



COMHAIRLE | CLARE
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

TUARASCÁIL MHÍOSÚIL ÓN PHRÍOMHFHEIDHMEANNACH

MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Nollaig / December
2024



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RURAL DEVELOPMENT

OUTDOOR RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME 2024/2025



There are 4 Funding Measures:

MEASURE	MAX GRANT	MAX NO. OF APPLICATIONS	DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS TO BE WITH DEPARTMENT*
Measure 1 (Small Scale Repair/ Development/ Promotion & Marketing)	Up to €40,000	6 applications	14th February 2025
Project Development Measure	Up to €50,000	2 applications	14th February 2025
Measure 2 (Medium Scale Repair/ Upgrade & New Trail/Amenity Development)	Up to €200,000	3 applications	28th March 2025
Measure 3 (Strategic Large Scale Repair/ Upgrade & New Strategic Trails/Amenity Development)	Up to €500,000	1 applications	28th March 2025

The Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, has recently launched the 2024/2025 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme.

The Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) aims to support the creation of new outdoor recreational facilities, as well as the repair, improvement, or promotion of existing recreational infrastructure in rural areas across the county.

Key priorities of the scheme include:

1. Ensuring projects align with the National Outdoor Recreation Strategy, Embracing Ireland's Outdoors, and the County Outdoor Recreation Plan, which is currently in development for County Clare.
2. Collaboration and engagement with local communities, the Rural Recreation Officer, and the Rural Recreation Committee and any other relevant stakeholders in the identification of projects.

Applicants must have all necessary consents, environmental screenings, and insurance in place for the proposed works at the time of application submission.

* Expressions of Interest should be submitted to oris@clarecoco.ie by 20th December 2024.

CLARE SHINES AGAIN AT 2024 IPB PRIDE OF PLACE AWARDS

Clare has once again demonstrated its commitment to community excellence at the 2024 IPB Pride of Place Awards, held on Saturday, November 2, at the Hillgrove Hotel in Monaghan. Hosted by Monaghan County Council in association with Co-operation Ireland, the event celebrated the outstanding achievements of communities across Ireland.

Nominated by Clare County Council, **Lisdoonvarna Fáilte** claimed the Inclusive Communities category award for its extraordinary efforts in fostering inclusivity among local residents, Ukrainian refugees, and individuals living in Direct Provision. This recognition highlights the group's impactful initiatives, including coffee mornings, fitness classes, and creative workshops that strengthen community bonds. Future plans such as a therapeutic community garden and expanded childcare services underscore Lisdoonvarna Fáilte's ongoing dedication to inclusivity and wellness.

Circular Clarecastle was a runner-up in Category 4 (Population

2000-5000) for its year-round activities, including festivals and environmental initiatives, which foster community pride and engagement.

Other nominations put forward for consideration nationally included **Bunratty Local Development Association** under Category 1: Population 0-300) recognised for its sustainability and heritage projects and **Newmarket on Fergus Community Forum** (Category 3: Population 1000-2000) for uniting community groups and spearheading projects like scenic walking trails, street improvements, and the popular 19th Hole Festival.

The success of Clare communities at the 2024 IPB Pride of Place Awards reaffirms their dedication to sustainability, inclusivity, and innovation. Each of these projects highlights the incredible spirit and commitment of Clare's residents to creating thriving, welcoming, and supportive environments for all.



CLARE AGE FRIENDLY PROGRAMME

Clare Cultural Companions

The Clare Cultural Companions initiative held an end of year celebration for Cultural Companions in glór and the new De Valera Library on Tuesday 26th November 2024. The members participated in a Christmas centre piece making workshop in glór. The celebration included a guided tour of the new De Valera library followed by a presentation by Muiríosa Guinan, Ann Jones and John Kelly on the current exhibition currently on display at the new Súil municipal art gallery. This event marked the end of a very successful year for the Clare cultural companions initiative, and the members are looking forward to the year ahead.



HEALTHY CLARE

Healthy Clare Funding Update

Healthy Clare continues to see the benefits of providing funding that support activities across the county which have a core focus on promoting health and wellbeing. As we move towards the end of the year we are receiving very positive feedback on Core and Micro funded projects. Some of the projects that have drawn down funding during November include;

2024 Healthy Clare Core Funding

- **Clare Sports Partnership ‘Links’ project**, supporting individuals in recovery from substance misuse through the medium of sport and social connection.
- **North Clare Meals on Wheels**, supporting the expansion of the Meals on Wheels programme into North Clare.

2024 Healthy Clare Micro Funding

- **Derg AC**: Offering a physical activity programme, ‘Train as a Mid Life Person’ under Outcome 1: Healthy Weight.
- **GROW Mental Health, Ennis**: Supporting weekly meet ups for GROW Service Users, under Outcome 2: Mental Health.
- **Clarecare**: Allowing for the delivery of Chair Yoga for Older People under Outcome 2, Mental Health.
- **East Clare Community Co-op**: Supporting the facilitation of Tia Chi and meditation classes within the community.

Healthy Clare Promotion and Collaboration

- Under the umbrella of Clare Garden Festival, the **‘Food from the Garden’** video will be launched in November to promote the closing part of this Healthy Ireland funded initiative and highlight engagement with community growing projects around the county. This video can be viewed on vimeo, https://www.claregardenfestival.com/FfGarden_24_6-PR.mp4
- Following very positive feedback on **‘Living Well Through the Menopause’**, this collaboration is one of the case studies highlighted under Creative Ireland. This video can be viewed on vimeo, <https://vimeo.com/1022940118?share=copy#t=0>

Health and Wellbeing Page Clare Echo

- At a recent national, Integrating Cancer Prevention and Early Diagnosis into Health Promotion webinar, organised by the HSE National Cancer Control Programme, Bernadette Mullins, HSE Health Promotion, recently highlighted the importance of her relationship with Clare County Council in highlighting cancer prevention programmes.
- November saw a number of features highlighted to include;
 - Week 9: Supporting Global Lung Cancer Awareness Month.
 - Week 10: Supporting World Diabetes Day.
 - Week 11: Supporting International Men’s Health Day.
 - Week 12: Supporting International Day of Elimination of Violence Against Women and 16 Days of Awareness Campaign.

If you would like to see a Health and Wellbeing initiative promoted in the Health and Wellbeing page, reach out to the Healthy Clare Coordinator, samccarthy@clarecoco.ie

CORPORATE SERVICES

Freedom of Information & Data Protection:

Previous years and 2024 to date - statistics to 30th September 2024	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Freedom of Information Requests	152	176	119	156	130
Freedom of Information Internal Review Applications	6	13	8	4	5
Appeals with Information Commissioner	1	4	2	4	1
Data Access Requests – Subject Access Request	5	6	10	10	13
Data Requests – Erasure Request	0	1	1	2	0
Data Access Requests – Third Party Access Requests e.g. Gardaí	20	27	27	29	29

Communications

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

- 19 media releases were issued during November 2024, including:
 - Lisdoonvarna Fáilte Triumphs at 2024 IPB Pride of Place Awards
 - Taoiseach Simon Harris Officially Opens Clare’s New County Library and Cultural Centre
 - Clare County Council provide 33 new homes in Scarriff and Sixmilebridge

Social Media

The Communications Office monitors and updates social media channels to maintain awareness of the work of the Council.

In the three week period 1-21 November 2024, the Communications Office:

- Posted 52 times on Facebook, with total followers now 20,794.
- Posted 54 times on X (formerly Twitter), with total followers is over 8.7K.
- 52 Posts on Instagram followers are now 3,902.

(Statistics accurate as of 22/11/2024)

Register of Electors

In advance of the General Election, the Franchise Section processed a high number of applications from the public to add or

amend details on the Register of Electors. The total number of electors registered to vote in the upcoming Dáil election stands at 96,398.

CULTURAL SERVICES – LIBRARY, ARTS, MUSEUM & ARCHIVES MANAGEMENT

Clare County Library



An Taoiseach, Simon Harris speaking at the official opening of the new De Valera Library, Ennis.

The new De Valera Library & Súil Gallery were officially by An Taoiseach Simon Harris on Friday 15th November in the presence of Cathaoirleach Cllr Alan O’Callaghan, Chief Executive Pat Dowling and Mayor of Ennis, Cllr Clare Colleran Molloy.

The new library and art gallery has a floor space of 2,321 square meters and comprises of a public library over 2 floors incorporating the Local Studies Centre, Library Headquarters on the top floor and art Gallery adjacent to glór.



Cllr Clare Colleran Molloy, Mayor of Ennis, Cllr Alan O’Callaghan, Cathaoirleach, An Taoiseach Simon Harris, Helen Walsh, County Librarian and Pat Dowling, CE of Clare County Council at the official opening of the new De Valera Library and Súil art gallery.

Resources include over 73,000 books, CDs, DVDs, Audio books, newspapers, magazines and sensory resources. The new library also provides public PCs, free WIFI, a hublet with tablets, a lapsafe with laptops, a Cubbie for use by those with extra sensory needs, Penelope pods which act as private booths for study and research, meeting rooms and “Changing Places” fully accessible toilet.

Online Resources usage

There is strong demand for e-audiobooks and Pressreader. Pressreader is an international news stand that allows access to over 7,000 of the world’s leading newspapers and magazines from over 100 countries.

1,920 E-Books	4,158 E-Audiobooks	1,133 E-Magazines (libby)
897 Online Courses	4,472 ePress (magazines & newspapers)	43 Transparent Languages

Marketing & Social Media

	Total Followers	New Followers	Post Reach/ Impressions	Post Likes
	8,111	83	49,965	2,044
	2,385	98	5,305	199
	2,177	1-	7,300	52

Library Activities in Figures

Total number of in branch events	289
Total audiences at in branch events	4,357
Total number of outreach events	16
Total audiences at outreach events	227
Total number of deliveries	12
Total number of class novels issued	6



County Librarian Helen Walsh with Sofia Serbinovschi, design a library card winner Right to Read

Children’s Services

Sofia Serbinovschi, aged 12, was declared the winner of the Design a Library Card Competition which ran as part of the Summer Stars Reading Challenge. Sofia was delighted to see her winning design printed on the new library cards which will be given to every child that joins the library. County Librarian Helen Walsh gave Sofia her prize of a book voucher and art supplies.

Right to Read/ Adult Literacy for Life

Library staff from Clare and Limerick attended two in-person training days as part of the Library Literacy Champions Course. They met service providers from the LCETB who work with adults who have unmet literacy needs. The training covered topics such as Family Learning and English as a Second Language. Further collaboration between the two library services and the ETB was discussed.



Hurdlestown Archive presentation by donor Dinny O’Regan, Pat O’Brien, owner of the Celtic Bookshop in Limerick and author of several historical works on East Clare, P.J. Mason from the Broadford Community Group, Clare County Librarian Helen Walsh, Executive Librarian Michael Talty and Archivist Ciara Fahy.

Local Studies

The Local Studies Centre has successfully relocated its collections, including 12,000 books, several thousand pamphlets and photographs, and many other archival items, to the new De Valera Library.

Social Media Stats:

Facebook 23/10/24-20/11/24					
	Post reach	Post engagement	New Page likes	New Page followers	Total followers
Clare Arts Office	2,389	340	6	16	3,419
Cultúrlann Sweeney	295	112	4	10	2,107
EASI Studios	13	0	0	0	643
Tulla Stables Artist Studios	32	0	0	0	660
CYT - Clare Youth Theatre	249	19	0	0	582
Riches of Clare	83	1	0	0	2,864
Clare Culture Night	295	2	1	1	1,318
Embrace Arts Programme	5	0	0	0	571

Another collection has been added to the Local Studies holdings. A collection of historical documents relating to the Bentley family from Hurdlestown House, Broadford has been donated. The Bentleys were landlords in the area for almost 300 years until the 20th century. These papers were donated by Dinny O’Regan whose family previously lived in Hurdlestown. The documents were moved to County Kerry with the family but are now being returned to Clare. The collection includes estate maps of several townlands in Newmarket on Fergus. These maps, dating from 1723, are extremely rare in themselves. The handover took place at the Local Studies area in the new De Valera library.

Clare Archives

The archivist was involved in the accession of 80 rollbooks/ daybooks/ district inspector’s reports from the Crusheen, Inchicronan, Ballinruan schools circa 1850-2020.

The archivist assisted in the move of Local Studies and Archives material from the Manse to the new library. The cataloguing of the Barrett Collection is ongoing. There were the usual archival queries regarding private collections and local authority collections in our possession.

Clare Arts Office

The new gallery Súil, operated by the Arts Office, opened in November with the launch of The Art of Place, a photography exhibition by John Kelly. Three other exhibitions took place in Ennis, Scariff and Kilkee in November.

Twenty musicians from all over the country, attended a Music Network performance development course run in conjunction with glór. Meetings also took place with the craft sector and a professional development lecture was given to students at the Burren College of Art. Cultúrlann Sweeney, Kilkee hosted a wildlife talk and a film and two Arts in Clare slots happened on Clare FM.

The Arts Office assisted a location scout for a forthcoming US production shooting in January 2025.

The Arts in the Community programme continued in St. Joseph’s Hospital, Ennis and in Raheen Hospital. A planning meeting was held with Creative Places Shannon and 3 groups of Clare Youth Theatre continued to meet weekly. The Arts Officer attended the annual conference of the Association of Local Authority Arts Officers.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Arts In Clare Group	-	-	-	-	3,417
Clare Trad Group	-	-	-	-	2,733
Súil	-	-	12	32	32
Instagram 23/10/24-20/11/24					
Account	Followers		Reach		
Clare Arts Office	872		443		
Culture Night	226		4		

Clare Museum



The Museum monthly lecture series continued with a talk on hair hurling balls by Clodagh Doyle from the National Museum, who surprised everyone by bringing ancient hurling balls and a 500-year-old hurley with her. The talk was attended by 12 people. The Museum completed its Creative Ireland project, which

involved local people talking about a special object in their lives. These were recorded for future generations.

Several new artefacts were donated during the month, including documents relating to the 1917 East Clare by-election and some butter making equipment. Two women's groups came to workshops on the Clare Embroidery Collection. One group will continue to visit the museum for workshops once a week for six weeks. During their time at the museum, they will make a quilt inspired by the embroidery collection for donation to the collection. The curator was on Clare FM, promoting the museum's monthly lecture series. The curator conducted outreach to 'The Harmony Group' - a women's group in Cloughleigh. The curator is in the process of contacting people who loaned objects to the museum to renew these loans for another five years. One new blog entry was posted to the website.

KILLALOE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Crusheen Mobility Plan

Arising from relatively significant number of developments in Crusheen and on foot of representations from the Elected Members, Killaloe MD are overseeing the preparation of a Mobility Plan for Crusheen. The Mobility Plan will set out how to enhance the footpaths, streets, public lighting in Crusheen and make sure we provide for new infrastructure e.g. pedestrian crossings, cycle paths, bus shelter, pathways to ensure Crusheen is a pleasant and sustainable village for everyone of all ages and abilities to safely walk, cycle and travel from homes to the school, the shop and other community and recreational facilities.

Significant public consultation has taken place. During November Killaloe MD together with our consultant team drafted a number of layouts and options for enhanced connectivity within Crusheen, responding to the feedback and requests from the community and stakeholders. The draft layout options include a number possibilities regarding footpaths and the insertion of cycle lanes, pedestrian crossing points, car-parking, bus set down areas, and enhanced pedestrian access to community facilities including the future Railway Stop – the subject of a separate initiative by Killaloe MD.

In line with the spirit of engagement with the community during this project and due to the need to arrive an agreed option with stakeholders on a number of key elements, it is envisaged that draft options will be presented to the community and property owners in January to ascertain their views on a preferred approach. Subject to agreement of the options, it is anticipated that in early 2025 the plan can be completed relatively quickly after. In the meantime, a potential funding application is being considered for elements of the emerging mobility plan.

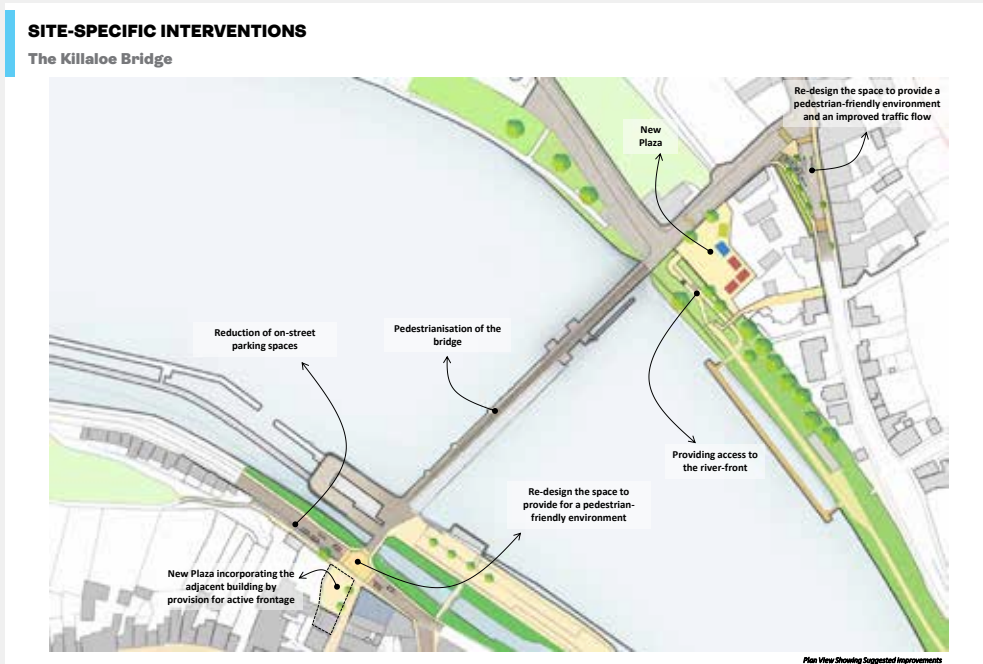
Killaloe Town Enhancement and Mobility Plan

Preparation of funding application

During November work commenced on the preparation of a joint RRDF Funding application for Killaloe-Ballina Town Enhancement Strategy with Tipperary Local Authority. The application will be led by Killaloe MD and will build on considerable background work undertaken during the year between the MD and colleagues in Nenagh MD. The proposed funding application will seek to develop the concepts in the Killaloe-Ballina plan to a detailed design and planning consent stage for projects in Killaloe and Ballina, reflecting the coherent and collaborative approach between both local authorities.

