June 2022. This development comprises of 285 units and the works were substantially completed in 2022 and will be fully completed in the coming weeks. The Planning Department is also progressing the Taking in Charge of this development, and this will be coming before the members early in 2023.



Noughaval Drive, Doora: Remedial works have been carried out including repairs to roads, footpaths, upgrade to entrance boundaries wall, line marking and signage. This estate has been Taken in Charge. This estate contains 11 houses.

Maigh Dara Quin: Remedial works have been carried out including full surfacing of all roads within the estate as well as new footpaths at all entrances to houses, along with uncontrolled pedestrian crossing, line marking, signage and works to drainage within the site. This tender was €165,330.00 excluding vat. This estate comprises of 45 houses.



Shanballa Lahinch Road Ennis: Remedial works have been carried out including full surfacing of all roads within the estate as well as repairs to concrete footpaths, new line marking signage, works to drainage, watermains, green areas and boundaries. The tender value was €267,041 excluding vat. This estate comprises of 197 houses.



Derg View Scarriff: Remedial works were carried out to upgrade the roads and footpaths. The tender value was €127,000 and this was awarded in October 2022. This development contains 20 residential units.



Before



After

Planning Enforcement

The year 2022 was a very busy year in Planning Enforcement with almost 200 complaints received in the year, some of which related to the same sites.

The table below provides a summary of Enforcement activity for 2022 as a whole and for the month of January 2023.

	2023 to date	Full year 2022
New complaints received	5	173
New files opened	3	105
Files closed	5	53
Warning Letters issued	15	178
Enforcement Notice issued	3	28
Legal	0	3

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

- The Trading Online Voucher Scheme, which provides grant support to small businesses to develop an e-commerce website, has continued to see strong interest. In January, two applications have been approved while three grants were drawn down.
- Mentoring: LEO Clare began 2023 with a continued strong requirement for all of our Mentoring Options including mentoring in Starting a Business, Finance, Digital Marketing, Export Development and Brexit. In January, 22 mentoring applications have been assigned mentors.
- Training: LEO Clare continued to see strong demand for online training support offering during January as our new programme for 2023 began. The main topics of interest to Clare enterprises were Start Your Own Business Programmes, Book-keeping Vat and Income Tax, Digital Marketing workshops and continued interest in the Trading Online Voucher workshops with over 120 clients signed up.
- Grant Funding: January saw a continued interest in our grant funding with 3 Business Expansion Grants and 1 Priming application received for our next evaluation committee meeting in early February.

Local Enterprise Office Clare 2022 Job Numbers

On January 17th, Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment Simon Coveney TD, announced the annual results of the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) for 2022 which showed that Local Enterprise Office Clare supported companies created 261 jobs in 2022.

- 261 new jobs created in 2022
- Net employment gain of 105 in 2022
- 220 total small businesses, employing 1,353 people supported by LEO Clare

The net jobs created by Local Enterprise Office Clare takes into account companies that amalgamated, ceased trading and those that transferred on to Enterprise Ireland.

Those 220 small businesses that are financially supported by LEO Clare employ 1,353 people.

Other Key Metrics in relation to 2022 for LEO Clare:

- €737k grant aid approved to 31 applicants.
- €456k paid out (pipeline commitments €557k)
- 1,380 participated in training programme
- 147 businesses received mentoring
- 6 businesses transferred to Enterprise Ireland

Showcase Ireland

LEO Clare supported four local enterprises (Creative Clay, Siar Landscape Photography, Wix and Wax Ireland and The Moher Soap Co.) to participate in Showcase Ireland 2023, an international art, craft and design event in the RDS, Dublin. The event is attended by traders from across the globe. A Member of LEO Clare visited the stands on along with stands of two other Clare based companies attending the event.



Showcase Pic 1 L-R Danielle Kennelly, Wix and Wax, Helen Pilkington, LEO Clare and Raquel Ruido, The Moher Soap Company



Showcase Pic 2 L- R Helen Pilkington LEO Clare, Raquel Walton Creative Clay, Aoife Lenihan and Gary Collins, Siar Photography

Social Enterprise Network Presentation

Local Enterprise Office Clare participated in the first Clare Social Network meeting which was held by the Clare Local Development Company. Guest speakers also included Social Impact Ireland and Michelle Guthrie from Local Enterprise Office Clare. The event was attended by many local businesses.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Property Transactions and Conveyancing

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

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

Transaction	January 2023	Year to date 2023	Full year 2022
Lease / Sub Lease of Property / Building	0	0	4
Licence to use property / building	0	0	13
Grazing Agreement for Lands	0	0	22
Deed of Transfer signed	0	0	19
Contract for Sale signed	1	1	2
Deed of Right of Way / Wayleave signed	0	0	6
Deed of Rectification / Variation signed	1	1	10
Allotment Agreements signed	38	38	39

Grazing of Lands 2023

The annual advertisement for grazing of Council owned lands for an 11 month period was advertised in early January 2023 and the agreements with the farmers are being finalized at present.

Shannon Allotments

The renewal of the agreements for the Shannon allotments is almost finalized for the year 2023. It has been possible, with improved management of the allotments and ensuring that all are maintaining their allotment, to allocate a few allotments to those on the waiting list. A meeting with the Allotment Association took place at the end of January to review governance, maintenance and operational issues.

Tullyvarraga Hall, Shannon

The Property Management Team are working with the Committee of Tullyvarraga Hall in Shannon to improve the condition of this building, which is about 60 years old. The building is the ownership of Clare County Council and leased to the Community Group. With a grant from POBAL and funding through the Council’s community Grants scheme, works are planned to refurbish the toilets to make them accessible. The works to upgrade the oil heating system and tank to current standards are completed. There two investments will make a significant difference to the Hall and with the installation of a replacement kitchen planned for early 2023, it will open up additional opportunities for the community to use this facility.

Acquisition of Inagh Garda Station

The Council has recently signed contracts for the acquisition of the former Inagh Garda Station from the Office of Public Works. This is a further example of moving to acquire vacant buildings and work with local groups to find a use for them. In this case, it is proposed to lease the small building to the amalgamated Inagh and Inis Housing Association, who will base staff in the building and use it as their office. Such collaborations are key to local community development. When the acquisition is completed, the proposal for leasing will be brought to Council for approval.



E n e r g y Management for Public buildings

In line with the Government’s campaign to reduce our energy usage, a range of measures have been put in place in our Corporate and other buildings to reduce usage on lighting and heating and IT related equipment. Energy management will be closely monitored by the Energy Management Committee.



Casual Trading

As most of the events and festivals were held in the summer time, no additional casual trading licences were issued in December. The renewals of current licences for 2023 is being done at present.

DERELICT SITES

During 2022, a total of 69 new derelict site files have been opened and represents a significant effort by the Derelict Sites Team to take action against derelict properties throughout the County. Initial engagement with owners or their representatives is key to resolution of the issues of dereliction and to understand the various reasons why the properties are in a derelict stage. A number

of properties have been brought to the market and some are at ‘sale agreed’ stage and we continue the engagement with the new owners of those properties to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities under the Derelict Sites Act, 1990.

We are also seeing the outcome of sales agreed in 2021 and 2022, with planning applications for refurbishment increasing and some works commencing on individual properties. We are also advising owners of residential properties of the grant that is available for refurbishing vacant and derelict properties to residential use – see further information below. However, with time and effort, working with owners, financial institutions and other departments, there are definitely options for positive re-development and revitalisation of many such derelict sites.

The table below provides a snapshot of the activity in January 2023 to date, together with comparative figures for the full year 2022. This is a very significant increase on activity throughout the whole County.