Proposal to pedestrian existing Killaloe Bridge on opening of Bypass

A key component of the Killaloe-Ballina Town Enhancement and Mobility Plan is the pedestrianisation of the existing bridge, on commencement of the operation of the new bridge crossing and Killaloe bypass (see below).



Extract from Killaloe-Ballina Town Enhancement and Mobility Plan

Killaloe MD in conjunction with Tipperary County Council’s Roads Department commenced the preparation of the significant technical information and survey work required to commence the statutory process to pedestrianise the existing Killaloe bridge. It is anticipated that a formal Section 38 Process undertaken under the Roads Acts, will commence in early 2025 by both Killaloe MD and Tipperary County Council. In advance of the formal Section 38 process, it is planned to host a public information meeting in December to update the public on the proposal to close the existing Killaloe Bridge to vehicular traffic.

Killaloe Courthouse

The *Killaloe-Ballina Town Enhancement and Mobility Plan (2022)* identifies several key opportunity sites in Killaloe to reinvigorate the town area, one of which is the Killaloe Courthouse. There is a necessity to bring the building back to a viable and economically sustainable use for the Courthouse by renovating the building and revitalising and reimagining the building and surrounding public realm.

In that regard, Killaloe MD appointed Drake Hourigan Architects to prepare a Feasibility Study on the reuse of the Courthouse with an anticipated completion of December. In November emerging opportunities for the Courthouse

were developed, based on significant public engagement in August. A site visit to the Courthouse was undertaken by Killaloe Elected Members, MD staff and the Consultant team in November to examine in detail the potential opportunities and restrictions of the Courthouse. It is anticipated that the Feasibility Study, funded under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme will be completed in December.



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

HOUSING

The housing public counter will remain 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. Our Ukrainian support team can be contacted on 065 6846577 or by email: communityresponseforum@clarecoco.ie or offerahome@clarecoco.ie. Our Local Authority Integration Team can be reached at integration@clarecoco.ie

The Council has launched a new online portal for our Housing Adaptation Grant for Older People and People with a Disability. The availability of the grant application online portal will greatly reduce paperwork, improve the speed of grant processing and allow applicants to see the progress of their grant throughout our approval process.

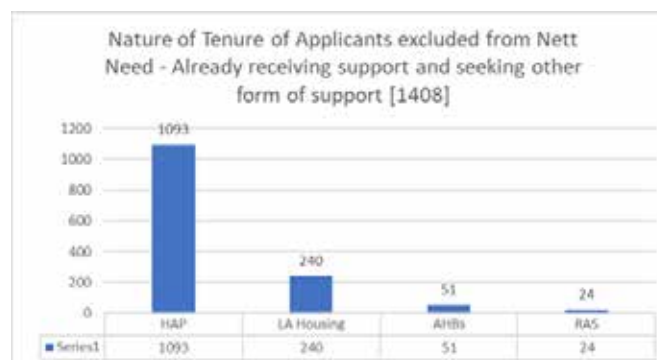
Clare County Council Housing Grants online application The Draft Traveller Accommodation Program was on display up to 27th September and final version of the program has been circulated to Elected Members for review and it is on the agenda for the December Council meeting. Membership of the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee was ratified by this Council at the October meeting and the first meeting was held in the last week of October.

Social Housing Demand

The annual assessment of Social housing need [SSHA] was completed on 4th November with return date of 2nd December. National report on same is expected in Q1 2025. The highest demand throughout the county remains for 1 and 2-bedroomed properties. There are 2,171 applicant households (77%) who have a requirement for this property type.

Current Housing need as of 22/11/2024

Total Households on List	2,825	
Transfer Applicants (see below)		1,408
Net Need	1,417	



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

Count of FIRST AREA OF CHOICE	BEDS APPROVED			
	1 and 2 beds	3 beds	4 and 5 beds	Total
ENNIS	970	197	69	1236
SHANNON	173	36	16	225
CLARECASTLE	149	29	9	187
INAGH/ENNISTYMON/LAHINCH	118	23	6	147
KILRUSH	94	25	7	126
FEAKLE/SCARIFF/WHITEGATE	80	25	3	124
MEELICK/PARTEEN/WESTBURY	66	25	11	102
MILTOWN MALBAY/MULLAGH/QUILTY	70	10	1	81
KILKEE/CROSS/CARRIGAHOLT	58	15	1	74
COROFIN/RUAN	63	16	1	80
NEWMARKET-ON-FERGUS	51	17	4	72
KILLALOE	50	14	2	66
LISDOONVARNA/BALLYVAUGHAN	44	13	3	60
SIXMILEBRIDGE	35	12	5	52
COORACLARE/DOONBEG	31	9	5	45
TULLA/KILKISHEN/BROADFORD	32	8	2	42

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CLONLARA	25	6	2	33
KILDYSART/BALLYNACALLY	21	4	3	28
QUIN	17	8	3	28
KILMIHIL	9	4	2	15
KILMALEY	10	2		12
KILFENORA	5	1		6
Grand Total	2,171	499	155	2,825

Newly Qualified Applicants



and Droichead Nua, Scariff (16 no apartments and 2 no semi-detached houses).



Housing Allocations

Clare County Council continues to work with the Approved Housing Bodies in relation to the provision of social housing. In this regard we recently advertised 14 units on the CBL website comprising 3 and 4 bed roomed houses which are being delivered by Tuath Housing located at Loughville, Lahinch Road, Ennis. This development attracted almost 400 expressions of interest, and the nominated households have been forwarded to Tuath Housing. This is the first social housing development that Tuath have delivered in Ennis and is delivered via CALF funding.

Phase 1 of the Social Housing Development located at Radharc an Sruthan Quin is completed and the tenants received keys to their new homes on 15th November. This development, which is delivered by Co-Operative Housing Ireland (CHI), via CALF funding comprises 4 no 2 bedroomed bungalows, 14 no 3 bedroomed houses and 2 no 4 bedroomed houses.

4 bungalows located at Carraig Nua Tulla, delivered by Cluid Housing under Part v agreement, were recently advertised on the CBL website. In addition, phase 1 of the social housing development located at Millbank Roslevan Ennis was also recently advertised on this site. This development which is being delivered by Co-Operative Housing Irl (CHI) comprises 15 no 3 bedroomed units. The Allocations Team are currently carrying out Assessment meetings with the households that expressed interest in these developments.

The official openings of two new social housing developments took place on 13th November last and the new tenants are looking forward to celebrating Christmas in their new homes. These are located at Baile Uí Loideáin, Sixmilebridge (4 no 3 bedroomed houses and 11 no 2 bedroomed terraced houses)



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



Tenant Purchase Incremental Scheme

There remains significant interest in the LA Tenant Purchase Incremental Scheme. We currently have 21 open cases at various stages of the process. The sale of seven properties under the tenant purchase scheme have been completed to date in 2024 with a further four to be completed this year.

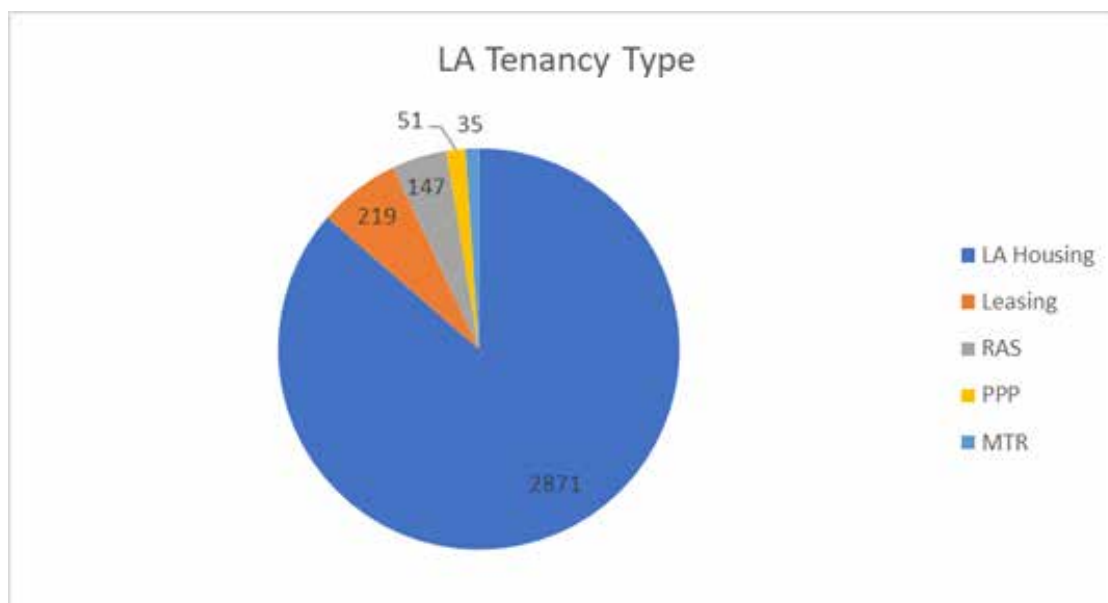
Having consulted with elected members in relation to maintaining our newer stock we have agreed that properties purchased or built since 1st January 2016 will not be available for sale under this scheme. This can be reviewed at end of current Housing Delivery Plan period in 2026. We have also agreed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

Housing Tenancies:

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

22nd November 2024			
MD	Allocated	Occupied	Total
Ennis MD	3	1,285	1,288
Killaloe MD	17	359	376
Shannon MD	16	736	752
West Clare MD	7	955	962
Grand Total	43	3,335	3,378

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



There are 146 RAS, 218 leases (122 Long term and 96 short term leases) There are 1093 HAP tenancies. Approved Housing bodies are providing approximately 860 tenancies to Social Housing Applicants. Clare County Council have full nomination rights in respect of the majority of AHB properties and these properties are advertised via our Choice Based Letting System. Nominations are prepared in accordance with a new National Process agreed by LAs and the AHB sector and commenced in July 2022.

Vacancies:

Vacant Stock	Ennis MD	West Clare MD	Shannon MD	Killaloe MD	Total
Traveller Accom.	3	7	0	0	10
Derelict Properties	0	0	0	0	0
Projects	3	4	1	2	10
Casual Vacancies	16	16	8	4	44
TOTAL	24	27	8	5	64

Estate Management

The Estate Management Team continue to undertake regular routine and response calls to tenants, dealing with complaints re breaches of Tenancy and ASB as well as inspecting Local Authority tenancies and providing the necessary supports to tenants. The team were successful in securing 3 Repossession Orders in court this year to date. A number of further Repossession Applications will be going through the Courts in the coming months.

The team have been extremely active in carrying out tenancy visits for the period up to end of November and a total of 1,302 inspections have been carried out year to date. It should be noted that the follow up on complaints received and the no of visits carried **out do not correlate** with an increase in instances of asb or tenancy breaches but rather that a more proactive approach is being taken with the team in engaging

with 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. Listed hereunder shows details of work being undertaken by the Estate Management team this year to date.

	Total year to date	1st Nov to 26th Nov
Complaints recd re breaches of Tenancy	861	27
Tenancy Visits	1,302	2
Referrals to TSS (including Tusla)	52	3
Tenancy Notifications/Warnings issued	66	9
Abandonment Notices issued	14	2
Keys collected from Casual Vacancies	56	6
Repossession Orders	3	0

The team carry out continued patrols of Local Authority housing estates and Traveller accommodation sites and have a very visible presence to manage and mitigate against complaints of antisocial behaviour. The team also engage proactively with tenants to help prevent anti-social behaviour, facilitate the daily patrol of local authority sites, arrange specific meetings with tenants as well as engaging with local communities. The working hours of the team are flexible to meet required need, involving working after hours and weekends as the need dictates. The team can be contacted out of office hours, should the need arise, by contacting the Council Emergency Phone no. **(087) 2599568**

Private Rented inspections:

886 inspections have been carried out to date. 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.

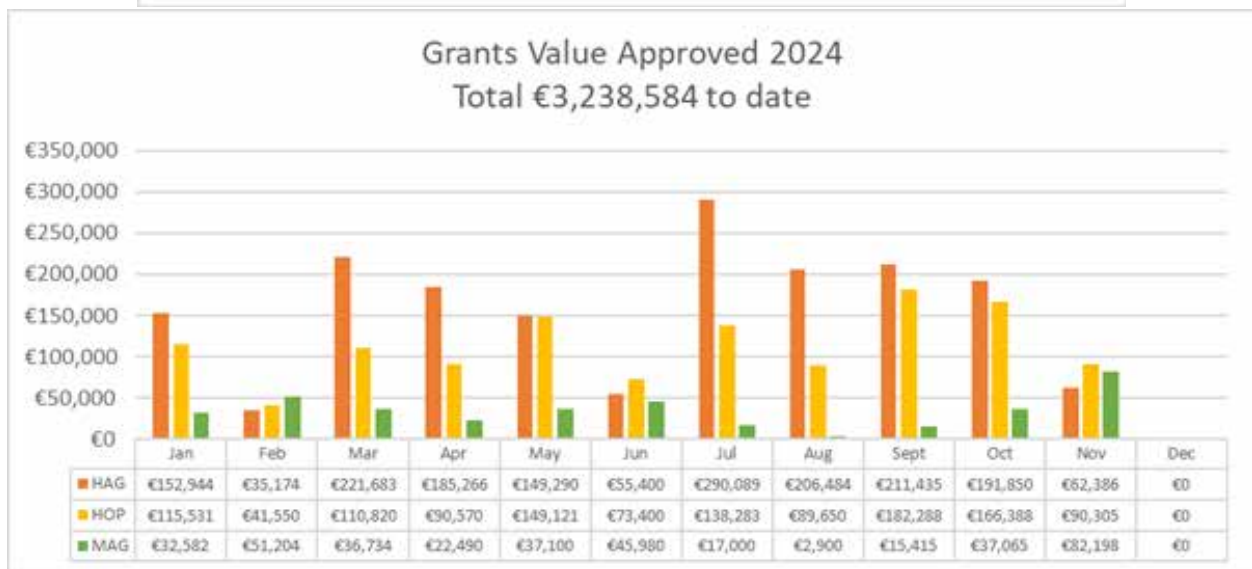
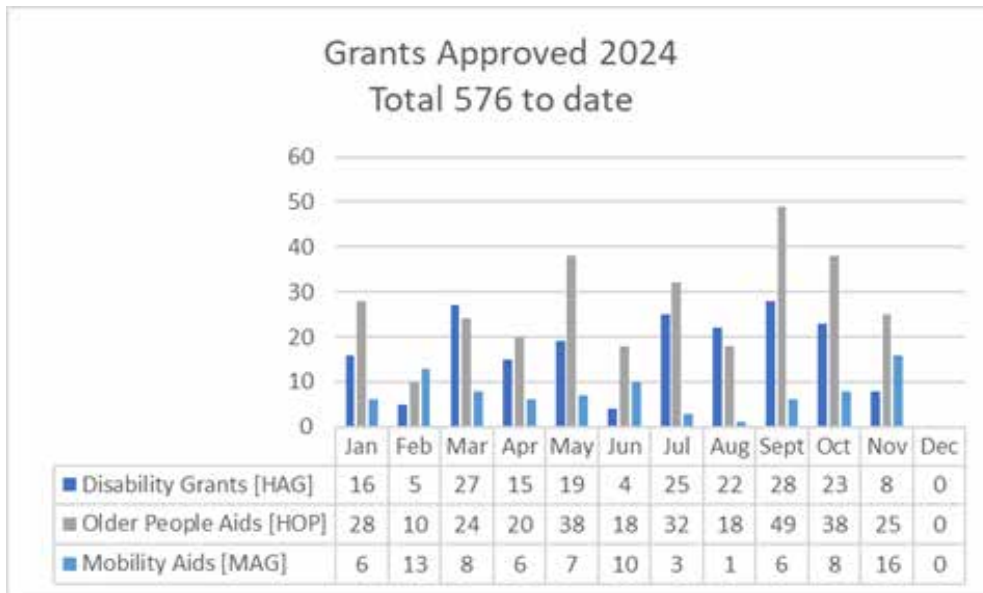
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Housing Grants:

The Housing Adaptation Grant for Older People and People with a Disability is now available to apply online through Clare County Council's website.

Clare County Council Housing Grants online application

Grants Approved to date this year:



Local Authority Home Loan

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

There are currently 68 Local Authority Home Loans Approved in Principle. Updated figures are outlined as follows:

37 Applications to date in 2024

49 Applications received in 2023

68 Local Authority Loans Approved

5 Local Authority Loans Drawn Down in 2022, 12 Drawn Down in 2023 and 12 to date in 2024

Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan

The Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan was introduced on the 22 July 2024. This is a Government backed mortgage and loan for the purchase and renovation of derelict and non-habitable homes. The property must be eligible for the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant, whether derelict, non-habitable or simply vacant.

Full details on the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan (LAPR) and eligibility criteria including the Loan Calculator can be found on <https://purchaseandrenovationloan.ie/>
1 LAPR Application has been received to date in 2024.

Traveller Accommodation

The Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme was on display up to 27th September and final version of the programme has been prepared, taking into account submissions received, and

was ratified by the incoming Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee at their first meeting at the end of October. A draft copy has been circulated to Elected Members for review and is an agenda item for the December Council meeting.

The Homeless Action Team

The level of complex and problematic cases presenting to the Homeless Action Team in Clare is increasing. This puts additional demands on the Homeless Action Team to provide Emergency Accommodation in a safe and appropriate manner. The levels of support, advice and advocacy, being requested from households around areas such as Homeless Services, Housing Requirements, Outside Support referrals and the need for Emergency Accommodation within this region is increasing. There has been a notable rise in the number of presentations of individuals and households experiencing difficulties and concerns around family/relationship breakdown, Hospital discharges, prison releases, addiction or mental health concerns, dual diagnosis, and a further increase in the number of households presenting from the Travelling Community. Prevention and support remain a key factor in the workings of the Homeless Action Team. Several single and household presentations worked with staff around prevention options and supports which in turn prevented the need for Emergency Accommodation and avoiding entering a homeless situation. Other individuals and families were supported in accessing Emergency Accommodation either within our services or through private establishments. The Homeless Action Team continues to pursue additional emergency accommodation options at a time when accommodation is in high demand generally.

Homeless Services [Homeless Action Team HAT]

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

Emergency Accommodation Status as of 14th November 2024:

	Families	Adults	Dependents	Providers
Laurel Lodge	0	13	0	1
Laurel Lodge	0	5	0	0
LL Winter Initiative	0	5	0	1
Cusack Lodge	5	7	14	1
Westbrook	0	19	0	1
Ashford Court	12	18	15	1
Clann Nua	0	13	0	1
EA Families	7	11	11	5
EA Individuals	0	15	0	5
TOTAL	24	109	40	17

In addition to the above numbers many other households engage with our homeless services on a daily basis.

Exits from Homeless Services:

Exits from Homeless Services:

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

During the period 17/10/24 to 14/11/2024 the following exited from homelessness:

- Self Discharge/Did not return to Service 1
- Moved to A.H.B Housing 3
- Moved to Temp. Accommodation 4
- Admitted to hospital 0
- Excluded 1
- In Prison (on remand) 0
- Tenancy LA 1
- Returned to family/friends 3

In addition to the above numbers many other households engage with our homeless services on a daily basis.

Affordable Housing Schemes for County Clare

CCC continue to run Expression of Interest (EOI) Campaigns seeking proposals on options to deliver affordable homes in County Clare. CCC are also engaged with developers with potential for Part V affordable delivery.

To date CCC have received approvals for access to the Affordable Housing Fund for the following developments:

- Tulla Rd Ennis – 10 units.
- Lahinch Rd Ennis – 11 units
- Shannon – 10 units (3 units allocated).

There is currently one submission under consideration by the Dept. of Housing. We are currently engaged with 4 other developers, that have expressed interest in affordable housing, for potential inclusion on the scheme.

There is an online information portal at <https://affordable-homes.ie/> providing general information to the public with regards to affordable housing.

Defective Concrete Blocks Grant Scheme

The Defective Enhanced Defective Concrete Blocks [DCB] Scheme went live in mid-July 2023, for private dwellings, with the finalised Act, regulations, updated YQA's (Your Questions Answered) & Ministerial Guidelines published.

On the 7th of November 2024, The Minister approved an increase in the grant cap from €420,000 to €462,000.

DCB Application Map

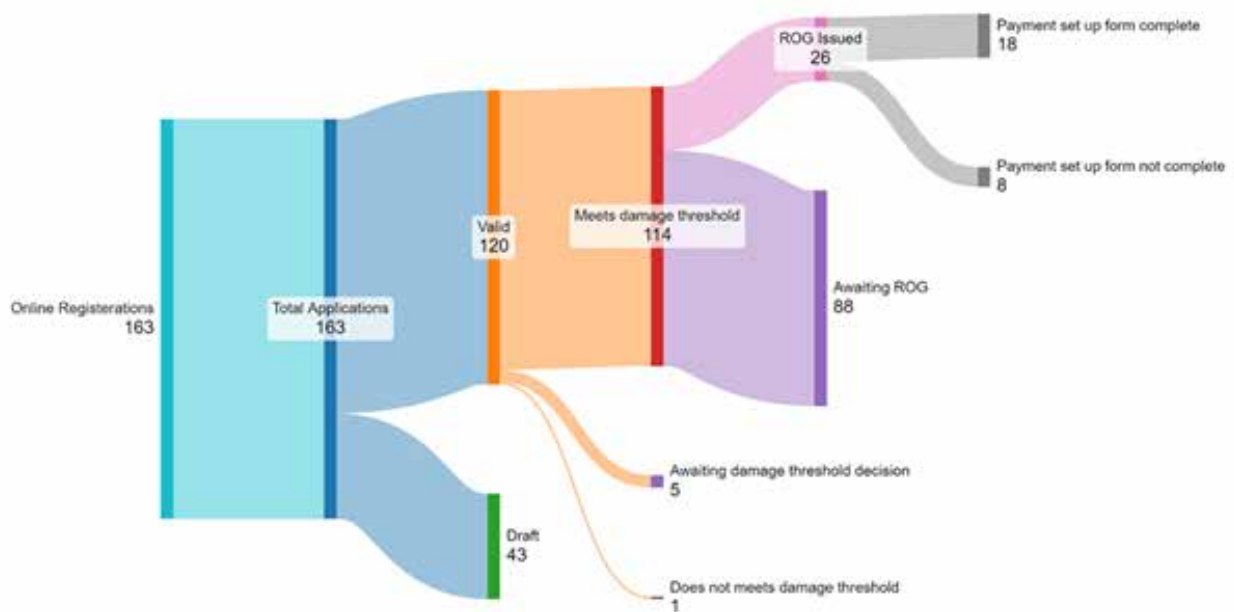


Applications to the scheme can be submitted on-line through our website. The website includes supporting information to further assist homeowners regarding the application process. Clare County Council DCB Team have also included a video on our website called "how to make an application" to further assist homeowners in the application process. In addition, our team are available to assist with any queries homeowners may have. Our team can be contacted by email at dcb@clarecoco.ie or alternatively by phone at 065-6846385, 065-6846468 & 065-6846309.

Clare County Council continue to administer and validate applications since the commencement of the scheme via the online portal. Clare County Council are engaging with the Housing Agency and the DHLGH and continue to carry out all associated duties.

To date Clare County Council have issued 26 Remedial Option Grants, with the total value of €7.85m awarded by the housing agency and are awaiting input from the Housing Agency to further process 93 applications with grant amounts to follow.

DCB Application Flow Chart



So far in 2024, Walk in clinics have been held in Kilrush, Ennistymon, Scarriff, Shannon and Ennis. An information evening was also held in Shannon Library in mid-October to further assist homeowners on how to make an application to the scheme via the online portal. The information evening was targeted for people with limited digital resources and/or capabilities, to assist them further in making an application. Clare County Council continue to engage with the DHLGH to ensure social houses affected by DCB are included in a similar scheme.

Update on capital programme:

Two housing developments were delivered in November 2024 – the 18 unit development in Scarriff and the 15 unit development in Sixmilebridge. The schemes comprise a mix of one, two and three-bedroom dwellings, which are designed and built to the highest standards and will provide a high-quality living environment for their residents. The units feature a high-specification finish with an emphasis on energy efficiency.

Other housing capital schemes are progressing well and are at varying stages of design and construction across the county. Doonbeg and Gort Road are under construction and these projects are continuing to progress well.



Progress on Gort Road housing development



Progress on Doonbeg housing development



Completed Sixmilebridge housing project



Completed Scarriff housing project

Approved Housing Bodies

Delivery of homes for social housing use by the Approved Housing Bodies is now at an advanced stage with 62 no. units completed to date this year. During November, 12 no. newly constructed 2-bed apartments by Saint Vincent de Paul at Clonroad, Ennis was completed, and tenants are now being appointed. Other Schemes at Ennis, Quin, Shannon and Tulla are expected to be finalised before the end of the year. This sector is vital to successful delivery of our targets under Housing for All and we continue to engage with them on housing output and lend support in relation to operational and financial matters.



Completed 12 units by Saint Vincent de Paul at Clonroad, Ennis

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

SHIP Capital	No. approved	Current stage	Start Date	Completion Date
Scarriff	18	Complete	Q1 2023	Q4 2024
Sixmilebridge	15	Complete	Q1 2023	Q4 2024
Main Street Clarecastle	1	Under Construction	Q1 2024	Q1 2025
38 St Patrick's Terrace, Kilrush	1	Contractor Appointed – On hold structural issues	Q2 2024	Q3 2025
Clarehill Clarecastle	13	Turnkey - Under Construction	Q3 2023	Q1 2025 (10) Q2 2025 (3)
Garrán Cathaigh, Leadmore Kilrush	14	Turnkey – Under Construction	Q2 2024	Q1 2025
Béal an Inbhir, Kilrush	28	Turnkey – Under Construction	Q2 2024	Q2 2025
Main Street Clarecastle	7	Turnkey – Under Construction	Q2 2024	Q4 2024
Harvey's Quay, Ennis	4	Turnkey Complete	Q1 2024	Q4 2024
Drumcliff Rd. Ennis	26	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH. S179A under judicial review	-	-
Ennistymon	30	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH. Project on hold.	-	-
Doonbeg Road, Kilkee	25	Stage 1 approved by DHLGH. Project on hold.	-	-
Gort Rd. Ennis	20	Construction commenced.	Q3 2024	Q4 2025
Back Road, Kilrush	12	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH. Part VIII approved. Tender advertised for construction contractor.	Q1 2025	Q2 2026
Moore Street, Kilrush	16	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH and Part VIII approved. To go to tender Feb 2025.	Q2 2025	Q4 2026
Doonbeg Lands	8	Stage 4 approved by DHLGH. Approval granted by ABP. Construction commenced November 2024.	Q4 2024	Q4 2025
Shallee Drive / Cloughleigh Rd	5	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH. Part VIII approved. Tender advertised for construction contractor.	Q1 2025	Q4 2025
Subtotal	234			
Approved Housing Body Projects	No. approved	Current stage	Start Date	Completion Date
Cluain na Laoi, Kilkishen (Circle Hsg/ Assoc.) CALF Turnkey	16	Completed	Q1 2023	Q2 2024
Crusheen (Cluid Housing Assoc.) CALF Turnkey Part V	3	Completed	Q3 2023	Q3 2024
Clonroad, Ennis, (St. Vincent de Paul CAS Turnkey	12	Completed	Q1 2024	Q4 2024
Acha Bhile, Lahinch Rd., Ennis (Cluid Hsg. Assoc.) CALF Turnkey	21	Completed 11 units in Phase 2 Under Construction 10 units in Phase 3	Q3 2023 Q1 2024	Q4 2024 Q4 2024
Quin, Ennis (Co-Operative Hsg. Ireland) CALF Turnkey)	36	Completed: 20 units in Phase 1 Under Construction: 16 units in Phase 2	Q1 2023 Q3 2023	Q4 2024 Q4 2024
Loughville, Ennis (Tuath Housing) CALF Turnkey	48	Under construction: 16 units in Phase 1 32 units in Phase 2	Q1 2024 Q1 2024	Q4 2024 Q1 2025
Market Street, Ennis (Co-Operative Hsg. Ireland) CALF Turnkey	14	Under construction	Q3 2023	Q2 2025
63 Shannon Heights, Kilrush (Sophia Hsg. Assoc.) CAS Renewal Const.)	1	At procurement stage	Q2 2025	Q4 2025
71 Shannon Heights, Kilrush (Sophia Hsg. Assoc.) CAS Renewal Const.)	1	At procurement stage	Q2 2025	Q4 2025
Loughville, Ennis (Tuath Housing) CALF Turnkey	48	Under construction: 14 units in Phase 1 34 units in Phase 2	Q1 2024 Q1 2024	Q4 2024 Q1 2025

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Bruachlan, Westbury (Cooperative Hsg. Ireland) CALF Construction	22	Planning granted	Q4 2024	Q4 2025
Shannon (Cluid Housing Assoc.)	5	Under construction	Q4 2023	Q4 2024
Millbank, Roslevan, Ennis (Co-Operative Hsg. Ireland) CALF Turnkey	25	Under construction: 15 units in Phase 1 10 units in Phase 2	Q1 2024 Q2 2024	Q1 2025 Q3 2025
Carraig Nua, Tulla (Cluid Hsg Assoc.) CALF Turnkey (Part V)	4	Under construction	Q1 2024	Q4 2024
Subtotal	208			
Total	442			

UKRAINIAN SERVICES TEAM

The CSO figures show there were 790 Temporary Protections granted nationally in the past four weeks, the number of new arrivals into the Country has reduced by 37 people compared to the weekly figures outlined in the previous Monthly Management Report. There are currently 5,142 Ukrainian Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTPs) living in County Clare, representing a decrease of 47 people in the County compared to figures released previously. There are 1,663 people accommodated in 28 multi-occupancy facilities located throughout the County - this reflects a decrease of 185 people compared to previous figures. The remaining people are accommodated in residential settings in formal hosted arrangements through the Irish Red Cross and Clare County Council's Offer-a-Home scheme. There is still huge interest in the scheme since its launch in November 2022, we currently have 253 homes offered resulting in an increase of 3 properties compared to figures released previously. We currently have 4 properties offered that will be available during the month of December. To date our Matching & Relationship Manager has facilitated the accommodation of 512 people that were originally living in hotel and multi-occupancy facilities.

The Government has confirmed the Accommodation Recognition Payment Scheme (ARP) is secure until the end of March 2025, it is anticipated we will have a better understanding of the position of this scheme by January 2025.

The Government has agreed an absence protocol for the Christmas 2024 period of **23rd December 2024 - 8th January 2025**, Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTPs) may travel freely and be absent from their State funded temporary emergency accommodation or their rapid build/modular home.

BOTPs must have returned to their accommodation by 8th January 2025, or risk losing that accommodation. During this time BOTPs must continue paying the mandatory contribution charge to their accommodation provider or Tuath Housing as usual.

Anyone in State funded accommodation intending to travel between these dates can do so **without having to apply to UCTAT in advance**.

However, where BOTPs are currently residing in a rapid build/modular home managed by Tuath Housing, they must notify contributions@tuathhousing.ie that they will be absent from their unit for security purposes and provide the address and dates.

Anyone intending to be absent outside of the pre-approved dates must make an application to seek approval in the usual way. Only those with an **approved exceptional absence or those who have relinquished their accommodation voluntarily through the agreed form** may be absent before 23rd Dec or after 8th January 2025.

The Absence Protocol does not apply to BOTPs currently residing in 90 Day Designated Accommodation Centres (DACs) where separate arrangements are in place. Nor does it apply to Accommodation Recognition Payment (ARP) or Pledged Accommodation who may make their own arrangements to travel as they wish.

Any unsanctioned absences will be treated as refusals by UCTAT in the case of standard commercial accommodation, or by Tuath Housing for rapid build/modular homes, which may result in the accommodation being reallocated. Any BOTP found to have refused an offer of accommodation will not be eligible for another offer of accommodation from the State. At all times, parents/legal guardians remain responsible for minors in their care, who cannot be left unaccompanied in accommodation under any circumstances.

Responsibility for personal effects left in emergency accommodation during an absence remains at the risk of the individuals. The Local Authority Integration Teams (LAITs) have been set up in all local authorities. Their purpose is to help coordinate the different kinds of support available for people who are applying for international protection, refugees, and others in similar situations.

The goal of LAITs is to help IP applicants and refugees become independent, settle into their new communities, and participate in Irish life. They do this by connecting people to important services that can help them integrate into the community.

LOCAL AUTHORITY INTEGRATION TEAM

Who do LAITs support?

LAITs provide support for:

- Applicants for International Protection (IP)
- People who have been granted refugee status or other forms of protection, such as subsidiary protection or permission to remain
- Refugees who have been resettled in Ireland through a government programme
- Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTPs)

How is the support provided?

LAITs operate under the principle of 'Integration from Day One'. This means that LAITs provide integration support to people who need it as soon as they arrive in Ireland.

What services do LAITs provide?

The work of LAITs isn't meant to replace existing services. Instead, LAITs help connect people with the existing services that are most suitable for their needs. This includes things like:

- Being a direct contact for new arrivals, helping them with any problems they might have when dealing with public services
- Connecting new arrivals with services like legal help, child-care and healthcare
- Connecting new arrivals with services that improve their ability to live independently, like job training, English classes, education, and apprenticeships
- Guiding new arrivals through the process of applying for financial support, medical help, child benefits, and other services they might need
- Holding meetings in local areas and using community development principles to help those who attend
- Supporting people if they face racism or other unfair treatment, helping them report it to the right authorities
- Helping vulnerable new arrivals get in touch with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other services if they need extra help

How do I contact my Local Authority Integration Team?