Derelict Sites	January 2023	Year to date 2023	Full Year 2022
No. of new files opened	5	5	69
No. of Section 8(2) Notices issued – Intention to enter site on Derelict Sites Register	4	4	33
No. of Section 8(7) Notices issued – Entry of site onto Derelict Sites Register	2	2	22
No. of Section 11 Notices issued – Measures required to render the site non-derelict	0	0	0
No. of files closed / property removed from Derelict Sites Register	1	1	21
No. of Notices served to Compulsorily Purchase (CPO)	0	0	6
No of Vesting Orders signed	0	0	4

Compulsory acquisition of Derelict sites (CPO)

Of the six CPOs initiated in 2022, three have been vested in Clare County Council and one is outstanding in the Property Registration

Authority. The CPO process has been initiated in two more properties and we are dealing with an objections on one and work has commenced on another one of the properties. We are working with the Housing Department to return the first three properties to living accommodation, following refurbishment or re-development.

A further three CPO's are being initiated at present with notices to be served in early February 2023.

VACANT HOMES

During January, Clare County Council established a new team in the Property Management unit of the Economic Development Directorate to focus efforts on reducing levels of vacancy and dereliction in towns, villages and rural areas. The objective is to ensure that the approach of the Council is consistent and gives opportunities and information to owners of vacant and derelict properties, while also ensuring that the powers under the Derelict Sites Act are applied to the property, if no positive engagement can be achieved.

Grants Scheme for Vacant and Derelict Properties

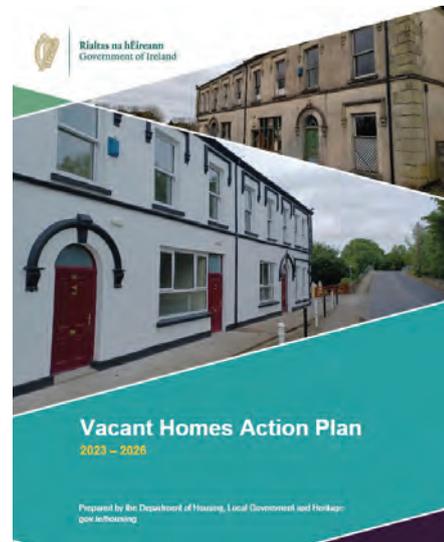
The grants scheme, which was introduced in July 2022 is for the refurbishment of vacant and derelict properties, primarily for first time buyers who will use the property as their principal place of residence. Full details of the scheme, eligibility criteria and frequently asked questions is available on gov.ie - Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund Scheme (www.gov.ie). The contact email address for further information and guidance on the grants scheme is vacanthomes@clarecoco.ie

Number of Applications	2023 to date	2023 Year to date	2022 (6 months)
Applications received	9	9	33
Applications being processed, further information requested etc	9	9	28
Applications Granted	0	0	3
Applications refused or withdrawn	0	0	2

Of the total applications received to date, 62% relate to rural locations and 38% relate to properties located in towns and villages.

It has been necessary to seek additional information on a large number of the applications made to date and during February it is intended that a series of workshops with elected members will be held together with walk in clinics for owners or potential purchasers interested in making an application for the grant. This will also coincide with the national campaign on the grants scheme.

Commencing on 30th January, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage plan to hold a six-week advertising campaign on the supports for those who own or wish to buy a vacant home with a view to converting it into a principal primary residence. The first phase of the campaign will focus on the recently expanded Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant, which is one of the key pillars of the Vacant Homes Action Plan 2023-2026. The second phase will focus on all the supports and schemes available, which will be documented on a new web page, gov.ie/vacancy campaigns page. These supports include the Repair and Leasing Scheme, the planning exemption for the conversion of commercial premises into residential units and the Buy and Renew Scheme.



It is also intended that the Housing Agency will provide further support including the setting up of a specific 1800 number and email address for members of the public to contact. The Housing Agency will answer calls and emails and deal with general queries on the schemes. Where the caller (or email) has a specific query the Housing Agency staff will take their details and forward the query to the relevant Vacant Homes officer, who will then contact the caller. More information on this will be provided to the elected members at the workshops which will be held in February.

SHANNON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Shannon MD staff respond to high flood waters

Due to persistent heavy rainfall and heavy flow in tributaries, increased levels of water were discharged at Parteen Weir (up to 210 m2/sec) by the ESB at Ardnacrusha. These were extremely high levels of water – the highest levels since the main embankment

works were carried out. Shannon Municipal District staff were on site with Project Management Office and Office of Public Works at the embankment in Clonlara to assist in ensuring that the level of protection afforded by the embankment works was maintained. The increase in discharge levels was further compounded

by the essential maintenance of one of the turbine units at the Ardnacrusha plant. Other areas of concern for flooding included Westbury and Shannon Banks.

Great credit is due to the MD Staff that were involved in the supervision/manning of temporary pumps on a 24-hour basis and other associated essential works. The crews worked tirelessly in managing the risk of flooding which involved ongoing surveillance of all potential affected areas, supervision of the pumps, the preparation of 10 tonne sandbags, signposting and laying of guide posts/stakes and bunting along relevant roads, clearing drains and gullies and clearing ditches.

Liam Conneally Director of Services has extended his thanks to the staff of Shannon MD who worked so diligently when dealing with the flooding. Mr Conneally noted that they were an example of public service at its very best.

Critically, the embankment works in Clonlara provided the protection that was required, and the high flood levels abated at the other locations. The levels of discharge at Parteen Weir have since dropped to 10m³/sec.

Shannon Municipal District has a Flood Action Plan in place and works very closely with ESB Ardnacrusha, all relevant Agencies and the community to protect and safeguard homes.



L to R: Shannon MD Staff – Joe Walsh Foreman, Thomas Mahoney G.O., Konrad Murphy G.O., Brian Killeen G.O., Michael Keane, A/SGSS.

Redevelopment of Ballycasey Park Amenity Area.

Work started in December on this Active Travel project in Ballycasey Park area of Shannon. The scheme will improve access to the Ballycasey park amenity from Bothar Mor, Bothar na Luachra and the Ballycasey housing estates. Clare County Council has appointed Michael Bolland Civil Engineering Contractor to this project.

This project is being project managed by Shannon MD. The tendered cost of the works is in the region of €525,000 excl vat. The project has started with site clearance, earthworks and drainage works. The scheme will involve the construction of approximately 5,000m² of new footpath, the installation of 3,300m of new kerbing and 1,000m² of new paved areas. New public lighting and street furniture will be installed in various parts of this amenity area. The project also includes for the construction of 2 new controlled



Shows the rising levels of water at Embankment Works in Clonlara.



Pumping of flood waters at Embankment Works



pedestrian crossing and 4 un-controlled pedestrian crossings. The estimated completion for this scheme is the 1st week of April 2023.

Ongoing Drainage improvement works

Improvement works were recently carried out to drains at Ballymorris in Cratloe. Gullies (roadside gutters and drains) collect water running off the road and over footpath kerbs and these can become blocked and overflow through leaves, debris and grit. These improvement works at Ballymorris will alleviate this issue.



Completion of Bus stop and uncontrolled pedestrian crossing at Drumgeely

The bus shelter and pedestrian crossing at Drumgeely have been upgraded. The Bus Shelter works were carried out by a contractor appointed by the National Transport Authority. Shannon MD through GMA funding supported this project. This is a huge addition to the Town and forms part of a series of upgrades to bus shelters being carried out by the National Transport Authority. Separately, construction has commenced on a bus shelter outside the Shannon Springs Hotel.