You can contact LAIT's by email. Their integration @clarecoco.ie

Our Kids Code



This project was an OurKidsCode pre-engagement pilot in partnership with Clare County Council, Clare Local Development Company and Northwest Clare Family Resource Centre.

The aim was to gather information about:

- a. the level of interest in OurKidsCode among Ukrainian families;
- b. the potential for OurKidsCode as a route to integration for Ukrainian families in Co. Clare;
- c. how OurKidsCode programme content, materials and facilitation might need to be adapted to accommodate the cultural and linguistic needs of Ukrainian families;
- d. the level of logistical and other support required from stakeholders to organise and promote the programme

This pilot programme was a very successful collaboration between stakeholder partners and achieved its aim to gather information that could inform future Our Kids Code programmes targeted at Ukrainian families. The families' reactions to the workshops were overwhelmingly positive and most expressed the desire to do more. Parents said they could see great potential for Our Kids Code clubs to be a vehicle for integration. The assessment instruments used produced a wealth of feedback on what worked and where there is room for improvement.

The workshops were well-supported by stakeholders on the ground and the Our Kids Code team is grateful for the enthusiasm and support of Clare County Council and DigiClare for the project. We also wish to particularly acknowledge the hard work and invaluable contributions of the two Ukrainian Translators/Co-Facilitators, Anna Kramarenko and Iaroslav Muraviov.

Community Integration Forum Meetings

Throughout the month of November Regional Community Integration Forum Meetings were held around the County in 5 locations. These Meetings offered an opportunity for agencies to co-ordinate their supports and outreach to migrants.

A Directory of Service has been developed and will be launched by the Community Integration Forum in December. It is a welcome information booklet of key services to assist people to begin to settle into life as a new member in our community.

Volunteer Recognition Event

International Volunteer Day was marked in Ennis with an event celebrating the remarkable contribution made by individuals who have selflessly dedicated their time and talents to a vari-

ety of volunteer roles across County Clare.

Hosted by the Clare Volunteer Centre and Clare County Council's Community Integration Forum, the 'Volunteer Recognition Event' was held at Tracey's West County Hotel last Thursday 5th December.

Organisers were delighted that the ceremony helped to shine a spotlight on the countless hours, skills, and passion that volunteers contribute to communities across Clare.

The occasion also featured a celebration of County Clare's diverse and inclusive communities, a presentation of prizes to the winners of the Clare Community Art Competition, and musical entertainment by the St Michael's Choir and the Lisdoonvarna Crew.

The Local Authority Integration Team attended a meeting of the Regional ESOL Steering Committee on 7th November, a group that covers Limerick and Clare under educational and English Learning networks. The terms of reference for the group was renewed at this meeting and it was agreed to work through our priorities for the new ESOL and Migrant Learner Action Plan.

Fiona Cahill & Padraig McMahon from the Local Authority Integration Team attended a Jobs fair in Scariff on 1st November. This Collaborative event was developed by Clare Local Development Company, Employability Clare, and the Department of Social Protection.



The Local Authority Integration Team were delighted to attend the NUIG report launch on Language & Migration in Rural Areas on 5th November. Zak Moradi, a Kurdish Irish Hurler and Author, give an overview of how sport helped him as an

eleven-year-old boy to integrate into Irish life. There were very engaging panel discussions on the experiences with language education & experiences in rural areas: opportunities, challenges, and perceptions. The findings highlighted the importance of heritage languages, social and cultural activities for engagement in the local communities.



Sports & Recreation

Local Sport and Physical Activity Plan for Clare

Clare County Council is one of 4 pilot counties to launch a draft framework of a new five-year sports plan which will aim to improve physical activity in disadvantaged areas and across all socio-economic backgrounds.-

A countywide focus group of 587 residents were surveyed in preparation for the plan and revealed some startling findings. The plan has 9 strategic priorities including tackling the drop off rate of teenage girls, keeping the ageing population active, increasing participation in disadvantaged areas and growing minority sports.

The Draft Local Sport and Physical Activity Plan was open to public consultation for the month of November where members of the public could put forward their views and ideas.

Among the key elements of the plan is to increase public participation in non-sporting physical activity and explore the potential to develop connections to primary care and access for those with disabilities.

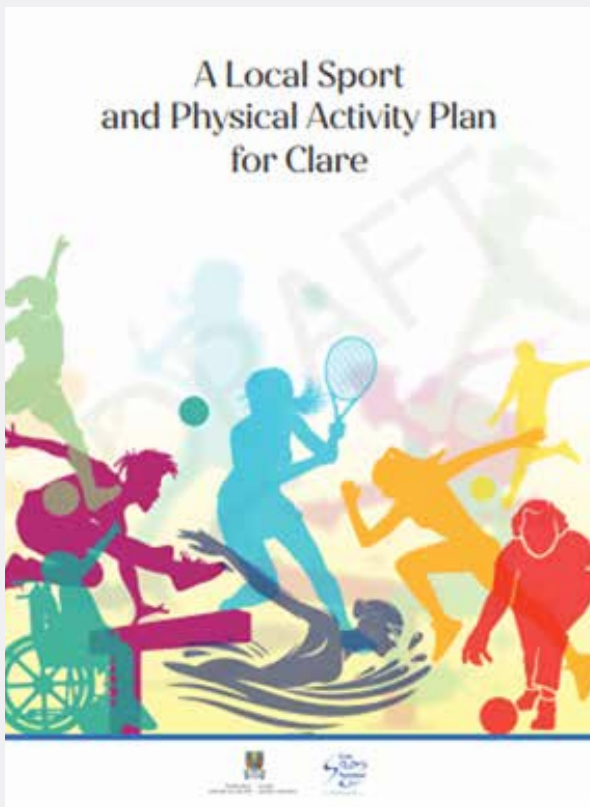
SPORTS & RECREATION

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Sport Ireland Local Sports Plan Templates

On 21st November Sport Ireland launched a national framework to support local authorities in developing and implementing Local Sports plans.

As Clare was one of 4 pilot counties for developing a Local Sports Plan Jason Murphy Director of Services and John Sweeney, CEO of Clare Sports Partnership were invited to a panel discussion at the launch. The Secretary Generals from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport

and Media and Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage also contributed to the event with Sport Ireland's CEO Dr. Una May and Director of Participation Louise Burke.

The templates which will assist Local Authorities develop a Local Sports Plan were piloted with a Development Group from counties Clare, Laois, Cavan and Carlow.

It is envisioned the new Local Sports Plans will play a key role in the National Sports Policy target to increase participation rates in sport and physical activity nationwide and will ultimately promote each county's health and wellbeing.



Panel Discussion Director of Participation for Sport Ireland, Clare County Council, Clare Sports Partnership, Laois County Council.



Jason Murphy, John Sweeney CEO Clare Sports Partnership, Brendan Boyce, Kay Nolan, Louise Burke Director of Participation Sport Ireland, Feargal Ó Coiligh Secretary General Department of Sport, Dr. Una May CEO of Sport Ireland, Oisín Foley Sport Ireland, John O'Neill S3 Consultants.

Active Ennis Leisure Complex Gym & Pool Report Membership Special offer

In November we launched our special offer for Christmas, this is a one-month membership for December and is priced at €50. With this offer we hope to increase the number of memberships through the quieter period building up to Christmas while also encouraging people to maintain their fitness levels going into the holiday period.

The affordable pricing provides an excellent opportunity for individuals to explore our state-of-the-art gym and pool facilities. Additionally, we are reminding users that gift vouchers are also available at the facility.



Jamie Fitzgibbon MSc in sports and exercise nutrition

In December, our Duty Manager, Jamie Fitzgibbon, achieved a significant milestone by completing an MSc in Sports and Exercise Nutrition. This advanced degree focuses on the science underpinning sports nutrition, empowering graduates with the latest evidence-based knowledge to support individuals and teams in optimizing their performance through tailored nutrition strategies.

As part of his MSc, he completed a thesis titled “The Nutritional Knowledge of Club-Level Hurling and Camogie Players.” His research involved a quantitative questionnaire designed to assess the level of nutritional awareness among players in these sports, as well as their understanding of and practices around supplement use.

The findings of his thesis contribute valuable insights into the role of nutrition in enhancing athletic performance at the club level and provide a framework for future education initiatives aimed at improving dietary habits among players. Jamie’s expertise will further strengthen the support available to members of the Active Ennis Leisure Complex, as he brings both theoretical knowledge and practical experience to the team.



Ennis Sub Aqua club

On Saturday, November 11th, the Ennis Sub Aqua Club hosted an exciting “Try a Dive” event at our swimming pool. This introductory experience was designed to offer participants a taste of scuba diving, giving them the chance to explore what it feels like to dive beneath the surface in a safe and controlled environment.

The event served as an opportunity to spark interest in the sport and provided attendees with detailed information about the Ennis Sub Aqua Club, including membership benefits and upcoming activities. Whether for adventure seekers or those curious about the underwater world, the event was a success in encouraging new faces to join the club.

The collaboration between Active Ennis Leisure Complex and the Sub Aqua Club highlights our commitment to offering diverse and engaging experiences for our members. For those who missed out, there will be more opportunities to connect with this vibrant community of diving enthusiasts in the future.



Lees Road and Tim Smythe Park Green Flag

Lees road and Tim Smythe Park reattained their Green flags. The Green Flag Award® scheme recognises and rewards well managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of recreational outdoor spaces across the United Kingdom and around the world.

Purpose & aims

- To ensure that everybody has access to quality green and other open spaces, irrespective of where they live.
- To ensure that these spaces are appropriately managed and meet the needs of the communities that they serve.
- To establish standards of good management.
- To promote and share good practice amongst the green space sectors.
- To recognise and reward the hard work of managers, staff and volunteers.



Footfall Report Active Ennis Leisure Complex.

The Total Footfall was 22156 for October up 9% from

September. We had an Average Footfall of 715 up 9% compared to September. The Lowest recorded Footfall was 266 and the Highest recorded Footfall was 997.

The highest total recorded footfall was on Saturday October 5th. The lowest recorded footfall was Sunday October 27th. The overall higher footfall may be explained by the return of school and public swim lessons. With shorter evenings the gym and public swims may also be increasing.

Lees Road

Along with attaining its green flag status Lee's Road had a lot of visitors in October. A total of 18,845 vehicles entered Lees Road Park in October. This was an average of 608 vehicles per day.

Tim Smythe Park

Bookings for Tim Smythe Park saw an increase of 5.9% in October. The active hours were up by 30.9% which was helped by a Charity dog walk in aid of Ennis Samaritans held on track in October. Revenue for Tim Smythe Park was up by 16.9% in October.

www.activeennis.ie www.activekilrush.ie

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

WEST CLARE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT - ENNISTYMON LEA

Speed Limit Review

Work progressing on the installation of updated speed limit signs on local roads and in urban speed limit areas
Estate speed limit signs at Corofin



Schedule of Municipal District Works

Work progressing on the completion of the SMDW for 2024
Manhole repair at Lahinch



Drainage Works at St Bridgets Well, Liscannor



Drainage Works at Moher, Liscannor



Overlay works in Corofin



Flooding

Outdoor crews were mobilised right throughout the weekend of 24th & 25th Nov to deal with flooding issues throughout North Clare arising from the aftermath of storm Bert
Recent flood damage at Ballyvaughan



Recent flood damage at N85 Inagh



Cleaning

Clean up of Clothes Recycling bins at Lisdoonvarna



North Clare Integrated Transport & Traffic Plan

Work continues on delivering on objectives in order to improve Transport & Traffic related issues in North Clare. The North Clare LEA have been very proactive in progressing objectives from the Plan

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Condé Nast Traveler names County Clare as one of the best places to visit in 2025



County Clare Named One of the
**Best Places to Go
in Europe in 2025**
By Condé Nast Traveller for eco-conscious stays
and a celebration of traditional crafts
[visitclare.ie/sustainable](https://www.visitclare.ie/sustainable)



All in Clare Tourism are delighted that County Clare has been recognized by Condé Nast Traveler as one of the best places to visit in Europe for 2025 for its 'Eco-conscious stays and a celebration of traditional crafts'. This recognition reflects our ongoing commitment in making Clare a more vibrant and sustainable destination, as outlined in our 'Clare Tourism Strategy 2030 – Guiding our Journey to a Vibrant New Future in Tourism'. Clare's foundation in sustainability and tradition is being further strengthened through its pursuit of an ambitious Global Sustainable Tourism Council certification. This process relies on transparent and evidence-based decision-making, informed by data collected from residents, businesses, and visitors. This acknowledgment by the Condé Nast Traveler is a testament to the work of our strategy, including communities, businesses and other stakeholders who are offering not only outstanding experiences to visitors but are working to manage their social, cultural, economic, and environmental resources. For more information www.visitclare.ie/sustainable and www.visitclare.ie/strategy2030

Christmas 2024

Invite to Christmas Crackers Guide 2024:



On foot of the call out to the local trade, networks, events and Christmas markets, our Clare Christmas events guide has been completed and is being promoted from November through to Christmas.

The events guide is the key to festive fun events across Clare, packed with everything happening this season—from Santa visits and glittering light displays to lively parades and charming Christmas markets overflowing with seasonal delights. The guide

includes some thoughtful gift ideas to make holiday shopping easy, with suggestions that support local Clare businesses. With a chance to win a family breakfast with Santa at the iconic Bunratty Castle on Friday, December 20 and an overnight stay at the Shannon Springs Hotel — or a family membership to the Vandeleur Walled Garden & Visitor Centre for 2025 - magical experiences full of memories to cherish. Making this Christmas and unforgettable Experience in Clare www.visitclare.ie/christmas

Experience the Magic of Ennis this Christmas:

The Visit Clare marketing campaign of our Capital town continues, with 3 paid video campaigns to promote the Magic of Ennis at Christmas time. These ran in the lead up to the turning on of the Christmas lights on Thursday, 28th November and the final video displaying wonderful scenes of Ennis and local business, scheduled through to Christmas Day.



Bunratty hosted Ireland's largest Christmas parade:



Ireland's largest Christmas parade rolled through Bunratty on Thursday November 28th as the County Clare village was transformed into a winter wonderland.

Bunratty Castle and Folk Park, supported by the local business community and Clare County Council, announced that 400 parade participants will wind their way through the village to the courtyard of Bunratty Castle where the annual switching on of the Folk Park's Christmas lights was carried out by a representative from Down Syndrome Clare, Bunratty Castle and Folk Park's nominated charity this Christmas.

The procession featured more than 100 elves, Christmas characters, the Tulla Pipe Band, animals from the Folk Park, members of the All-Ireland winning Clare senior hurling team, and Santa Claus whose sleigh was drawn by six horses. Additional musical entertainment was provided on the evening by the Bunratty Brass Band and two local choirs.

The parade marks the beginning of 'Christmas at Bunratty 2024' with 35,000 people expected through the gates of the popular 26-acre visitor attraction during the festivities.

Following the parade, Bunratty Castle and Folk Park presented a donation to this year's nominated charity, Down Syndrome Clare.



Christmas Experience at Bunratty Castle and Folk Park:



The Christmas Experience at Bunratty Castle and Folk Park is one of the best known and longest running Christmas experiences in Ireland and this year is set to be the biggest and best yet. This beloved park transforms into a magical winter wonderland setting from November 29th to December 23rd. Santa Claus, based in his famous grotto on the traditional village street, is ready and waiting to welcome children from all over Ireland and listen to their Christmas lists. Outside the grotto an enchanting 26-acre wonderland awaits where visitors can explore the illuminated village street, meet a host of festive characters, including the Grinch, Scrooge, Shrek, Mary Poppins, Rudolph, the Gingerbread Man, and Fairy Princesses, enjoy indoor and outdoor installations and festive decorations. Other highlights include a visit Mrs. Claus' kitchen, Christmas tales fireside with Bunratty's resident seanchaí and the Polar Express Train ride. Visitors can also indulge in some festive shopping at the

traditional Christmas market in the castle courtyard. The beauty of Christmas at Bunratty Castle and Folk Park is that it is not just for kids. For those seeking a more leisurely experience, a festive walkabout ticket is available, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in the twinkling lights, magical market, and festive cheer. For more information visit www.bunrattycastle.ie/christmas2024

Breakfast with Santa at Bunratty Castle:



Breakfast with Santa at Bunratty Castle: Join Santa for a magical morning of fun and festive cheer at Bunratty Castle! Enjoy a delicious breakfast feast, served by a team of mischievous elves. As you savour your pancakes, prepare to be entertained by a host of beloved Christmas characters, including Jack Frost, Mary Poppins, and more. Sing-along to your favourite holiday tunes and watch as these whimsical figures bring joy and laughter to the castle. After breakfast, families can enjoy a one-on-one visit with Santa in his cozy castle residence where children can share their Christmas wishes and will receive a special gift. Then, explore the enchanting Christmas trail at Bunratty Castle and Folk Park, where twinkling lights, festive decorations, and captivating characters await. For more information visit www.bunrattycastle.ie/christmas/breakfast-with-santa

Christmas at the Castle Banquet:



This festive season, create unforgettable memories with loved ones at the enchanting Christmas in the Castle Banquet at Bunratty Castle. Your unforgettable evening begins at 7:15 PM as you step into the castle's courtyard and cross the ancient drawbridge, setting the stage for an enchanting experience. Warm yourself with a glass of mulled wine before indulging in a delectable four-course festive feast, illuminated by the soft glow of candlelight. Throughout the meal, the world-renowned Bunratty

Castle Entertainers will captivate you with a mesmerizing performance. Expect to be enchanted by beloved Christmas carols, contemporary classics, and festive theatrical pieces that will transport you to a world of Christmas magic. For more information visit www.bunrattycastle.ie/christmas/christmasbanquet

Celebrate the Festive Cheer at the Cliffs of Moher Experience with Free Entry for Clare Residents:

County Clare residents and holiday homeowners in Clare are invited to celebrate the Christmas season with free admission to the Cliffs of Moher Experience from December 1st to January 5th, 2025. The festive offer allows locals and holiday homeowners this wonderful amenity on their doorstep. The Cliffs' Craft & Gift Store features products from over 80 Irish suppliers – 60 of whom are local artisans – offering a wonderful way to support local businesses this Christmas. Shoppers can find unique, handcrafted gifts ranging from knitwear, candles, and jewellery to art, ceramics and beauty products. Visitors can dine at the Cliff View Café, where the menu showcases locally sourced favourites such as Burren Smoked Salmon, St Tola Goat's Cheese, and Burren Gold Cheese. Food lovers will enjoy the selection of Clare's finest treats, including jams, chutneys, and festive hampers that capture the unique flavours of County Clare.

In the spirit of giving, the Cliffs of Moher Experience team will host community fundraisers and events throughout December, including a Christmas Breakfast. Annual visits with local schoolchildren the nursing homes in North Clare will continue this year, spreading holiday joy to residents.

The visitor centre will be decked out in twinkling lights and holiday decorations from mid-November, adding a magical touch to every visit. Festive visitors are welcome daily from 9am to 5pm.

For those who haven't yet experienced the new Ledge 4D Experience, a treat awaits. This interactive attraction, located within the visitor centre, offers a thrilling 3-minute journey across the cliffs. With immersive visuals showing the cliffs on a calm summer's day – both above and underwater – paired with environmental effects like the mist and wind of the West Coast, the 4D experience brings the cliffs to life in a way like no other. The Cliffs of Moher Experience is accessible to visitors with disabilities or reduced mobility, thanks to two electric buggies – 'The Lifts of Moher'. Operated by trained staff, these buggies offer a guided tour that includes the viewing platforms overlooking the majestic cliffs and the historic O'Brien's Tower, a 19th-century icon.

Clare residents can book their complimentary tickets online at www.cliffsofmoher.ie using the promo code **CLARE24**. Proof of address will be required in addition to your booking.



Loop Head Lighthouse Closes for 2024 season:



Loop Head closed its door for the 2024 season on Bank Holiday Monday 30th October. The season was marked by many positive changes including the opening of the Loop Head Lighthouse Attendant's Cottage as self-catering accommodation in July, a new admissions office at the gate and extended opening periods. The accommodation remains open throughout the year and groups of 8 people or more will be given tours of the Lighthouse by appointment during the winter. It is planned to re-open St. Patrick's weekend for the 2025 season.

Vandeleur Walled Garden & Visitor Centre:



From October 26th to November 1st 2024, the Vandeleur Walled Garden hosted its Halloween in the Haunted Garden event, transforming the space into a grim graveyard complete with cobwebs, tombstones featuring humorous inscriptions, and interactive family activities.

The event featured a Screech Walk as well as an interactive mystery trail where visitors dressed up and explored haunted pathways to solve the "Grim Garden Secret," guided by activity sheets provided at the entrance. A variety of Halloween-themed activities were held throughout the week, including pumpkin carving demonstrations by Karoly Torok on October 26th, 28th, and 30th; a seasonal pumpkin flower arrangement demonstration by Phil Crowley on October 28th; and storytelling sessions led by Clare storyteller Balor Otherworld on October 30th. Additional activities such as face painting and an open invitation for visitors to attend in fancy dress added to the atmosphere.

The event successfully engaged families and visitors of all ages, providing an immersive experience, and reinforcing the garden's role as a vibrant community space in Kiltrush. During this time, we also launched the Kiltrush Chronicles, a new series designed to promote our Visitor Centre and its offerings, with a special spooky spotlight on the Vandeleur Mausoleum in the nearby graveyard.

Inis Cealtra / Holy Island:



The Inis Cealtra Visitor Experience project is progressing at pace with an announcement of the successful fitout contractor due in the coming weeks. Elected Members and staff from the Killaloe Municipal District joined the Tourism Development Team for a site visit and update on progress.

In tandem the Design Team are coordinating and conducting the final checks for the Part 10 An Bord Pleanála Planning Application for Holy Island which will be lodged in December.

Shannon Heritage Portfolio including Bunratty Castle & Folk Park, Craggaunowen, Knappogue:

RTE News experiences Halloween at Bunratty Castle and Folk Park



Bunratty Castle and Folk Park's were thrilled to be featured on RTÉ Six One News on Halloween night. Over 8,000 visitors enjoyed the three-day event, which featured spooky goings-on in the castle, creepy creatures, and all manor of mayhem and madness across the 26 acre park. Highlights included the ghost train, circus acts, the wicked wake, and the witches' trial.

Bunratty Castle features in Failte Ireland Keep Discovering Autumn Winter Campaign



Virgin Media's Alan Hughes returned to his roots at Bunratty Castle as part of Fáilte Ireland's Keep Discovering Autumn Winter Campaign. Bunratty Castle and Folk Park were delighted to welcome the Virgin Media presenter and former Shannon Heritage castle entertainer, back to his old stomping ground for one night only. Broadcast on Virgin Media One's Ireland AM on November 8th, Alan explored the Folk Park and even donned a medieval costume to experience the Butler of Bunratty Castle Medieval Banquet. During his visit to County Clare, Alan also enjoyed a walking tour of Ennis and a visit to the Shannon Aviation Museum.

London Calling – Shannon Heritage portfolio showcased to key travel professionals.



Shannon Heritage / Clare Tourism Development East were pleased to participate in several Tourism Ireland-led travel trade events across the UK this November.

At World Travel Market 2024, Shannon Heritage joined over 75 Irish tourism companies to showcase the diverse offerings of the island of Ireland. In London's Guild Hall, the portfolio was presented to 30 key tourism trade professionals specializing in Ireland.

Additionally, the team attended the ETOA-led Global European Marketplace, where they engaged in productive meetings and networking opportunities, discussing 2025/2026 partnerships and updating trade partners on new experiences across the portfolio.

Shannon Heritage showcase at Failte Ireland Global Inbound Workshop



Shannon Heritage / Clare Tourism Development East was delighted to attend the 2024 Failte Ireland Global Inbound Workshop held in Lyrath Estate, Kilkenny earlier this month. This event provided our team the opportunity to meet and present to over 25 buyers across multiple overseas markets. From luxury to leisure, group tours to FIT businesses, this workshop provided an excellent opportunity to showcase the new experiences and developments across the portfolio to trade partners from across the world.

Ireland Meets Germany Workshop



The marketing team were delighted to partake in Tourism Ireland's 2024 Ireland Meets Germany B2B Sales Workshop which took place in Frankfurt earlier this month. This workshop provided an excellent platform to connect with German, Swiss and Austrian tour operators who are passionate about bringing visitors to the Emerald Isle. As a key overseas market for our portfolio, and a market particularly interested in Irish culture, waterways and landscapes, this workshop provided an invaluable opportunity to educate partners on the recent investments at Craggaunowen, Bunratty and Knappogue and future plans for Inis Cealtra.

Burren & Cliffs of Moher

World Travel Market 2024

World Travel Market (WTM) London, the largest B2B travel trade show of its kind in Europe took place on the first week of November. Tourism Ireland stand hosted 75 inspiring tourism providers, meeting overseas tour operators.



Margueritte Foyle, Kylemore Abbey & Gardens, Melanie Lennon, Sales & Marketing Manager, Clare Tourism West & Northwest, Tanya Dawson, Luxurious Ireland/Culture and Heritage Tours, Niamh O'Neill, International Business Development Manager at O'Donoghue Ring Collection and Adrienne O'Flynn, Sales & Marketing Manager Clare Tourism East.

Global Inbound Tour Operator Workshop

The Fáilte Ireland Global Inbound Tour Operator Workshop took place at Lyrath Estate in Kilkenny on the 12th of November. Sharon Malone, Assistant Sales & Marketing Manager, Clare Tourism West and Northwest was in attendance.



Oonagh Kelly, Fáilte Ireland, Edel Vaughan, Doolin Ferry Co and Sharon Malone, Clare Tourism West and Northwest.

Celebrating Clare's Local Talent

Geraldine Enright, General Manager for Clare Tourism Northwest, and Melanie Lennon, Sales & Marketing Manager for Clare Tourism West and Northwest, attended a luncheon hosted by the Shannon Chamber. It was a privilege to present Eddie Wilson, the CEO of Ryanair with a beautifully curated 'Crafted in Clare' gift box, showcasing some of the incredible local suppliers and artisans from the county. Clare is home to a wealth of talent, and we're excited to share a taste of what makes our region so special.



Melanie Lennon, Sales & Marketing Manager, Clare Tourism West & Northwest, Eddie Wilson, CEO of Ryanair, and Geraldine Enright, General Manager, Clare Tourism Northwest.



Geraldine Enright, General Manager, Tourism Northwest presenting Eddie Wilson, CEO of Ryanair with a 'Crafted in Clare' Gift Box.

One Epic Trip 2024

Do you have friends or family in the US? Brought to you by the Cliffs of Moher Experience and Aer Lingus, one lucky winner will enjoy a trip to Ireland including flights, accommodation and entry to several of Ireland's most iconic attractions.

To learn more, visit: <https://www.cliffsofmoher.ie/one-epic-prize/>

Terms and conditions apply



Tommy Hilfiger visit to the Cliffs of Moher Experience

The Cliffs of Moher Experience were delighted to welcome Tommy Hilfiger to the Cliffs last month.



Ciana Garrahy and Teresa Lavin with Tommy Hilfiger.

UNESCO Global Geopark:



Irish Geoparks Forum

The Geopark team participated in the national Irish Geoparks Forum in Cuilcagh Lakelands in Cavan in November, presenting on significant progress to date from the Burren Geopark.

Geopark continues their strong support of the BT Young Scientists programme

The Geopark continues their strong support of the BT Young Scientists programme at Lisdoonvarna Secondary School. Our

current project with Béibhinn O’Loughlin under the supervision of teacher Mr. John Sims is looking at finding microfossils in the Burren limestone and will take part in the finals in Dublin in January.

The Geopark supports international and local groups by providing geological expertise for field trips.

The Geopark supports international and local groups by providing geological expertise for field trips. Dr. Eamon Doyle led a field trip for Burrenbeo on a cold and wet day in November.

The National Hydrology Conference, Athlone.

The geopark geologist participated in the National Hydrology Conference in Athlone in November. Recent collaborative work between the Geopark and University of Galway on the hydrology of part of the Aille River was presented by Dr. Ternan Henry, University of Galway.

Twining - Birmingham - Clare Business Investment Showcase



Further to the success of Clare County Council receiving Lord Mayor, Chaman Lal of Birmingham in February 2024, the new Lord Mayor Ken Wood, extended an invitation for a delegation from Clare to reciprocate this visit.

During this visit, the County Clare delegation, led by Cathaoirleach Alan O’Callaghan attended a day long Birmingham Ireland Business Investment Showcase, hosted by the Lord Mayor of Birmingham Ken Wood and Deputy Head of Mission, Department of Foreign Affairs, Ireland, Orla Mc Breen.

The event was investment focussed and showcased the economic relationship between EI Electronics / AICO and Birmingham as well as presentations on why to invest across the regions. There was a roundtable business to business (B2B) engagement with significant learning transferred back and forth. These economic ties are the foundation of what is intended to develop as a formal cultural, social and tourism link between Birmingham and Clare (Shannon MD) given the connectivity long standing direct flights between both regions.

Visit Clare

Alternative Accommodation Webinars & Site Visit



In line with one of the key strategic objectives of the Clare Tourism Strategy 2030, the Tourism Department has commissioned two key reports namely:

- Accommodation Audit for County Clare, completed in conjunction with Fáilte Ireland.
- Comprehensive Review of Campervan and RV Parking Facilities within Clare.

As a follow up to these reports, and in partnership with Fáilte Ireland, the tourism department organised a two-part webinar series and a site visit to a luxury glamping facility in West Clare aiming to stimulate interest and potential investment into alternative accommodation offerings here in Clare.

The webinar event was hosted by Crown & Canopy who are leading experts in the area of alternative outdoor and off grid accommodation and provided landowners and those seeking to develop alternative tourist accommodation with essential insights and practical guidance. The event also shared information on financial, and training supports available through the LEADER programme and Clare County Council’s Local Enterprise Office. There was an overwhelming response to the initiative and support provided by the Tourism Development Department.

Explore Clare by Bus: Sustainable, Surprising and So Many Places to See!



As part of the ongoing commitment to making Clare a more vibrant and sustainable destination, a new webpage to the Visit Clare website now has full content, from having researched and created “Explore Clare by Bus” promotional collateral. There are over 70 of Clare’s towns, villages, and hidden gems serviced by bus transport within the County. Taking the bus offers a relaxing and eco-friendly way to explore Clare, with countless

destinations to uncover along the way. This information was collated with the input from TFI Local Link, Bus Éireann, Expressway, and the Big Green Bus. Details can be found on www.visitclare.ie/bus and www.visitclare.ie/sustainable

Visit Clare – Coming to a Big Screen near you:



A newly commissioned Visit Clare video will be promoted nationally for an 8-week period leading up to and during the Christmas period. The 60-second video “Fly into the heart of Clare” will be played before movies at all cinemas nationwide, with a guaranteed audience of ~300,000 people.

Visit Clare – For amazing breaks and great days out throughout the year:

Visit Clare teamed up with Damian Farrelly Classic Hits and the Armada Hotel, for a full week radio and website promotion commenced 4th November, to promote domestic Visits to Clare throughout the year. This promotion was elevated with a beautiful prize – a 2-night Vine and Dine Stay in the stunning Armada Hotel in Spanish Point Co Clare.



Shannon Airport Billboard: Drive into County Clare, Swing into Fun Adventures:



The Visit Clare brand will be promoted on a roadside billboard exiting Shannon Airport from early January 2025. This is a significant promotion with Shannon International Airport where passenger numbers set to reach 2 million by the end of 2024.

KILRUSH LOCAL ELECTORAL AREA, WEST CLARE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

The recent adverse weather has seen the crews engaged in preventive and reactive measures to ensure the road network in local electoral area remained open and accessible.

Schedule of Municipal District Works 2024:

In the last month the West Clare MD carried out works connected with the Speed Limit Review 2023. The works involved the replacing of existing signs, and the erection of new poles and repeater speed limit signs.



West Clare MD carried out hedgecutting along the N67 & N68 National Secondary routes.



Footpath works continued on Pella Road, Kilrush. The new footpath will connect a new housing development with the existing public footpath. Works are funded from development contributions. The works will be completed early in 2025 once the overhead wires are relocated by Eir.



A section of the Kilkee Cliff Walk was resurfaced. It is hoped to complete resurfacing works to the remainder of the Cliff Walk in early 2025.



Recruitment Competitions November

Eligibility Exercises & Desktop Shortlisting

- Assistant Staff Officer
- Business Advisor
- Community Safety Co-ordinator in Local Community Safety Partnership
- Executive Chartered Building Surveyor
- Plant Operator A - Shannon & Killaloe
- General Operative - Killaloe

Interviews

- Clerical Officer Final Interviews
- Energy Officer
- School Warden - Ennis, Kilrush & Shannon
- Traveller Liaison Officer
- Fitness Instructor
- GSS - Killaloe & Kilrush
- Forman - Shannon
- Chief Technician
- Executive Chartered Building Surveyor
- Business Advisor
- Plant Operator A - Shannon & Killaloe
- General Operative - Killaloe

The following competitions were advertised:

- Resident Engineer - 2 Year Contract
- Senior Staff Officer
- Plant Operator A- Ennis

TRAINING PROGRAMMES / WEBINARS / CONFERENCES/ INFORMATION SESSIONS NOVEMBER

- Climate Action Awareness – Outdoor Teams
- Excel Advanced Courses
- Excel Intermediate Courses
- Grade 4 & Analogous Competency Based Interview Skills
- Half-Day Irish Language Workshop with Spraoi le Gaeilge
- Junior Achievement Information Session
- Makodata Viewer & Explorer Training
- MS Teams Workshops
- NALA Plain English Webinar
- Pre-Retirement Course

Essential Skillz on-line Courses:

- Health & Safety Induction
- Managing Health & Safety
- Mindfulness
- Slips, Trips & Falls

Health & Safety:

- 3-Day First Aid
- Abrasive Wheels
- Banksman
- Manual Handling
- Prevention Management of Aggression & Violence
- Ride on Roller
- Safe Dog Handling Workshop
- Safe Pass
- School Warden Training

Employee Wellbeing

In November the Wellbeing Hub focus was Men's Health.

- Reduce your risk of Cancer - HSE Talk to staff provided by the HSE.
- A taste of Yoga was offered to staff at lunchtime over a 5-week period

- Flu Vaccinations for all staff - provided in the Áras
- The mass for the deceased staff, members and retired staff was organised.