Westbury Wallplates

Shannon MD has erected 'Westbury' nameplates on both entrance walls to the estate. These high quality granite signs give an enhanced visual impact as well as a practical directional guide for all inhabitants and visitors to Westbury.

This formed the final part of upgrade works at Westbury which included the stripping and replastering of the outer face of the entrance walls and refurbishment of railings. The total cost of the improvement works was in the region of €110,000.

Other works underway

- An energy consumption review of the MD building is due to be conducted in the MD Office in Shannon.
- No Dumping signs are being installed at Tullyglass Hill in addition to No Parking signs at entrance gates to the Gaelscoil.
- Tree pruning maintenance is being carried out at various locations throughout the MD.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

TRANSPORTATION

Roadworks Programme and Operations

The preparation of the 2023 Schedule of Municipal District Works (Annual Roadworks Programme) will commence when the grant allocations from the Transport Infrastructure Ireland, Department of Transport and National Transport Authority are announced and will be presented to the Municipal Districts in March.

Strategic Transportation

Connecting Ireland/Bus Connects

This project commenced in 2021 and is being led by the National Transport Authority. The aim of the project is to improve the public transport service provision in Clare by improving scheduling, dealing with gaps in the service and by introducing new public transport routes. Liaison and information sharing has commenced between the NTA and Clare County Council Municipal Districts and Road Design Section to support the NTA in a comprehensive rollout of the project. The local link from Kildysart to Kilrush was rolled out during 2021 as part of this project by the NTA.

Clare County Council Transportation section attended a workshop on Wednesday, 26th October 2022 with representatives of Limerick City & County Council, Bus Éireann, the National Transport Authority (NTA) and the NTA's consultants Jarrett Walker & Associates (JWA) and Systra. The NTA informed the meeting that a draft Bus Connects plan will go to public consultation during 2023.

Active Travel Programme 2023

Funding for the Active Travel programme for 2023 is expected to be announced by the Minister for Transport on Monday, 30th January 2023. The Active Travel team in Clare County Council made a submission to the NTA during November 2022 seeking grant funding for the year 2023 for Active Travel schemes throughout the county as proposed through the Municipal District offices.

The total funding drawn down for the year ended 2022 was €3,969,698. Committed expenditure for ongoing projects to be completed in the first quarter of 2023 is €1,853,695.

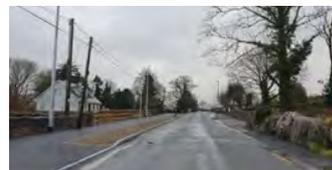
The following is a brief overview of the status of ongoing projects:

- Construction works ongoing at St. Flannans National School in Inagh under 'Safe Routes To School' programme.
- Construction works ongoing in Ennis town (including Ballybeg), Tulla, Spanish Point, Miltown Malbay, Claris-

ford (Killaloe) & Ballycasey Close (Shannon).

- Public lighting installation ongoing in Ballybeg (Ennis).
- Transportation Consultants are continuing to advance the Option Selection phase including preparation of feasibility reports to assess permeability across bridges throughout the county.
- Preliminary design being advanced for Clonmoney National School in consultation with An Taisce under 'Safe Routes To School' programme.
- Preliminary design completed with landowner engagement continuing for schemes in Roslevan and Meelick.
- Option Selection phase being advanced for cycling schemes at Limerick Road (incl. St. Flannans Drive), Tulla Road and Lahinch Road as part of development of the cycling network within Ennis.

The Active travel program is multi-annual and the above projects that have advanced to the Construction phase will be completed in the first quarter of 2023. Subject to confirmation of funding, the remaining schemes will be advanced from Concept Development through to Detailed Design throughout the year.



Dromindoora



Inagh



Spanish Point



Kilmalley

Public lighting

Cork County Council published the tender for the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project in County Clare and four other counties on 1st October, 2020. Following the successful conclusion of the procurement process a contractor has been appointed as the Design Build Works Contract for this regional project. Surveying work is scheduled to start in May 2023. At present 61% of public lights in Clare have been changed to LED through the current maintenance contract.

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

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

may not be possible to ensure that all routes are kept free of ice or snow at all times on the treated routes in the plan.

Over the last two months there have been two prolonged cold snaps which resulted in icy conditions across the county. Over 2800t of salt utilised over 23 nights and salting carried out twice on many of these nights.

Winter Maintenance

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

The routes prioritised in the winter maintenance plan are all national routes, strategic regional routes and strategic local roads. Approximately 700km of the road network is included in the Winter Maintenance Plan. Given the scale of the resources involved in delivering this winter service plan, it is not possible to provide this service to all parts of the road network and it

Road Design Office

Current Projects: January 2023

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:

A progress meeting with the TII was held on the 19th January 2023.

Project	Progress Update
TII HD 15 Sites	<p>For the N85:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The revised concept design for Clareabbey roundabout has been approved by the TII. Modelling of the proposed changes and their effects on the traffic flow is necessary and this is being progressed by the TII through their consultant. • The TII are of the view that any proposed design for the Lahinch Rd/Shanaway Rd junction should be incorporated in the Active Travel Strategy and plan for the wider area. • The RDO carried out an extensive topographical survey of the N85 from Claureen roundabout to the start of the speed limit zone and are currently developing conceptual designs for this area. A further topographical survey from Claureen roundabout to Cloughleigh National School has been carried out and conceptual designs are being developed. <p>For the N68:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Derrycrossaun junction is now substantially completed.
TII HD 17 Sites	<p>For the N68:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A topographical survey of the Monvana Rd. junction N68/L2510 is complete and conceptual designs are progressing. • Interim measure proposed and being developed for N68/L2138. <p>For the N67:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topographical surveys of junctions N67/L1022, N67/50222/, N67/L50221 & N67/L1016 now completed. The preferred option for N67/L50222 has been agreed with the TII Road Safety Engineers, a Feasibility Reports has been prepared for submission. Conceptual designs progressing for N67/L1022 and N67/1016. • Gateway 1 approval has been received from the TII for the proposed safety scheme at Minister Place, Kilkee. A draft Design Report is with the TII Road Safety Engineers for their comments prior to formal submission. • The preferred option for the junction between Mount Charles Terrace and the N67 has been agreed with TII Road Safety Engineers. A Feasibility Report is being prepared for submission to the TII.
Special Speed Limits	<p>CCC are proposing to introduce Special Speed Limits at Caherea N.S. on the N68 as well as New Quay and Rineen National Schools on the N67. These will be periodic speed limits to cover school drop off/ collection times.</p>

Other Projects 2023:

Project	Progress Update
Low Cost Safety Schemes 2023	The funding application for LCS for 2023 was submitted to the DoT in November 2022. 2023 grant funding from the DoT has not been allocated yet.
EuroVelo 1	The project is substantially completed. All the signage has now been installed.
Liaison with NTA regarding bus stops	Construction works are completed. Bus Stops are being considered at Manus Cross Clarecastle on the R458, Ballyea Cross on the N85 & Kilnaboy on the R476
Liaison with NTA regarding bus shelters	The NTA has approved 15 no. bus shelters for the 2023 programme. The tender process has been completed with construction works to commence in early 2023. Construction has commenced on the 3 bus shelters in Westbury and the bus shelter at Shannon Springs Shannon.
Road Schedule & Queries	Search requests from the public and Municipal Districts regarding the road schedule are being carried out on an ongoing basis. Updates to the roads schedule is carried out as updates are being received.
Cycle and traffic counts	Ongoing monitoring at various locations.
Planning Reports	Planning reports are being provided for the Planning Department on a continuous basis.
Cycle Infrastructure County Clare	Surveying and mapping of the existing cycle infrastructure for the entire County commenced in 2022 and will continue as an ongoing project for 2023 feeding into the Clare County Cycling Network Project
Ennis Pedestrian Friendly & Park and Stride Assessments	Completed.
Kilrush Cycle Routes Project	Road Design are currently collaborating with West Clare Municipal District to develop three new cycle routes throughout the Kilrush area. The cycle routes will incorporate a town, estuary, and heritage loop totalling 26km.
R352 Henchy's Cross Junction	This project is completed.
National Cycling Network	This is a project initiated by the TII and is being developed in conjunction with the RDO, Clare County Council. This project seeks to develop a cycling network connecting settlements with a population 5,000.
Clare County Cycle Network	Draft strategy commenced in conjunction with the NTA and AECOM. Public consultation phase completed.
Latoon Cycling Infrastructure	Tender documents are currently being prepared.
Climate Adaptation	The funding application for 2023 Climate Adaptation Grant was submitted to the DoT in November 2022.

Bridge Rehabilitation Programme 2022:

The Bridge 2022 Rehabilitation grant is €602,000. The funding application for the 2023 Bridge



Bridge Rehabilitation Programme:

The 2023 Rehabilitation Programme was submitted to the DoT in November 2022. The Bridge Rehabilitation grant for 2022 was €602,000. The 2023 grant allocation has not been issued by the DoT.

The 2023 Rehabilitation Programme submitted to the DoT in November 2022 contains:

- Shragh Bridge
- Bunratty Lower Bridge
- Cahiracon Bridge
- Alagha Bridge
- Inchiquin Bridge
- Dromore Bridge
- Gortnaglough Bridge
- Drimmeen Bridge
- Rathmeehan Bridge
- Ballybran Bridge
- Mahonburgh Bridge
- Black Weir Bridge
- Ballykeel North Bridge
- Boolyduff Bridge
- Cloghera Bridge
- Crean Bridge
- Erinagh More Bridge
- Drumellihiy Bridge
- Gortnagonella Bridge
- Knockanena Bridge
- Knockdonagh Bridge
- Poulmagun Bridge
- Clondreddan Bridge
- Lissanair Bridge
- Gortalassa Bridge
- Moyglass Beg Bridge
- Rinnagonnaght Bridge
- Ballynacally NS Bridge
- Knockagore Bridge
- Rapepark Bridge

Bridges submitted to the Road Design Office that require emergency work.

- Magherabaun Bridge: Start early February.
- Clonboy Bridge: Start early February.



Annagore



Addroom

Health and Safety

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

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

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

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

General Design Office

Scarriff Rural Regeneration Project



Further to the Architect’s design proposal and consultations with the local community a Part 8 Planning Application is currently being prepared by the General Design Office. It is

anticipated that we will be in a position to lodge the application by the end of March 2023.

Town and Village Renewal Schemes

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

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

Drumgeely Neighbourhood Centre

Tender documents are being prepared for Drumgeely Neighbourhood Centre Public realm works, which is in the final stages of the Part VIII planning process.

Scarriff Digital Hub/Enterprise Centre/Community Space

Tender documents are being prepared and consultants are being appointed for the Scarriff Digital Hub/Enterprise Centre/Community Space, which is in the final stages of the Part VIII planning process.

CAPITAL DELIVERY / PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

The following updates outline the current position and progress during January for the major capital projects being managed by the PMO.

Doolin Pier Visitor Services Building – Having paused the Design process in 2021 to allow for surveying, monitoring and assessment of some of the more significant environmental considerations, work on this exciting project has recommenced with Cross Directorate Meetings taking place in December 2022 and January 2023 to deal with associated car parking and actions arising from the recent AA assessment and the Draft County Development Plan. Lands contiguous to the proposed building footprint are currently being reviewed to assess suitability with a view to incorporation into the overall design and subsequent submission to An Bord Pleanála for planning approval at the earliest juncture.

Ennis South Flood Relief Scheme/Riverside Walk Project.

– During the first two weeks of January 2023, a combination of heavy rainfall and high tides caused the River Fergus to be in flood which presented a good test of the scheme infrastructure and an opportunity for us to monitor activity. Inlet Water levels at Ballybeg and St Flannan's College were monitored and were at 55% capacity, but the works operated effectively in line with design. The flood levels in the Fergus and the Clare-abbey flood plain as well as the operation of the sluices along the new flood wall, were also monitored with all elements of the scheme operating in accordance with design.

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

– As reported last month, a third party has sought leave to have the decision of An Bord Pleanála judicially reviewed. We are currently reviewing the statement of grounds in preparation for the Court Hearing, the outcome of which will inform our next course of action.

Killaloe Bridge and By-Pass – Following return from the Christmas break on the 3rd of January, works have resumed at pace on this important project. Piling works for the main Shannon Bridge Crossing are progressing well on the East-

ern (Tipperary) side of the river. The Piling subcontractor, PJ Edwards, have also mobilised a second piling rig on the Western (Clare) side of the river with piling works expected to commence shortly. The excavation and replacement of unsuitable material from the site compound towards the Clare side of the river crossing at Clarisford is progressing well despite the recent poor weather conditions. This work will facilitate access to the bridge location for larger plant including the piling activities and bridge construction. Piling works for the new Kilmastulla River bridge crossing on the R494 has been completed by Sisk's other piling subcontractor, Terradrive Piling & Foundations Ltd. Static & Dynamic pile testing have also been completed and once the test results are analysed and proven, RC works will progress. The construction of the R494 Upgrade is progressing well with the notified long term Traffic Management arrangements put in place on the 25/01/2023 to facilitate the site clearance and enabling works on the south-bound carriageway. Utility service diversions are also being carried out on the R494 and utility investigations are progressing elsewhere via slit trench identification and ongoing coordination with the relevant providers. All major temporary traffic management arrangements will be included on the Map Alerter system which can be viewed on <https://www.mapalerter.com> Works to the Main Construction Compound on the R463 are now substantially complete. The construction of the Killaloe Bypass section is progressing with site clearance and enabling works advancing from the Shantraud Roundabout to the Ballyvally / Kincora roundabout with the construction of haul roads within the site and commencement of the earthwork's operations for this section of the project. Other works include archaeological monitoring, ecological monitoring & property pre-condition surveys. The last few outstanding Land Acquisitions are currently being progressed, mostly by agreement with others via Arbitration, with the next one scheduled to be heard in late March 2023.

Kilkee Flood Relief Scheme – Following a review of the draft costings estimate for the emerging fluvial/pluvial options, the Council and OPW have requested further back-up information to the rates and sums provided. Once received and verified,

adjustments to the Multi Criteria Assessment (MCA) will be made as necessary. The initial fluvial/pluvial damages have been calculated and compared to the various option costs to produce the draft results of the benefit – cost ratio (BCR).

Data from the additional beach survey in December was received. The consultant is currently reviewing this and comparing it to previous data collected in 2020. There is one remaining wintering bird survey to be carried out in February to close out this element of site survey works.

The environmental assessment of options and the Options Report for the fluvial/pluvial element are ongoing. Further information is available on the Project Website www.kilkeefrs.ie

Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF)

– RPS Consulting Engineers are currently progressing the detailed design of the scheme following receipt of the factual reports from the site investigation survey works completed by Priority Geotechnical Ltd late last year. The detailed design phase will assist with the final road design, land-take requirements, preparation of the scheme drawings and specifications for a competitive Tender process for the works in Q2 2023. A progress meeting was held with RPS on 12th of January to review landowner accommodation works which will better inform our engagement with landowners regarding the acquisition of the necessary lands required for the road element of the scheme. A cross directorate meeting was held with Housing & Planning Departments regarding the optimum delivery of the housing element of the scheme. We also continue to liaise closely with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage regarding the proposed delivery of this LIHAF scheme.