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 25th October to 25th November inclusive:

Tender Name	RFT ID	Response deadline	Procedure
Expressions of Interest for Turnkey Housing Developments/Housing Schemes and/or Land for the Provision of Social Housing to Clare County Council.	4685870	31/03/2025 00:00	Preliminary Market Consultation
Tender for the Development of 12 No. Housing Units at Back Road, Kilrush, Co. Clare	4683808	16/12/2024 16:00	Open
Affordable Housing - Clare County Council is Seeking Expressions Of Interest For The Provision Of Turnkey Housing Developments For Delivery Of Affordable Housing Across County Clare	4616985	31/12/2024 16:00	Preliminary Market Consultation
Claureen New Link Road	4567402	02/12/2024 16:00	Open
Tender for the Construction of Two Dwellings at Shallee Drive and Cloughleigh, Ennis, Co. Clare	4565644	29/11/2024 16:00	Open

Finance

As part of Budget 2025, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE) introduced the Power Up Grant to support commercially rateable premises in the retail and hospitality sectors with a flat grant of €4,000.

The grant will be based on the Increased Cost of Business (ICOB) Grant, with the majority of the funding going to businesses in the hospitality and retail sectors that were eligible and approved for the ICOB 2 (top up) grant. The only additional requirement for the Power Up Grant is that these businesses must self-declare that they are currently trading and will continue to do so in the future.

The Power-Up Grant, funded by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, is being administered by local authorities based on the eligibility criteria set by the Department. Local Authorities have emailed businesses who may be eligible for the Power Up grant with details on how to register. The Power Up registration portal is open for a limited time to 22nd November in order to get payments to businesses before the end of the year.

Budget 2025

On Thursday November 28, 2024 the members of Clare County Council adopted the 2025 Revenue Budget, with Income and Expenditure for next year at just under €192 million.

Recommending the draft budget to the members, **Chief Executive of Clare County Council Pat Dowling** outlined a budget that prioritised supporting the local business community and continued to provide for community projects, without raising the commercial rates.

Other supports for local businesses contained in the 2025 Budget include

- Long Term Vacant Property Incentive Scheme in 2025
- The Hospitality 5% Support Scheme
- And Small and Medium Business 5% Support Scheme. This support is available to approximately 87% of commercial rates customers.

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Town Centre First

Two more Town Teams formed and progress on Thrive Ennis project

A series of meetings took place in both Tulla and Lisdoonvarna over the last six months to prepare the ground for the election of the first ever Town Teams in these towns. Following extensive consultation and nomination processes, elections were undertaken to ensure the formation of representative Town Teams for both towns that are fully aligned with the Town Centre First framework. There has been significant interest from the public in building strong Town Teams.

In Tulla, Patrick Talty was elected on 14 November as Chairperson along with a brand new Tulla Town Team Executive.



Newly elected Tulla Town Team Executive: L-R: (front row) Brian Torpey, Fran Torpey, Marie Cooney, Sinead Nagle, Patrick Talty (Chairperson) (back row) Alan Dawson, Alan O'Donovan, Tomas Costello and Grace Corry. Mary Casey (missing from photo).

In Lisdoonvarna, Martin McMahon and Mary Gardinier were elected as Co-Chairpersons on 25 November also with a new Lisdoonvarna Town Team Executive. A series of training sessions will assist the Town Teams to get up and running.



Newly elected Lisdoonvarna Town Team Executive: L-R: (front row) Barry Dillon, Martin McMahon, Mary Gardinier (Co-Chairpersons), Aidan McGrath, Diana Lupu, Patsy Mooney (back row) Mason Roche, Pat Dowling, Marie Urquhart, Sean Urquhart and Sean McMahon.

The preparation of a Town Centre First Plan for Kilrush has commenced with Hasset Ducatez Architects as consultants and with valuable input from cross-Directorate staff.

THRIVE Ennis - Town Centre First Heritage Revival Scheme

Thrive Funding provides an opportunity to return one vacant heritage building back into reuse in Ennis Town Centre, whilst addressing community needs. The THRIVE Ennis project is making good progress and it is expected that Clare County Council will bring forward designs to planning stage to regenerate/adapt a heritage building in Ennis and to apply for Thrive Stream 2 funding in March 2025 to bring such a project to fruition on the ground.

THRIVE is funded by the government under the ERDF Regional Programmes through the Southern Regional Assembly.



Citizen and Stakeholder engagement sessions at the Civic Room, Ennis.



L-R: Paddy Tiernan (Ennis Municipal District), Mary Leahy and Joan Tarmey (Town Centre First Department) at Citizen and Stakeholder engagement event.



There has been tremendous feedback from the public engagement sessions with the wider public. Citizens and stakeholders were invited to engage in a participatory process on potential community uses for heritage buildings in Ennis Town Centre.

FORWARD PLANNING

One Shannon Hub

Following the briefing held with the Shannon Municipal District Councillors on the One Shannon Hub transformational project, work continued on bringing the concept design stage to conclusion. Once this stage of concept design is completed the next steps will be to bring the project through planning consent and on to detailed design.

Kilrush Maritime Training Centre

Work is continuing on the Kilrush Maritime Training Centre Project to identify



a suitable funding stream to cover the remaining funding gap within the project. The Project Team are liaising with Enterprise Ireland in relation to the Smart Regions Fund and discussions on this should conclude in the coming weeks at which point Clare MEZ DAC can decide on the suitability of this scheme for Kilrush Maritime Training Centre.

Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary

The Environmental Sub-Group, which is chaired by Clare County Council, has met twice in the past month to progress the specification and requirements surrounding the development of a baseline noise map for the Shannon Estuary. It is anticipated that this would be the first step in the process of developing a background anthropogenic noise map against which future developments within the estuary could be benchmarked and assessed against. It is anticipated that as a first step in the process a noise modelling system will be used to prepare a useable, GIS based noise map which can inform the future longterm monitoring required. Details of this proposal will be presented to the SIFP Steering group in early December for deliberation.

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION AND BUILT HERITAGE

Section 57 Applications

Section 57 Declarations are issued to owners of buildings or structures that wish to conduct works to their structures. A Section 57 Declaration determines whether works would be considered exempt from planning. 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	November 2024 up to & including 28/11/2024	Total (Valid) Year to date 2024
No. of Section 57 Declaration Requests received	0	22

Lisdoonvarna Historic Town Initiative HTI

The Historic Town Initiative for Lisdoonvarna seeks to revitalize the town's unique Spa heritage, fostering a vibrant community and enticing destination where history and well-being intertwine to enrich the lives of residents. Lisdoonvarna Historic Town Initiative was funded by the Heritage Council and Clare County Council.



Studio Myco consultants were employed to focus on the heritage-led regeneration of the Spa Wells complex. Where one of the key outputs is the production of an "actionable plan" accompanied by a cohesive architectural layout and conservation management plan for the preservation of the historic structures and celebration

of the unique wellness heritage associated with the Spa Well site. Public Consultation has been ongoing with the relevant Stakeholders.



In tandem with this work Repucon have been commissioned to provide a Business Case to support the Heritage-Led Regeneration Plan. And a Topographical Survey of the Spa Wells complex is also being undertaken as part of this work.

The 2025 Historic Towns Initiative scheme

The 2025 Historic Towns Initiative scheme has now opened for applications. More details can be found on the Heritage Council website at the following link:

<https://www.heritagecouncil.ie/funding/historic-towns-initiative-2025>

The Historic Towns Initiative scheme is in support of the Town Centre First: a policy approach for Irish towns (2022). The Historic Towns Initiative (HTI) is a joint undertaking by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Heritage Council which aims to promote the heritage-led regeneration of Ireland’s historic towns.

The closing date is 5pm on Friday 14 February 2025.

The Historic Towns Initiative 2025 aims to provide support to historic towns engaged in a programme of heritage-led regeneration. In 2025 the Heritage Council are interested in projects that address residential vacancy and dereliction in town centres, that propose the re-use of historic structures and that can act as a demonstrator for future projects.

Under Stream 1 proposals are sought for capital works to repair and enhance the heritage of the town through heritage-led regeneration projects designed and implemented by local authorities, projects that encourage private owners and/or occupiers to invest in appropriate conservation-led works and repairs, projects that address dereliction and residential vacancy, the conservation of landmark buildings, streetscape conservation projects, and conservation-led public realm works which encourage investment from other sources. Projects which work within an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and which will promote this designation are also sought. Applications must show how they will build resilience in the historic built environment of the town to enable it to withstand the effects of climate change.

Under Stream 2 the Heritage Council will support applications to deliver a heritage-led regeneration plan which will examine the existing heritage of a town and determine what conservation

focused interventions are required. The resulting plan should ultimately inform future grant applications. Under Stream 2 we will award up to €50,000 per town for heritage-led regeneration plans.

Transition Year Traditional Crafts TY Tasters

This project introduced transition year students to the traditional skill of blacksmithing and stone masonry. The project aims to foster an appreciation for these crafts, provide hands-on experience, and inspire potential career paths in heritage trades.

Ennis and Kiltrush Community Colleges took part in the TY Tasters pilot scheme. The two schools have taken the opportunity to experience the work of Stone Mason, where students attend workshops at Instone in Tubber with Jamie Forde. Two Blacksmiths, Sam Gleeson and Reece Jones spoke about their work and illustrated ironwork, working with copper and blade making. The students got experience carving and the use of tools such as chisels, mallets and anvils etc.



The response from the schools has been very positive where the students were inspired by the personal stories of how these craft people came to set up their own enterprises, the creativity and wellness benefits involved and the option of an alternative career and viable business.

Clare Community Archaeologist

Tori McMorran has been employed over the past four months in the role of the Clare Community Archaeologist with support from the Clare Heritage Plan fund from the Heritage Council and Clare County Council. Tori McMorran was involved with Clare communities in awareness raising, education initiatives, archaeological project development and archaeological field work. She promotes archaeological schemes such as the Community Monument Fund and Adopt a Monument etc. Recommendations are being made to continue and expand this work into 2025.



monuments which are deemed to be significant and in need of urgent support;

- build resilience in our monuments to enable them to withstand the effects of climate change;
- encourage access to monuments and improve their presentation.

The Community Monuments Fund has 3 Streams:

1. Stream 1 will offer grants up to €100,000 aimed at essential repairs and capital works for the conservation and repair of archaeological monuments
2. Stream 2 will offer grants of up to €30,000 for development of Conservation Management Plans/Reports that are aimed at identifying measures for conservation of archaeological monuments and improving public access.
3. Stream 3 will offer grants of up to €30,000 for enhancement of access infrastructure and interpretation (including virtual/) at archaeological monuments.

The link to Community Monument Fund 2025 is on the Clare County Council website:

<https://www.clarecoco.ie/services/planning/news/community-monuments-fund-2025.html>



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Community Monuments Fund 2025

Application Form CMF/A

Name and address of Monument:

The Community Monument Fund

The Community Monument Fund has been announced, deadline for completed applications is the 31st of January.

- The core aims of the Fund are the conservation, maintenance, protection and presentation of archaeological monuments. It will:
- enable conservation works to be carried out on

Heritage Organisation Support Fund 2025



The Heritage Organisation Support Fund (HOSF), which provides financial support to not-for-profit NGOs working in the heritage sector, is now open for applications.

Heritage Stewardship Fund 2025

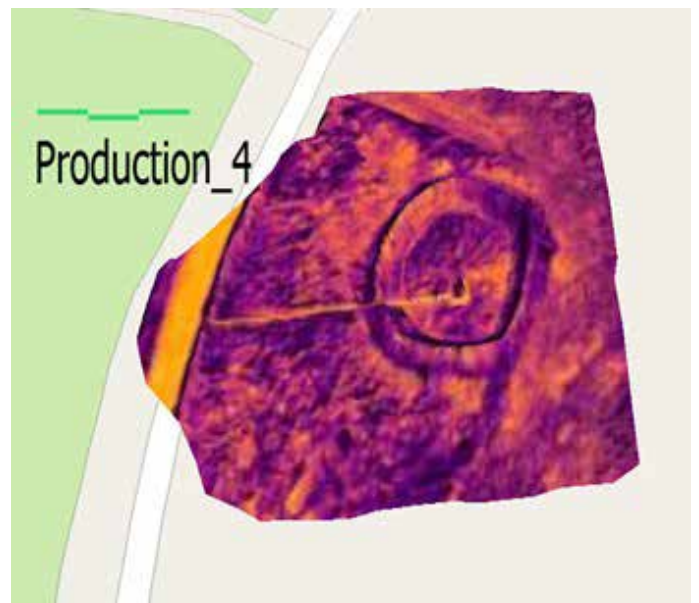


The Heritage Stewardship Fund, which provides financial support for staff in local au-thorities, state agencies and educational institutions with responsibility for heritage programmes, is now open for applications. The scheme’s primacy target is staff working in public sector organisations whose core remit may not be fully focused on heritage, but whose work has an impact on heritage.

Loop Head Decarbonisation Zone Heritage Survey

This pilot project uses remote mapping technology including Photogrammetry, LiDAR, and Infrared (IR) imaging to map archaeological sites in the Loop Head peninsula. This area was chosen for the study as the area is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and coastal erosion and contains a wealth of heritage. The resulting 3D models and maps of the archaeology capture their current level of conservation. The imagery serves as a reference point for conservation works, monitoring changes over time, enabling the identification of erosion and structural degradation due to environmental factors.

Ground truthing of the mapping and images collected will be undertaken by an archae-ologist to assess the use and value of the information. By comparing digital models to on-site conditions, the need for conservation issues will be identified, allowing for targeted conservation actions.



County Heritage Week Awards



Liscannor Community are the worthy winners of the County Award for their Heritage Week Event. Placemaking Heritage around the Cliffs of Moher, Liscannor, Co. Clare

The Liscannor Heritage Group held a Heritage Week event looking at Placemaking Heritage around the Cliffs of Moher, Liscannor. The events took place at the Liscannor Community Hall. The local community explored their historical assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that improve urban vitality and promote people's health, happiness, and well-being. The activities throughout the day included making a historic Submarine from Clay, Rock Painting Castles, a Historic Walk with a Heritage Specialist, Connecting the past to the present, looking at the evolution of John Phillip Holland, Submarine Inventor, to today's Marine Drones. Congratulations to the community and all involved with the event.

BIODIVERSITY

Several of Clare County Council's Biodiversity Projects are nearing completion as we approach the end of the year. Some of those projects completed to date are summarised below:

Clare Wetland Story Map

The Clare Wetland Story Map is an online interactive map which raises awareness of the importance of wetland ecosystems and profiles 10 wetland sites the public can visit in County Clare. The story map outlines the ecosystem services that wetland systems provide for biodiversity (habitats, flora and a wildlife refuge for endangered fauna), carbon sequestration, water storage reservoirs and flood prevention, water quality and an educational resource. This project is coordinated by Clare County Council's Biodiversity Officer working in partnership with Wetland Surveys Ireland and profiles the diversity of wetland habitats in County Clare; outlines how the public can help wetlands and to profile 10 different wetland sites encompassing raised bogs, fens, transition mire, freshwater lakes, lagoons, turloughs, reedbeds, marsh, upland blanket bog. It will promote engagement to link local communities and local interest groups to contribute to biodiversity recording of wetlands and engage encourage up-take in citizen science initiatives such as the National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) and the Community Wetlands Forum. The story map will serve as an educational resource for local communities and schools to consider the protection of wetlands in their community, to consider how wetlands can be integrated into Community Biodiversity Action Plans and to promote creative projects including inspiring local artists. The project is funded by Clare County Council's Biodiversity Office, Creative Ireland (through Clare Libraries) and National Parks and Wildlife Service (through the Local Biodiversity Action Fund). The Clare Wetland Story Map will launch in 2025.



Clare Wetland Story Map will launch in 2025.

Clonlara Marsh Fritillary Farm Project

Clare County Council's Biodiversity Office is supporting the Clonlara Marsh Fritillary Farm Project located at 'Sheedy's Bog' near Clonlara, County Clare. The Marsh Fritillary is a protected butterfly species in Ireland and occurs on habitats such as cutover bog and wet grass-land where the main food plant, Devil's-bit-scabious is abundant. The species is listed on Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive. The conservation status for the Marsh Fritillary is assessed as 'inadequate' in NPWS's Article 17 reports. Some of the negative impacts that affect the species survival include undergrazing, land abandoned and afforestation. The project came about when Clare County Council's Biodiversity Officer Barry O'Loughlin visited 'Sheedy's Bog' with landowner Feargal Marren in August 2023 and identified and confirmed three larval (caterpillar) webs of the Marsh Fritillary on a section of cutover bog. The species was not previously recorded or identified on the bog. 'Sheedy's Bog' has a high abundance of the main food plant Devil's-bit scabious. Scrub encroachment at the perimeter of the bog was identified as a significant pressure outcompeting the cutover bog habitat. In order to address the issue, the landowner linked up with the local community group Clonlara Community Development and applied for funding in early 2024 to develop a Habitat Management Plan for the Marsh Fritillary under the 'Peatland and Natura Community Engagement Scheme' administered by NPWS. Clare County

Council’s Biodiversity Office also funded the Habitat Management Plan. The plan involved undertaking field surveys to map baseline habitats and record vegetation carried out by Wetland Surveys Ireland and a report outlining recommendations to enhance the habitats for cutover bog including scrub control, fencing and revising grazing stocking levels to encourage native breeds of cattle as opposed to conti-nental breeds to keep the scrub down and to manage vegetation at an optimum state. It is envisaged practical actions will be funded and carried out in 2024.