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

N19 Shannon Airport Access Road – The Phase 3 (Design and Environmental Evaluation) stage is currently ongoing. Phase 3 is expected to take up to mid-2023 to complete culminating with an application by Clare County Council to An Bord Pleanála for the Project accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). All consultation received as part of this scoping process are now being considered by the design team in the preparation of the EIAR to accompany the development consent application. Significant progress has been made in terms of construction methodologies & sequencing, junction design development, active travel measures, access strategies and scheme land-take requirements. The scheme consultants FTC & Co are engaging with the various project stakeholders such as TII Road Safety Section, TII Structures, the NTA, the Gardai, Shannon Airport and Shannon Commercial Properties. Further information and associated literature on the project can be accessed via the scheme website

www.shannonaccess.ie

N85 Kilnamona Road Improvement Scheme – Members will be aware that the proposed scheme now envisaged has been extended to include from Fountain to just west of Kilnamona Cross. We now await confirmation of the TII Funding allocations for 2023, where we would expect to be in a position to appoint Technical Advisors in early 2023, subject to TII approval.

Public Realm Regeneration Project (Ennis) – We are still currently awaiting final approval from the Departments URDF team to progress to the next step of the process, further to submission of additional information and clarifications which they requested following their URDF visit to Ennis in November 2022. In parallel, Irish Water have proposed to fund the rehabilitation of the foul sewer which they wish to carry out as part of the main scheme works to future proof and improve their services within the town. An update on the current status of the project was provided to a large gathering of Ennis Chamber of Commerce members in late January with a commitment to ensure there is full communication between all interested and affected parties. A further update briefing is scheduled for the Ennis MD Councillors Meeting in early February.

Quin Flood Relief Scheme – Clare County Council continue to monitor ground conditions on site for completion of trial excavations required under the Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIS) and commencement of the main flood defence works.

Remediation of sites containing ACM – Detailed design is now at an advanced stage with a view to completing tender documents necessary for the appointment of suitable contractors for the removal and processing of the ACMs. In the meantime, the sites continue to be routinely monitored and maintained as required by Council staff in accordance with our agreed approach following discussion and consultation with the EPA.

Shannon Town & Environs Flood Relief Scheme – The final version of the Hydraulic Report will issue in early February with the revised Hydrology Report to issue shortly thereafter. Coastal modelling has also progressed in the past month and the initial flood maps for breach/overtopping conditions have been reviewed by representatives of the project Team from the Council, the OPW and RPS.

The RPS geotechnical team are currently revising the preliminary embankment alignments and section drawings incorporating the review comments issued by the Council and the OPW. A site walkover to review the remediation works on the western and eastern embankments was undertaken by the steering group in advance of the January monthly meeting. Further information on the scheme is available on www.shanntowntandenvironsfrs.com

Springfield, Clonlara FRS – Members will be aware of the ESB's decision in late December to discharge surplus flood waters from the Shannon River through the Parteen Weir. Initially, the spill rates were low (55cumecs) and of little or no impact on the area. However, the spill rates increased in mid-January (135 cumecs to 210cumecs) and extra vigilance was required. The Shannon Municipal District Office deployed a team to the Springfield area and implemented the Operational Plan for a flood event. The existing temporary emergency Pumps were deployed and augmented by an additional pump provided by the OPW. The penstocks were closed at the flood embankment and the results recorded and monitored. Staff provided 24-hour cover for the pump operations. The results have now been provided to our Consultants for their assessment. They visited the site during the event to see the operation first hand. The flows began decreasing from the 20th January and are now back to the statutory 10 cumecs discharge level. The experience provided an opportunity for staff to operate the scheme in a real live scenario and worked extremely well and as expected.

Members will be aware from previous reports that works on site are due to recommence in March when weather conditions improve. Outstanding works include the installation of the two permanent pumps, associated pipework, trash screen for the pump sump, landscaping, drainage channels and fencing. The two new pumps have arrived in Ireland and are currently being stored locally pending installation.

West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 1: Kilrush to Kilkee) – It is intended to finalise the appointment of a Topographical Surveyor in the coming week or so, following which, lands will be surveyed, and information gathered will assist in finalising the emerging preferred route. Following this, Public Consultation 3 will be held and will give stakeholders an opportunity to further comment on the potential route. Winter ecological field surveys continue.

West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 2: Ennis to Ennistymon) – “Public Consultation 2” will commence on Friday 10th February 2023 and will run for three weeks. Information will be available to view at the public libraries in Ennistymon and Corofin as well as the offices of Clare County Council, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare. Information will also be available to view online at www.clarecoco.ie

The Council would welcome input from all interested and affected parties and are happy to meet and discuss how we can successfully deliver this project. To that end, Face to Face public consultations have been arranged and will be held at the following locations and dates between 3:30pm and 8:30pm. All are welcome and Members are encouraged to attend.

- Monday 20th February - Ennistymon Public Library
- Tuesday 21st February - Clare County Council Headquarters
- Wednesday 22nd February - Corofin Public Library

West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 3 & 4: Ennistymon to Miltown Malbay and Miltown Malbay to Moyasta)

– The closing date for submission of tenders for the ‘Appointment of Technical Advisors’ closed at the end of January and are currently being reviewed and assessed. Subject to TII approval, Clare County Council aim to appoint the successful tenderer and develop the ‘Route Option Selection’ phase at the earliest juncture.

Other Greenway Proposals – The PMO continues to engage with TII and other interested stakeholders to progress Greenway Proposals between Shannon and Bunratty/Sixmilebridge as well as being part of the Steering Group in the Waterways Ireland led proposal between Limerick/UL and Scarriff. Members will be aware that this project proposes to utilise the cycle/pedestrian infrastructure included as part of the Killaloe Bridge and Bypass works.

FIRE & BUILDING CONTROL SECTION

Recent Training Courses

The following brigade training courses were held during January:

- Community First Responder Advanced Training
- Emergency First Responder Refresher Training
- Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) briefing sessions took place at Ennis, Shannon & Ennistymon Fire Stations with briefing sessions planned for the other stations in February.

Fire Station Projects

Tenders for the provision of Professional Consultancy Services associated with the construction of a 2 Bay Shed at Kilrush Fire Station were received in January.

Recruitment of Fire Service Personnel

Interviews were held in January for Fire Fighters for Kilrush and Kilkee Fire Stations. There were no applicants for the vacant posts in Shannon Fire Station.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Fire & Building Control Section Main Activities	December 2022	Year to Date 2022	January 2023 (Up to 27.01.23)
Number of Emergency Calls Attended	94	1012	83
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Received	5	90	4
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Granted	7	89	4
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Invalidated	0	1	0
Number of Disability Access Certificates Received	2	73	4
Number of Disability Access Certificates Granted	5	71	1
Number of Commencement Notices Received	17	372	27
Number of Dangerous Structures/Places Complaints	0	19	0

(Note: In the January Monthly Report, the Dec figures related to 1st to 16th December due to timing of report)

CLARE CIVIL DEFENCE

Operational Duties

Civil Defence provided medical cover for the following events:

- Run Clare Run 10 km run in Lees Road, Ennis.
- Mens Munster League Hurling Match.
- Clare Ladies Football Match.

Civil Defence also provided the following operational duties:

- Members participated in 2 separate searches for missing persons in Ennis. Clare Civil Defence were tasked by An Garda Síochána to conduct the searches in a large area of forest and open land and on the River Fergus.

Members Training & Professional Development

- Weekly training has resumed for members on Thursday nights.
- Recruits Basic Training (RBT) ongoing for 8 new recruits
- Members of the Boat Team conducted night training on the River Fergus, Ennis.

ENVIRONMENT

Environmental Awareness

An Taisce Green Schools

Clare County Council supports and encourages active participation in the An Taisce operated Green Schools programme. Our Environmental Awareness Officer (EAO) carries out Green School assessments and makes recommendations to An Taisce on the awarding of a Green Flag. To support schools and encourage active participation our EAO delivers talks / presentations to schools and also meets with Green Schools Co-ordinators and Committees to help support them in their roles.

The table below is a summary of school visits in January:

	Assessment	Support meeting	Presentation/talk	Total
Jan-22	1	1	1	3

During the month our EAO participated in An Taisce Green Schools national focus group looking at developing greater engagement and active participation by secondary schools across the country.

Community engagement

Clare County Council Greener Clare team upon request delivers presentations and talks across Clare. This is great opportunity for raising awareness within communities to an already available audience that would not necessarily attend an environmental talk.

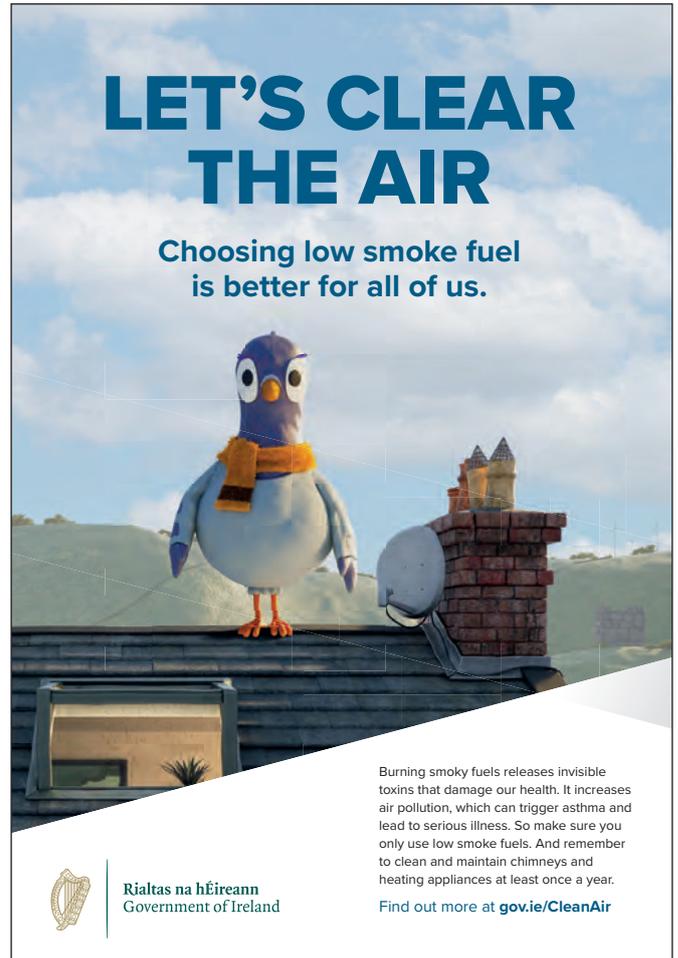
	January 2023		Total to date
	Tradaree ICA	Probus Men's Club (Ennis)	
Group	Tradaree ICA	Probus Men's Club (Ennis)	2
No. Attendees	17	35	52
Topics discussed include:			
Overview of Environment Section	✓	✓	2
Illegal Dumping and Litter	✓	✓	2
Circular Economy	✓	✓	2
Recycling workshop	✓	✓	2
Climate Change	✓	✓	2
Water Quality and catchment science	✓	✓	2
Clean Air	✓	✓	2
Dog Owner Responsibility	✓	✓	2

Communication campaigns

Details of print and social media campaigns are detailed below for January 2023.

Message / Campaign	Greener Clare social media	Clare County Council social media	Newspaper adverts
Healthy and Green Christmas and New Year Campaign - <i>Less chemicals in the home</i>	1		1
Christmas Tree Recycling	1	1	2
Healthy and Green Christmas and New Year Campaign - <i>Cigarette littering</i>	1		1
Clean Air	1	1	1
Community Water Development Fund 2023 <i>World Wetlands Day</i>	2	1	1
Dog owner responsibility	1	1	1

Circular Economy / Reuse / Recycling	3		
Total	10	4	7



Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Champion

Following on from our successful SDG Week 2022, an application was made to the Department of Environment Climate and Communications in January to become an SDG Champion. Being an SDG Champion will help embed the SDGs further into our work programmes which will benefit community groups and our county.

Access to Information on the Environment (AIE)

The table below gives an overview of the work undertaken to comply with our requirements under the Access to Information on the Environment (AIE) Regulations.

	Decision	New request	Internal review	OCEI appeal request
Jan-22	2	2	1	0

Water Enforcement and Laboratory Scientific Services

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

Water Enforcement Scientific Team	January 2023	Jan 2023
Planning applications (Domestic)	25	25
Planning applications (Large Developments)	1	1
Planning applications (Forestry)	5	5
Planning applications (Agriculture)	0	0
Inspection of Section 4 licenced premises	1	1
Domestic Wastewater Treatment Plant Inspections (NIP Plan)	0	0
Pollution complaints received	20	20
Warning & advisory letters issued	0	0
Enforcement actions (\$12 issued or number of 'active' cases)	0	0
Private Commercial Drinking Water Supplies	-	0
Private Group Water Scheme supplies	-	6
Public Group Water Scheme Supplies	-	18
Public Water Supplies	-	0
Bathing Water	-	0

Lakes Monitoring Tender:

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

Training:

Staff attended EPA webinar on National Agriculture Inspections programme. This provided information and guidance on the responsibilities of the Local Authority to comply with the criteria as set.

Historic landfills

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

Gardening

During January, the Gardening team accepted and recycled over 800 Christmas trees. The mulch from the shredded trees will be composted and subsequently used as a weed suppressant and soil conditioner on future projects, and reduce the need to use synthetic weed membranes and chemical fertilizers.



Planned seasonal works continued within the team, including flower beds being prepared for spring planting and young plants stored in polytunnels to promote early growth and protect against frost damage. For 2023, the Gardening Team will work with Ennis Municipal District and other stakeholders to prepare for the upcoming 'Communities in Bloom' competition.



Waste Management

Bottle Banks

Bottle Banks continue to be well used through January following on from the Christmas and New Year period. Weekly monitoring and maintenance takes place at each site to help ensure a reliable service for the public.

New advance directional signage is being installed for the bring bank site at O'Callaghans Mills GAA and also in Ruan. Additional Textile banks are being provided at Kilkee and Kilfenora in January.

Recycling Centres:

New signage has been provided at Ennis and Scariff Recycling Centres for the various waste skips on the sites. This will improve ease of use for customers. Additional Recycling Centres will be reviewed in the coming weeks for any signage improvements required.

Waste Enforcement

Solid Fuel Inspections

Clare County Council's Environment Section has implemented an inspection programme, comprising visits to retailers and distributors to raise awareness of the implications of the new Solid Fuel Regulations, Air Pollution Act 1987 (Solid Fuels) Regulations 2022. Inspections have been undertaken throughout January.

Retailers were informed that the new Regulations are now in place and that follow up enforcement inspections will take place over the coming weeks.

End of Life Vehicles

Under the **European Union (End-of-Life-Vehicles) Regulations 2014 as amended**, there is an obligation on all producers (i.e. the vehicle manufacturer or professional importer of a vehicle into the state) regarding the deposit, treatment and disposal of End-of-Life Vehicles (ELVs).