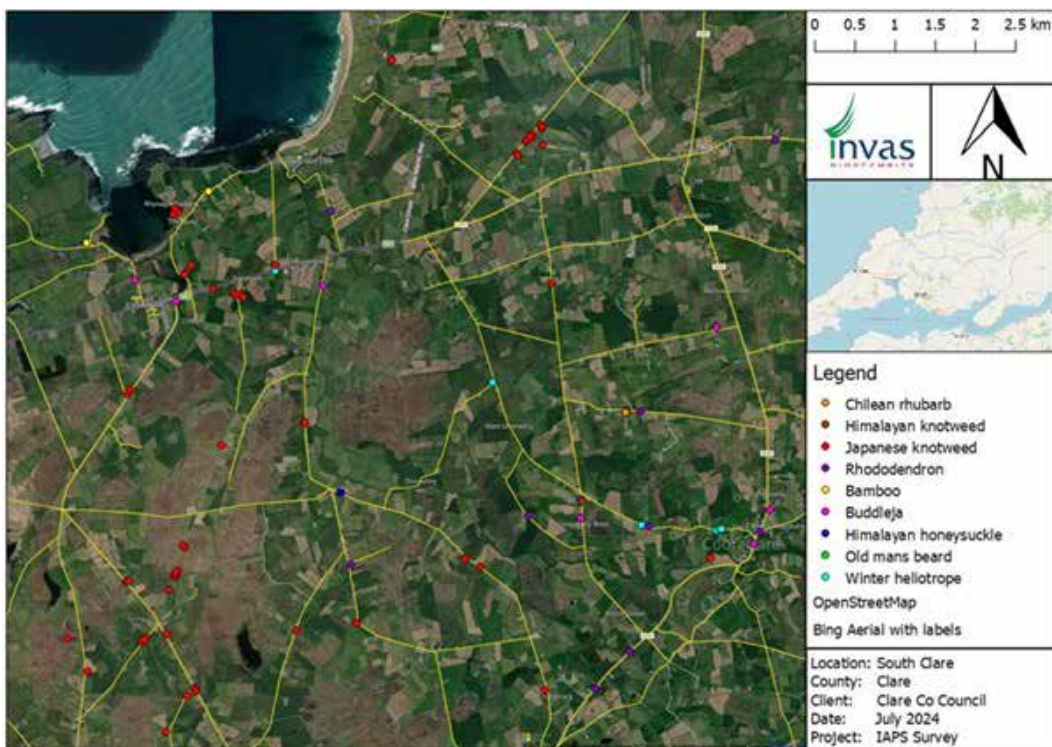
View of cutover bog habitat at ‘Sheedy’s Bog’ near Clonlara, County Clare and a marsh fritillary larval web recorded onsite by Clare County Council’s Biodiversity Officer Barry O’Loughlin (August 2023).

West Clare Invasive Species Survey: LBAF Project 2024

A survey was carried out in 2024 to identify and map invasives species along all Regional and Local Roads in West Clare concentrated from Doonbeg to Kilrush to Kilmihil to Tarmon in south-west Clare. The survey was funded by Clare County Council (West Clare Municipal District) and the Local Biodiversity Action Fund, administered by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (National Parks and Wildlife Service). The aim of the survey was to identify all IAPS along regional and local roads in West Clare, in particular those species restricted under Irish legislation (S.I. 477/2011) (as amended) such as Japanese Knot-weed, Rhododendron, Chilean Rhubarb, ; and those listed as being of

Union concern in the EU IAS (Invasive Alien Species) Regulations (1143/2014) and other IAPS that are deemed to be problematic. The surveys were carried out by INVAS Biosecurity and worked closely with Clare County Council’s Biodiversity Officer. All identified and mapped species were documented in a report.

A key recommendation of the report is to implement a comprehensive long-term Management Plan for the area of West Clare surveyed in 2024 that should consider prioritising certain species and areas in the catchment for targeted IAPS control and treatment. The Biodiversity Officer will liaise with West Clare Municipal Office staff to explore funding mechanisms to support eradication of invasive species surveyed.



Surveys and mapping of invasive species in West Clare were conducted in July 2024

Clare Wetland Field Survey 2024

The objective of the 2024 Clare Wetland Surveys was to carry out a field survey of wetland sites in the Ennis-Kilkishen-Parteen areas of Clare focusing on 21 sites likely to be of high conservation importance and wetland sites under threat, which included fen, reed swamp, peatland, wet woodland, marsh and turlough sites and carry out a detailed field survey of selected wetlands. A list of 21 priority wetland sites for field survey in 2024 were selected for survey by Clare County Council's Biodiversity Officer. The survey follows on from the 2023 Wetland Field Survey. The survey assessed the type, extent, distribution and condition of wetland habitats in the county and identified the issues and pressures affecting them. The survey also evaluated the wetlands within Ennis Municipal District in terms of local importance, county importance, national importance and international importance and identify Annex I habitats. Three sites were deemed to be of National conservation value due to the presence of extensive areas of high quality alkaline fen habitat, Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus*, and active raised bog. Eleven sites are assessed as being of County conservation value (C+) due to the occurrence of good quality habitats including alluvial woodland, transition mire, and alkaline fen. Seven sites were deemed to be of local high local conservation value (C). A report, GIS datasets and photographic records of wetland sites surveyed was produced. In addition, individual wetland site survey reports have been produced. The datasets will be incorporated into Clare County Council's Planning database to protect wetlands in decision making processes and the report will be available to agri-enviro organisations, communities with an interest in wetland conservation and third level research institutions with potential to carry out further research studies and conservation actions for wetlands in County Clare.



Clare Wetland Field Survey 2024

Funding Opportunity: Peatland and Natura Community Engagement Scheme 2025

Please note details of the 'Peatlands and Natura Community Engagement Scheme 2025' fund below. The Peatlands and Natura Community Engagement Scheme (PNCES), formerly the Peatlands Community Engagement Scheme (PCES), operated by the National Parks and Wild-life Service, is now open for applications for 2025 with a closing date of 24th of January 2025. The Scheme aims to encourage communities, local organisations and other interested parties to become involved in the enhancement of their natural surrounding areas and to raise awareness. Applications are welcomed across a diverse range of initiatives with community benefit from events, education programmes, promotions, publications, exhibitions, development of conservation management plans, public amenity and recreational measures, maintenance measures that support conservation measures, monitoring or surveying work to inform of restoration/conservation projects, invasive species and fire control measures, anti-littering initiatives to local environmental improvements in the area of the designated sites and other peatland areas.

Grant Levels Under the Peatlands and Natura Community Engagement Scheme, there are two categories of funding available:

- Category 1 – Natura 2000 sites (SAC / SPA). The maximum grant available is 80% of the costs of the project to a maximum of €40,000
- Category 2 – Non-Natura Peatland sites (incl. NHA and undesignated sites). The maximum grant available is 80% of the cost of the project to a maximum of €20,000

Visit the link for more information: https://www.npws.ie/peatlands-and-turf-cutting/peatlands-and-natura-community-engagement-scheme-2025?fbclid=IwY2xjawGy6NpleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHQy1fh-V36rJmqMbQ9-826QEnAkRTGFmAmG3wXa9kt-wGQ_G8Jb7TRaEIng_aem_txHILXgGS3FDkPqhdt3xqA



Clare Wetland Field Survey 2024

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT - PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The table below shows the number of planning applications processed during the month of November (to November 25th), together with the year-to-date figures. Fifty four percent of planning applications received in November were received by electronic means.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS	November (to 25/11/24)	Year to date 2024
No. of planning applications received	81	981
No. of Planning Decisions made	69	826
No. of decisions notified by An Bord Pleanála	2	52
No. of pre-planning enquiries received	20	248
No. of Section 5 applications	6	90
No. of Section 97 Exemption Cert applications (in respect of Part V of the Planning & Dev Act 2000)	4	36
Submissions received regarding Compliance	12	239

PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

November Statistics (29th October 2024 to 22nd November inclusive)

New Complaints Received	18
New Files Opened	6
Files Closed	8
Warning Letters Issued	5
Enforcement Notices Issued	1
Legal Proceedings	2

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

- **Training:** Throughout November, Local Enterprise Office Clare provided training programmes to just under 100 clients. These courses encompassed training in CANVA, Instagram Reels, Trading Online webinar, Bookkeeping & Start Your Own Business workshops.
- **Mentoring:** In November, LEO Clare assigned close to 30 mentorship sessions bringing the total to date in 2024 to over 300 mentoring assignments processed. Mentoring was also provided to 4 LEO clients attending Showcase 2025 in the RDS, Dublin in January.

LEO Clare Trade Mission to Belfast

This year, LEO Clare piloted an Export Accelerator Programme in which 6 businesses took part. As part of this programme, the 6 local businesses attended a trade mission in Northern Ireland from 19th-20th November, where they had the opportunity to meet with potential customers who had expressed an interest in their product or service. A number of partnership agreements have already been signed as a result of this trip.

New Frontiers Programme – Phase 2

Three Clare based companies were selected by TUS, Limerick to take part in Phase 2 of the New Frontiers Programme, after an intense competition process. The programme is a full-time commitment from these companies to develop & validate their business proposition, while working in the business over the next 6 months.

Visit to Birmingham City

Director of Service Carmel Kirby and Head of Enterprise Padraic McElwee participated in a reciprocal visit to the City of Birmingham arranged by the Twinning Committee. The delegation was led by the Cathaoirleach, Cllr Alan O’Callaghan and Mayor of Shannon MD, Cllr Pat O’Gorman. Also in attendance were Cllr Michael Begley and Cllr John Crowe. In conjunction with our colleagues in the Tourism Directorate, led by Head of Tourism Deirdre O’Shea, we had the opportunity to present an overview of the progressive economic development activities in Clare and highlight the many potential opportunities for future collaboration. The opportunity was also taken to establish connections in Birmingham who are willing to assist Clare businesses wishing to use Birmingham as a gateway into the UK market.



Left to right, Padraic McElwee, Head of Enterprise, Anne Griffin, Administrative Officer, Economic Development, Lloyd Broad, Head of European and International Relations Birmingham City Council, Councillor Michael Begley, Councillor Alan O Callaghan, Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Ken Wood, Councillor John Crowe, Carmel Kirby, Director of Services, Economic Development, Deirdre O Shea, Head of Tourism and Councillor Pat O Gorman, Cathaoirleach of Shannon Municipal District.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Property Transactions and Conveyancing

The Table below shows the number of property transactions completed by Property Management Unit up to 22nd November and the activity to date in 2024 and the corresponding figures for 2023. While the property market in the County continues to be quite active, there is a shortage of supply, particularly in the residential sector. We continue to assist many solicitors acting for their clients on issues associated with title, boundaries, old leasehold folios etc. We are also processing a number of applications for first registration of Council property and assessing the various properties we own for correct title.

Transaction type	November 2024	Year to date 2024	Full year 2023
Lease / Sub Lease of Property / Building	0	6	7
Licence to use property / building	1	14	7
Grazing Agreement for Lands	0	22	17
Deed of Transfer signed	0	8	5
Contract for Sale / acquisition signed	0	1	1

Deed of Right of Way / Wayleave signed	0	6	2
Deed of Rectification / Variation signed	2	4	4
Allotment Agreements signed	40	40	39

DERELICT SITES

The Derelict sites team are currently dealing with 267 properties that are considered derelict. We continue to have very high levels of activity and engagement with owners and their representatives. Initial engagement with owners or their representatives is key to resolution of the issues of dereliction and to gain an understanding of the various reasons why the properties are in a derelict state. Where derelict properties are sold by the owner, we commence 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 a consistent number of planning applications for property refurbishment /extension and it is clear from driving around the County the level of work ongoing on individual properties. We are advising property owners of the vacant property refurbishment grant if the property is suitable for residential use. With time and effort, working with owners, financial institutions

and other departments, there are definite options for positive re-development and revitalisation of many such derelict sites.

The table below provides a snapshot of the activity in November and the comparative figures for the full year 2023. While a lower number of notices were issued, the engagement with owners continued apace.

Derelict Sites	November 2024	Year to date 2024	Full Year 2023
No. of new files opened	1	26	28
No. of Section 8(2) Notices issued - Intention to enter site on Derelict Sites Register	1	36	41
No. of Section 8(7) Notices issued - Entry of site onto Derelict Sites Register	7	40	24
No. of Section 11 Notices issued - Measures required to render the site non-derelict	0	2	0
No. of files closed / property removed from Derelict Sites Register	3	25	15
No. of Notices served to Compulsorily Purchase derelict sites (CPO) (see note below)	0	7	10
No of Vesting Orders signed	2	5	5

Compulsory Acquisition of Derelict Sites (CPO)

In 2023, The Department of Housing, Heritage and Local Government launched a CPO activation programme for local authorities which set targets for CPOs for each local authority. We had commenced a number of CPO's in 2022 and the Table below sets out the status of those CPO's commenced in 2022, 2023 and to date in 2024.

Year	No of CPOs commenced	Current Status
2022	6	3 – CPOs completed and property transferred to Housing for refurbishment works. Two of these are now completed and Part VIII permission has been got for the other property.
		1 – CPO completed and closed in August 2024- New owner has commenced works
		2 - works have commenced and CPO parked for now
2023	10	8 - At Vesting Stage and lodged in PRA
		1 – CPO completed and property was sold at auction in October 2024, subject to approval of elected members in 2024 and

		1 - Objection received and is under appeal. Further work is needed on this one
2024	7	3 - At Vesting Stage and lodged in PRA
		3 CPO process commenced
		2 CPO process commenced in August 2024 and now at Vesting Stage
		1 CPO commenced and has been appealed to An Bord Pleanála
		1 - Objection received and An Bord Pleanála has rejected not confirmed the CPO order. The CPO will be re-commenced in January 2025.

In addition, the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund will provide funding for CPO's on a rolling basis in the town of Ennis with the objective being that these properties would then be sold on the open market. A particular emphasis will be on properties that have potential for residential use. One such CPO is with the PRA for registration and works have recently been completed in order to safeguard the property in the interim. A second CPO commenced in August 2024 and is now at vesting stage. A particular focus on properties in the town of Ennis has resulted in a number of properties coming to market.

Derelict Site Levy

Determination of valuations on the derelict sites which are on the Derelict Sites Register commenced in 2023 and notices have been issued to 18 property owners to date in 2024. Three owners have appealed the valuation to the Valuation Tribunal and while decisions are awaited on two appeals, one appeal by an owner has recently been rejected. The levy is an annual levy while the property remains on the Derelict Sites Register and amounts to 7% of the value of the property, on an annual basis. Assessment of valuations and billing of the levy will be further progressed during 2024 and it is intended that all properties on the Derelict sites Register will be valued for the purposes of billing the levy. This levy will go towards the cost of billing and collection of the levy and resourcing of derelict sites function.

The Table below shows the levels of activity on the Derelict sites levy as of 22nd November 2024.

Derelict Sites Levy	November 2024	Year to date 2024	Full Year 2023
No. of properties on which the levy has been billed	0	10	0
Amount billed in respect of Derelict sites Levy	0	€136,360	0
Number of properties on which valuations have been requested	7	40	24
No. of Section 11 Notices issued - Measures required to render the site non-derelict	6	27	6
Number of properties on which notices of Valuation have been issued to owners	7	18	6

VACANT PROPERTY REFURBISHMENT GRANT - FOR DERELICT AND VACANT PROPERTIES

The level of approvals of the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant by Clare County Council is at €18.8 million as at 22nd November 2024 (311 grant applications approved), with further approvals due to issue. This is a very significant investment in housing in County Clare and the work ongoing around the county on renovations and extensions is very visible. The Vacant Homes Team continues to advise applicants on all elements of the scheme and is available to meet with individuals to take them through the process.

A very successful walk-in advice clinic was held in Áras Contae an Chláir on 25th September with over 30 property owners coming in to meet the Vacant Homes Team for advice regarding making their applications, information required etc. Further walk in clinics have been held in October and November in Milltown Malbay, Scariff and Sixmilebridge. Any applicant can meet with the Vacant Homes Team on Mondays in Áras Contae an Chláir by appointment.

The breakdown of Grant approvals by Municipal District is shown in the Table below.

Amount approved by Local Electoral Area (incl those with grant funding paid out)			
Local Electoral Area	No of applications approved	Total amount approved (€)	% of total number of Grants Approved
Kilrush LEA	112	€6.9 million	37%
Ennistymon LEA	61	€3.273 million	20%
Ennis LEA	46	€2.6 million	14%
Killaloe LEA	57	€3.4 million	18%
Shannon LEA	35	€2.1 million	11%
Grand Total	311	€18.8 million	100%

We continue to have high levels of enquiries and applications for the Croí Cónaithe Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant, with 469 applications received since 2022 to date. We are in the top eight local authorities in the Country in relation to application numbers. Our response time for initial assessment of new applications is generally four weeks.

To date, we have processed 45 payments of the grant amounting

to €2.6 million and there are a number of claims for payments on hands. The level of claims is increasing and reflects completion of works on properties for which the grant was approved in 2022 and 2023.

Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan.

A new loan has been launched by Government called the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan. It is a government-backed mortgage and loan that helps people to buy and renovate a derelict or uninhabitable home. The loan is for first-time buyers, and 'fresh start applicants', who have been unable to get funding from commercial lenders. It is an extension of the Local Authority Home Loan. The applicant must qualify for the Vacant Property Re-furbishment Grant to get this loan. The Housing Department will administer this loan and work closely with the Vacant Homes Team.