These Regulations require producers to register with each local authority in the State and set up a National system for the collection of specified vehicles; or to participate in a National scheme for the recovery of end-of-life vehicles as operated by the approved body, ELV Environmental Services (ELVES).

Clare County Council with the aid of the Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authority (WERLA) initiated legal proceedings against 13 importers of Specified Vehicles throughout Clare for non-compliance with the above Regulations. Prosecution proceedings are ongoing. The case is back in Ennis District Court on 24th February 2023.

Waste Facility Permit / Certificate of Registration Applications

A total of 3 Waste Facility Permit (WFP) Applications have been received in January. These are currently being assessed and a decision will be made whether to grant or refuse.

Environmental Monitoring (Illegal Dumping/Litter)

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

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

A total of 2 Notices were issued under **Section 14 of the Waste Management Act 1996** in January. We also issued 5 litter fines in January. A total of 2 litter fines were paid in January.

CLIMATE

Energy:

A two day recertification audit was held at the end of November. The audit was carried out by the NSAI (National Standards Authority of Ireland). This auditing process is a requirement for maintaining the ISO50001 Energy certification. Audits took place on all aspects of Clare County Councils Energy Management, including analysis consumption, record keeping, energy actions etc. Clare County Council was successful in the audit and is now recertified to ISO50001 standard for the coming three years.

Reduce your use Campaign: Clare County Council is partaking in the reduce your use campaign in association with the SEAI. This initiative is focussing on the Winter 22/23 with a view to enabling reduced consumption across the council. The initiative is aimed at addressing energy security on a national level due to conflicts ongoing globally.

Climate Action Plan:

The Planning stage for the Climate Action Plan has commenced. This stage involves the establishing of baseline information with regard to the Local Authority and the County.

Mitigation Assessments are currently ongoing at Tier 1 level for the County of Clare and at Tier 3 level for the Decarbonisation Zone.

A Climate Change Risk Assessment is currently ongoing in relation to defining the current and future risks associated with Climate Change for our county.

Councillors at MD level have been briefed by the Climate Team on the need and requirement for the Climate Action Plan over the next 12 months.

WATER SERVICES

Annual Service Plan

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

Future Delivery of Water Services.

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

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

Water Services Operations

Water and Wastewater Operations

The following statistics provide an indication of the level of activity / work being carried out by the water and wastewater teams throughout the county from 16th December 2022 up to and including 19th January 2023. The figures do not however reflect the time invested by the teams which is required to resolve each complaint/issue.

- 23 Customer Complaints were dealt with and closed out
- 1 Emergency Work Order was received during the timeframe
- 284 Reactive Maintenance Work Orders were dealt with and closed out
- 2 Customer Asset Flooding Work Orders were received during the period
- 100 Service Requests (SR's) were raised for Field Requests and Follow On Work Orders for Reactive Maintenance work
- 22 Outage Notices were placed on the IW portal during the period. 18 unplanned works for burst water mains, low water pressure, interruption at Water Treatment Plant and pump failure. There were 4 Communication notifications issued for leak detection works and low water pressure.

Water Operations.

The following is a summary of the outages dealt with in December 2022 and January 2023.

In the **Mid Clare Area**, outages occurred at the following locations: -

- 19th Dec. Corrofin, Ruan – leak detection ongoing/low pressure
- 20th Dec. Corrofin, Ruan – leak detection ongoing/low pressure
- 21st Dec. Cluain Greine, Drumcliffe Rd., Ennis – Planned installation of DMA meter.
- 23rd Dec. Corrofin, Ruan – leak repair/low pressure
- 11th Jan. Hawthorns, Bramble Lane, Sycamore Dr., Ennis – Burst Watermain.
- 12th Jan. Greendale, Clonroadmore, Ennis – Burst Watermain
- 18th Jan. Crusheen village and surrounding areas - Leak repair at Reservoir
- 26th Jan. St. Josephs Terrace Clarecastle and surrounding areas - Burst Water main.
- Ongoing Meter Installations/Replacements for Non-Domestic Programme.

Major Outages for West Clare Area for period below:-

- 27th Dec. Doonbeg, Kilkee and surrounding areas. Pump failure at Drumellihy.
- 30th Dec. Mountrivers, Doonbeg and surrounding areas. - Burst Water main.
- 3rd Jan. Cooraclare village and surrounding areas - Burst Water main
- 4th Jan. New Doolough – interruption in supply due to power failure.
- 6th Jan. New Doolough – interruption in supply due to power failure.
- 17th Jan. Alva, Cooraclare and surrounding areas - Burst Water main
- 18th Jan. Cross, Kilbaha and surrounding areas - pump failure at Moveen Reservoir
- 18th Jan. Cooraclare and surrounding areas - Burst Water main
- 22nd Jan. Reservoir cleaning at Doonaghboy – no interruption in supply.
- 24th Jan. Kilmihil and surrounding areas - Burst Water main
- Old Doolough WTP Network Flushing
- New Doolough WTP Network Flushing and Reservoir Cleaning
- Ongoing Meter Installations/Replacements for Non-Domestic Programme.

Major Outages for North Clare Area for period below:-

- 20th Jan. Rockmount, Kilfarboy, Rineen and surrounding areas - Burst Water main

- 26th Jan. Ballyveskin and surrounding areas - Burst Water main.
- 26th Jan. Caherbana – Lough and surrounding areas - Burst Water main.
- Ongoing Meter Installations/Replacements for Non-Domestic Programme.

Major Outage Shannon

- 22nd January Major burst on the asbestos line at McDonald's Car park

Water Conservation

- Leak Detection Works – Mid Clare – Gort Rd., Kelly's Corner and Hawthorns, Ennis and Corrofin DMA's
- Leak Detection Works – North Clare – Bellharbour.
- Leak Detection Shannon/East Clare. – Flagmount, Tuamgraney, Broadford, Killaloe, O'Briensbridge and Scarriff ; Cragganowen, Shannon (various) and Sixmilebridge.
- Fix Operation – Various locations – Scarriff and Sixmilebridge
- Larsens – Find crew – Mountshannon DMA
- SES - Find Crew – Castlequarter/Ballinfonta DMA & Sixmilebridge DMA

Water and Wastewater Operations.

A sewer rising main break occurred in Tullyglass Shannon on the 24th December 2022. Two further breaks occurred on the 18th and 20th January 2023. All were successfully repaired by the Shannon Operations Crew without any disruption to service or negative environmental impact.

Irish Waters "Access to Heights & Egress Programme" (AHEP) has re-commenced in Clare. 19 wastewater sites (plants & pumping stations) have been selected for upgrades and improvements which will include new stairwells, ladders, guardrails and chamber covers with fall arrest. Irish Waters contractor "Ward & Burke" commenced their initial site inspections in January assisted by Local Authority staff.

Irish Water Capital programme.

Kilrush Wastewater Treatment Plant:

The new scheme will comprise of a new wastewater treatment plant near Skagh Point, a new rising main, additional storm storage and upgrade of the existing Francis St pumping station. At the WWTP site the admin building is well advanced and ready for installation of the control panel. At Frances Street Pump Station site, the storm tank has been completed and the area has been backfilled. Pipework from the storm tank to the pump station is under construction.

Completion of the overall scheme is due in mid-2023. When complete, this scheme will end the discharge of raw sewage to the sea near Skagh Point.



Kilrush WWTP

Clarecastle Sewerage Scheme:

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

Construction of the new pumping facility is nearing completion at Quay Road. The underground structures in front of the existing pump house have been completed and the area backfilled.



Clarecastle Quay Road

Liscannor Wastewater Treatment Plant:

The scheme now consists of a new wastewater treatment plant at Corcomroe, a pumping station adjacent to John P Holland Park, rising main, gravity sewer and connection to the existing outfall. Treatment of wastewater is continuing. The 28 day process proving stage was completed. Full completion of the scheme is due in early 2023.

Ballyvaughan Wastewater Treatment Plant:

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

Kilkee Wastewater Treatment Plant:

A new wastewater treatment plant, pumping station and rising main are planned for Kilkee. It is planned to continue the use of

the existing sea outfall at Intrinsic Bay. Design of the treatment plant and pump station is ongoing. Preparation of the planning application documents is continuing.

Ennistymon and Lahinch Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade:

Work on selection of an exact site, pipeline route, detailed design, land acquisition, marine modelling and a planning application will commence in early 2023.

Newmarket on Fergus Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade:

It is proposed to construct additional treatment facilities at the treatment plant and a new 400mm diameter rising main which would outfall to the Rine River thereby ceasing discharge of treated effluent from the existing wastewater treatment plant to the Lough Gash turlough. The planning application was received by Clare County Council on the 5th of December 2022 and a decision is awaited. Subject to all statutory consents and a tender process, it is anticipated that a Contractor will be appointed during 2023. Construction is anticipated to commence in early 2024.

Kilfenora Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade:

Construction is continuing at the WWTP site. Pipework and ducting is mostly complete. Mechanical and electrical works are ongoing. The overall scheme is due for completion in 2023.

Miltown Malbay Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade:

Irish Water held a workshop on the 14th of December to explore options for the upgrade of the wastewater treatment system in Miltown Malbay. The project is now at the investment planning stage.

Remedial Action Lists Water Treatment Plant Upgrades

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

1. New Doolough Water Treatment Plant – This plant is the regional treated water source for West Clare covering the large geographical area in the county. The project has modernised the treatment technology at the plant which will allow it to achieve the desired quality of output during events which cause high turbidity at the source. The main upgrade works are now complete and operational, and the testing of the plant has been completed successfully. Resolution of snagging issues and production of the safety file is underway.
2. Corofin Water Treatment Plant – this plant provides water to the town of Corofin. The project will modern-

ise the treatment processes on site which will enable production of water to the desired standard during high turbidity events in the source lake. Works to upgrade the water treatment plant are now completed with commissioning and testing proposed to commence end January 2023.

3. Ballymacraven Water Treatment Plant – this plant provides water to the North Clare Region, including Ennistymon, Lahinch, Lisdoonvarna, Doolin and Ballyvaughan. Phase 1 of this will modernise the water treatment processes at the plant with Phase 2 delivering the sludge handling line under a separate contract. Phase 1 Work has commenced with the construction of a new third water clarifier underway, with base poured and in place and wall pours commencing. A new ESB customer room is also under construction.

Rockmount Water Treatment Plant\ Reservoir

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

Clareabbey Wastewater Treatment Plant Inlet & Storm Tank Upgrade Works

Work at this location includes the construction of a new inlet works and screens, and a new storm tank. All civil and mechanical and electrical works are complete with commissioning underway. The project is expected to be complete in Q1 2023.

Clonroadmore & Clareabbey Wastewater Treatment Plants

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

Ennis Drainage Area Plan

This project involves the gathering of all available data on the wastewater network in Ennis and surveying and monitoring of flows in the network. This information will be used to build a hydraulic model of the network. The hydraulic model can be used to model future growth in the town and accurately identify where upsizing of pipework/pumping infrastructure might be required. It will also be used to identify where groundwater is infiltrating into the network adding unnecessary additional loading. It will allow Irish Water to have confidence in obtaining the best value for money on network improvement. The

consultant is reviewing the available data and preparing a surveying contract for Ennis wastewater network. The stage workshop has been held and feedback from Council operations staff provided to the consultant.

Ballycannon and Elton Court Sewerage Pumping Station Upgrade

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

Asset Transfer

Following an assessment of the water and wastewater networks in County Clare, 384 sites have been identified for potential transfer to Irish Water to date. Following on site surveys, 67 of these assets have been determined to be duplicate, non-operational assets or assets which Irish Water will not accept. Of the remaining 317 assets, 220 have now been fully transferred or recommended for transfer to Irish Water.

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

- **Report prepared / Pending/ Internal Query (4 assets) –** These consist of assets for which a report is being prepared or which need further investigation or information /approval from another council section to proceed.
- **National Special Projects Office (NSPO) (67 assets) –** This is a department within Irish Water dealing with special projects which includes facilitating the Asset Transfers from Local Authorities. The majority of assets in this category are folios under third party ownership but where long standing use and some evidence of previous land dealing is present. Irish Water are now advocating that property in long term operational possession but not in the Council name be obtained by the adverse possession process. Circular L1 2022 has confirmed department support for this approach. All assets which have not yet transferred will be examined to see if they can be progressed using this method.
- **Property Registration Authority Ireland (0 assets) –** At present there are no assets submitted to the PRAI to be subdivided.
- **Outstanding assets to be reported on (26 assets) –** These are 3rd Party/Unregistered assets. To transfer

these, detailed searches through historical Councils records are required in order to submit to Irish Water for their consideration on the best approach to proceed with. Many of the remaining assets have been examined and various routes being explored to close these out.

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

Rural Water Programme

Following on from the Christmas break, the mains replacement of 4.2km on the Ballycar GWS network continues to progress with a completion date of mid to late February. There is currently approx. 3.5km of mains completed although progress has been impacted by weather conditions and the presence of rock.

The tender for the replacement of 600m of mains on the Clohanes GWS has been completed and a contractor is to be appointed next week with works hoped to commence in mid February. A contractor has also been appointed for a community connection for the Bartleystown GWS in Clonlara with works set to commence in early February.

We still await invitation from the Department for the 2022-2025 Multi Annual Rural Water Programme which was due to commence a year ago. The delay is a source of great frustration for a number of schemes for whom we have bids waiting to be submitted.

A total no. of 78 bids were received in 2022 under the 'Grant for Improvement Works to a Private Water Supply'. This number is slightly reduced on the number of applications in 2021 totalling 107 applications.

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

ENNIS MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



“A very strong performance by Ennis”

This is according to the report from An Taisce, who are commissioned by the Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) to carry out litter surveys in Irish towns and cities and rank them in a league table (Anti-Litter League, Survey 2, 2022).

Ennis climbed four places in the rankings in the most recent IBAL survey, achieving **5th place** out of 40 towns / cities surveyed.

There was notable improvement in some key sites including the Gort Road Business Park and Ennis Bus/Train Station, which achieved the top grade, having been assigned a B rating in previous surveys.

The movement in rankings is the result of a concerted effort by Ennis MD outdoor crews and Ennis Tidy Towns

Winter Works

Ennis MD crews carried out various tasks in responding to severe weather incidents across the district during sub-zero temperatures, which were frequent during December and into early January. The crews responded to numerous public requests in terms of salting/gritting of public footpaths and roads to ensure safe access for vehicular and pedestrian users throughout the district including local schools and businesses.

January also saw high figures in terms of rainfall with status red levels reached in accordance with the Flood Emergency Response for Ennis. Temporary pumps were mobilised, these were procured in line with OPW temporary pumping protocols in order to increase discharge capacity of the existing storm water network. Ennis MD crews assisted with strategic placement, maintenance and operation of these pumps along with ensuring the local surface water network was functional by way of monitoring, maintaining and clearing of existing road gullies and drains throughout the district.

Pay & Display Meters

Ennis MD outdoor crews undertook preliminary investigations and traffic management in advance of installing over 20 solar powered pay and display machines throughout the Ennis Town Centre during the months of December and January.