Other Points of Information

1. The breakdown of applications between urban and rural areas has remained consistent - 55% of applications are for rural areas of the county and 45% for properties in towns and villages.
2. To date, 71% of applications are for properties to be used as principal private residence (333 properties) and the balance of 29% are for rent. This has remained fairly consistent in recent months.
3. To date 20% of applications have been either withdrawn or refused. This can arise if the purchase of a property falls through, if the property has not been vacant for the two year period or where proof of eligibility criteria is not possible. We assist applicants on all elements of the application process and are receiving positive feedback in this regard.
4. A report has recently been produced by Dublin City Council and the Dublin Simon Community entitled "Opportunities and Challenges of vacant above the shop units for residential use in Ireland". It is intended that we will circulate this report to Chambers of Commerce and property owners in towns around the County.
5. The Grant will boost the supply of rental properties and properties for permanent residence and will deliver on a key priority of 'Housing for All' National Policy and the Vacant

Homes Action Plan, the key objective of which is to reduce vacancy and dereliction in our cities, towns, villages and rural countryside and provide more housing options in the process.

information and guidance on the grants scheme is vacanthomes@clarecoco.ie.

gov.ie - Vacant homes

Full details of the scheme and eligibility criteria are published on the Council's website. The contact email address for further

ENNIS MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

November was another busy month for the Ennis MD Team with a lot of varied works and projects being progressed across the Municipal District. At last month's meeting, mention was made as to why certain projects were not included, specifically, the Drehidnagower Bridge proposal and the Northern Inner Relief Road. It should be noted that there are many different projects and proposals including these two, being worked on but we don't include them unless there is a specific change in situation to the previous month. Some of the milestones achieved include the following:

Co - Creating Works 2024

The Co-creating Projects for 2024 continued to progress during November. The civils works for Hermitage, Circular Road, College Road and Cottage Garden areas are now complete. The new raised tarmac crossings are the only outstanding items left to be completed.

Crews have also commenced civils works on the remaining two junctions to be completed this year at Greendale and Sandfield Park.



Doora Village - Traffic Calming and Footpath

A new scheme to introduce traffic calming and to construct new footpaths and drainage works to Doora village commenced construction in early November. The works when completed will provide greater accessibility for patrons to the church grounds and will reduce the speed of traffic passing through the village

and improve the overall safety of the school road junction. The works are progressing on schedule and are due to be completed by the middle of December.



Ennis Town Bus Service

Ennis MD continues to work with the NTA (National Transport Authority) in progressing the plans for the Ennis Town Bus Service. The NTA Town Bus Team and their Design Team have agreed in principle the bus stop locations with Clare County Council and are proceeding to detailed design and road safety audits of the bus stop locations. NTA Design Team with Ennis MD will be inspecting bus stop locations in early December and proofing some sections of the routes using the proposed bus type.

Urbact Project

Representatives from Ennis MD attended the latest URBACT workshop on Connecting Rural and Urban Communities that took place over two days in Hungary in late November. Ennis MD staff presented our Draft Integrated Action Plan which was very well received by the other partners and Lead Experts and will hopefully lead to a successful funding application on completion.

Christmas in Ennis

The Ennis Christmas lights were officially switched on in Abbey Street carpark on Thursday November 28th in front of a very large crowd. The 'Vocal Ponies' kicked off the family friendly event at 5pm, followed by a festive performance from 'The Circus Ponies'. The Mayor, Cllr. Clare Colleran-Molloy and her special guests Santa Claus, All Ireland winning captain Tony Kelly, manager Brian Lohan and the Liam MacCarthy arrived at the venue in a horse drawn carriage. Colum McGrath was MC for the event and got all on stage to engage in festive friendly banter.

The first of four Christmas Artisan Markets took place on November 30th at the Templegate Plaza, offering high end produce, in a festive atmosphere. This area was enhanced with additional Christmas lighting financed by the 'once off Christmas support allocation' from the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage.

The 'Frozen – sing along' in Glór, subsidised by Clare County Council was a huge success and a very glam event, with Mums and daughters sporting their Elsa and Anna gear. There were loads of opportunities to get photos with your favourite characters before and after in the Foyer.

Ennis Local Transport Plan (ABTA)

Ennis MD staff continue to engage with key stakeholders and our Technical Advisors, Systra, on the Local Transport Plan. The next steps will include a briefing to the Ennis MD Councillors prior to the formal Public Consultation Stage commencing,

Other Key Strategic works

In addition to the aforementioned, Ennis MD staff continue to work on a cross-directorate basis with our colleagues and the various Government Departments in advancing a number of other works throughout the Town and Environs. Members will be aware that the suspension of Construction works commenced on November 28th for six weeks to allow the Town to thrive over the busy Christmas period. Other works that the Ennis MD Team are involved in include the LIHAF Access Road project, the Tulla Road and Clare Road Active Travel Projects. We also work closely with our DAC colleagues in developing the ambitious plans outlined in the Ennis 2040 Economic & Spatial Strategy, with the 4 main proposals currently being progressed under the Strategy being Francis Street, Post Office Field Masterplan, Abbey Street (Riverside proposal) and Harvey's Quay.



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

TRANSPORTATION

Roadworks Programme and Operations

The 2024 Schedule of Municipal District Works (Annual Roadworks Programme) is now at practical completion stage in all 4 Municipal Districts.

Strategic Transportation

Active Travel

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

Tulla Road Cycle Scheme:

The detailed design for the Tulla Rd Scheme is being finalised by the consultant.

Ennis Local Transport Plan:

Systra Consulting Engineers have presented the first draft of the Ennis LTP to Clare County Councils Planning Section, Ennis MD and Active Travel Section. Environmental Screening will now take place with a view to going out to public consultation early in the new year.

Limerick Road (incl. St. Flannans Drive) Cycle Scheme:

Environmental Screening and a Road Safety Audit has now taken place. Once the final report on these have been received the Preliminary Design Report can be submitted to the NTA for approval. Following approval from the NTA a non-statutory public consultation will take place. Currently photo montages of the scheme are being prepared in preparation for the public consultation period.

Ardnacrusha to Athlunkard Bridge:

The tender for this scheme has been awarded to Clandillon Consulting. They are currently carrying out a constraints study and preparation of a Traffic Count Survey. The scope of their works involves preparation of options selection report and a preliminary design report.

Bridge Permeability Project:

The National Transport Authority funded this pedestrian and cyclist bridge permeability assessment project. Feasibility & Options Selections and Preliminary Design Reports for active travel measures across 11 bridges in Clare is complete.

These bridges are:

- Club Bridge, Ennis
- Sixmilebridge Bridge
- Creagh Bridge
- Carrigaholt Bridge
- Cooraclare Bridge
- Quin Bridge
- Inagh Bridge
- Doonbeg Bridge
- Drehidnagower Bridge
- O'Briens Bridge Liscannor
- Clarecastle Bridge

The report has recommended interventions at a number of bridges. It also highlights that these interventions should be delivered along with connecting active travel infrastructure.

Drehidnagower Bridge:

The report recommends that given the fact that funding a structural solution may not be available in the near future that a yield system be introduced. It goes on to recommend that a suitable continuous active travel facility between the Lees Road junction and Watery Road junction be investigated at detailed design.

Connecting & Co-creating Ennis:

Works are progressing with these junction improvements throughout Ennis. Currently works are ongoing in Cloughleigh Road, Circular Road, College Road and Cottage Gardens.

‘Safe Routes To School’ program:

Holy Family National School:

Phase 1 of this scheme has now been completed. The scheme was completed by Michael Cotter Contractors.



Ennis National School:

A contractor has been appointed to implement these works and is scheduled to commence in December 2024.

Ballycasey Pedestrian Crossings:

A number of raised tables including pedestrian crossings are being provided through funding from the NTA in Shannon including at Hurlers Cross, Ballycasey Rd, Slí Lara and Bóthair na Lóiste. These are due to fully complete by the end of the year.

Sixmilebridge Pedestrian Crossing:

A new controlled pedestrian crossing is being provided in the vicinity of Cappa Lodge and Beachwood Grove. This will improve connectivity between the National School and Sixmilebridge Cappa Lodge Training Facility.

Spanish Point Pedestrian Crossing:

A new pedestrian crossing is being provided on the R482 in Spanish Point in the vicinity of the Armada Hotel. This controlled crossing will help improve safety by the provision of a raised table and zebra crossing. This will also improve connectivity between a number of housing developments and Spanish Point beach.

Public Lighting



Clare County Council continues to work with its Public Lighting Maintenance Contractor, Electric Skyline, to repair existing faulty public lights on the network. Given the absence of a maintenance contractor for a period and owing to the fact we are now entering into the Winter Period, outage numbers are elevated. In addition to this, due to an ageing network and non-conforming existing cable at some locations additional civil works and cable replacements are required which exacerbate repair times. Furthermore, where ESB attendances are required repair times may also be prolonged as Emergency Repairs and Weather Events shall take precedence for ESB Network Crews.

Where PLEEP works have commenced, it entails that maintenance crews cannot enter the same area for repair works to safeguard against ESB safety requirements and protocols in respect of violating exclusion zones.

For the benefit of Councillors, public lighting faults can be reported via Local Authority Identification (<https://www.clarecoco.ie/services/roads-and-transport/road-maintenance-issues/report-a-broken-streetlight>).

The PLEEP (Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project) has commenced retrofitting of existing luminaires in the Shannon MD and will progress to Ennis and Killaloe MD's in the coming weeks. 219 Luminaires have been retrofitted to date to the 15th November. Survey Works are also continuing in the West Clare MD and shall be completed soon.

Road Design Office

Project	Progress Update
<p>Bridge Rehabilitation Programme</p>	<p>Rehabilitation work has been completed on 17 Bridges across the Municipal Districts</p> <p>Contractors are onsite on 1 bridge in West Clare.</p> <p>Shragh Bridge is at design/tender stage and will form part of the 2025 bridge rehabilitation programme.</p>   <p>Other Bridge Projects: Design works are ongoing for a culvert replacement on the N85 at Fountain, Ennis.</p> <p>An enabling works contract will be required. This will consist of the relocation of a major strategic fibre optic cable.</p>
<p>Safety Improvement Works on Regional and Local Roads</p>	<p>Low Cost Safety Schemes in 2024: Designs have been completed for the Low Cost Safety Schemes and these projects are being delivered by the MDs.</p> <p>Specific Improvement Grant Ogonolloe €100k: This scheme has been handed over to the MD for construction. Works include carriageway narrowing, build outs and a pedestrian crossing. Construction works are well underway by direct labour. Works will include the provision of bus stop facilities.</p>
<p>Default speed Limits & Proposed Speed Limits</p>	<p>In accordance with Section 9 of the Roads Act Clare County Council has advertised its intention to propose 18 special speed limits which includes a number of periodic 50kph Speed Limits at schools. Subject to the consideration of any objections being received, and with the consent of TII for National Road speed limit changes it is the intention to put the proposed Byelaws on the February Council meeting agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N67 Carnaun Cross - St. Theresa's Nursing Home, Kilrush, Co. Clare • N67 Kilkee - Moyasta, Co. Clare • N67 Bealaha - Doonbeg • N85 Inagh, Co. Clare • R463 Larkin's Cross, Parteen, Co. Clare • R477 O'Donoghue's Pub - Fanore Beach Gate, Co. Clare • L-1012 Boston, Co. Clare • L-1016 Bealaclogga, Bellharbour, Co. Clare • L-1112, Kilnaboy, Co. Clare • L-2006, L-2016, L-6054, L-6056, Querrin, Co. Clare • L-60771, Bog Road, Kilkee, Co. Clare • L-2006 Doonaha, Kilkee, Co. Clare

The proposed introduction of periodic speed limits at National Schools on Regional Roads will be at the following locations:

- R-460 Scoil Naisiunta Cluain An Atha, Cloonanaha, Co. Clare
- R-479 Doolin Mixed National School, Co. Clare
- R-487 Moveen National School, Co. Clare
- R-485 Kilmurry McMahon National School, Co. Clare
- R-463 Ogonnelloe National School, Co. Clare
- R-463 Raheen Wood Community National School, Co. Clare

Default Speed Limit Update:

The Minister has confirmed that the commencement date for the 60kph rural local road default speed limit is the 7th February 2025.

Signs and poles for the new 60kph default speed limit were delivered mid October and the MDs are erecting these new default speed limit signs so they will be in place for the commencement date on the 7th February 2025

TII Safety Improvement

HD17

N85 Lahinch Road Shanaway Junction Improvements & Pedestrian Crossings

The Preliminary Design has been approved in the TII Departures Portal. A section 38 for a mini roundabout and two raised pedestrian crossings will be advertised on the 29th November.

N85 Clareabbey Roundabout

Feasibility & Options report has been approved at Gateway 1. Clare County Council will prepare a brief & seek to appointment engineering consultants to develop a preliminary & detailed design for pedestrian and cyclist facilities at this location.

Minster Place, Kilkee

Clare County Council will request funding from TII to advance this project to Part 8 & construction stages.

N67 /L2028 Junction Doonbeg

A Feasibility & Options Report has been approved at Gateway 1. The RDO will now progress this project into the Preliminary Design Phase.

Fence Retrofit

Works commenced on the N68 on the 13th of November and are due to be completed by the end of November.

Periodic Special Speed Limits

The periodic special speed limits byelaws for N68 at Caherea National School, N67 New Quay National School and N67 Rinneen National School were adopted at the November Council meeting.

Health and Safety

The Health and Safety Team are continuing with their schedule of Annual Safety Statement and Risk Assessment Reviews.

The top-level H&S objectives approved by the Safety Management Committee in March 2024 are continuing, however one of the fundamental objectives has been achieved.

Clare County Council were successful in achieving ISO 45001 Accreditation in the Physical Directorate & Housing Departments. The feedback from the NSAI Auditor was that there is an embedded Safety Culture, clear Senior Management leadership and a detailed awareness of the roles and responsibilities that all staff have within the Occupational Health & Safety Management system supported by documentary evidence. This Audit was a real team effort and it was very evident how much work was put in by each and every team member in their respective Departments and the H&S Team.

The Health and Safety Team continue their schedule of Safety Inspections using the Pro Works App in order to inspect, monitor and advise on the implementation of the Clare County Council Occupational Health and Safety Management System. Each Municipal District is continuing to engage with the Pro Works App in order to complete Site Specific Safe System of Work Plans and Temporary Traffic Management Plans for Roadworks and will be completing additional training in the use of the software.

CAPITAL DELIVERY / PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

<p>Doolin Pier Visitor Services Building</p>	<p>The council are currently engaging with Local Elected members to discuss the next project steps, following a review of design development to date and current Local area needs. In parallel, the MD are progressing construction of footpaths between Fisher Street and Doolin Pier, thereby ensuring that pedestrian facilities are in place along this busy route.</p>
<p>Ennis Public Realm Regeneration (Project B)</p>	<p>As reported previously, and further to completion of High Street, the appointed contractor has focussed on progressing a large section of O’Connell Street in advance of the Christmas trading period. As well as working during normal business hours, certain works were completed on evening shifts to achieve earliest completion for these areas. In recent weeks, the full expanse of shared space streetscape has been unveiled along the section between O’Connell Square and Station Road. The high quality Public Realm design ensures that a shared surface multi-modal pavement is in place throughout the town centre. The opening up of the newly completed section of O’Connell Street provides a vision of what is yet to come for other areas of the town centre (Barrack Square and Street, O’Connell Square, and Bank Place), all due for completion in 2025.</p> <p>The contractor has now demobilised for the festive season in line with conditions of the contract, and with the switch-on of Christmas lights, the town now has its first opportunity to fully experience the benefits of the investment made to date.</p> <p>An intensive works programme will resume in January 2025 on O’Connell Street with civils and paving crews being deployed at O’Connell Street (Cathedral area) and O’Connell Square.</p> <p>Road Closures are now in place for O’Connell Street, and High Street, and there will be a need for limited further road closures in the town centre in 2025 to facilitate certain aspects of the works. The works requirement within the contract obliges Shareridge to have a Public Liaison Officer (PLO) as part of their Team who is based in their Project Office in Ennis Town Centre. The PLO is engaging extensively with affected parties as the works progress in advance of commencement of every work phase. The public and traders are encouraged to take every opportunity to meet with the project team to ensure that their needs are communicated, and disruption is minimised wherever possible. The contractor and design team are also convening fortnightly drop-in meetings, as well as issuing weekly progress update bulletins. Affected/interested parties are invited to email ennispublicrealm@shareridge.ie if they wish to be added to mailing list. It is unavoidable that there will be disruption with a major civil and infrastructural works of this nature, but every effort is being made to keep this to a minimum while allowing the necessary access to allow timely completion. It is expected that the longer-term advantages in terms of user amenity and accessibility will far outweigh the shorter-term inconvenience. The cooperation and understanding of all stakeholders in this regard is greatly appreciated.</p>
<p>Ennistymon Inner Relief Road and Bridge Crossing (Blake’s Corner)</p>	<p>The Judicial Review process is ongoing.</p>
<p>Killaloe Bridge, Bypass & R494 Upgrade</p>	<p>Progress has been good over the past month. Major Milestones achieved in recent weeks include: Pavement Binder Course being laid on Main Bridge, Pavement Wearing Course laid on Killaloe Bypass, Public Lights connected and Signage installed on KBP, Temporary traffic lights removed from Shantraud.</p> <div data-bbox="778 1774 1098 1998" data-label="Image"> </div>

Please Note: R496 closed from 11th Nov. to 29th Nov. to facilitate construction of R496 arm of Roelagh Roundabout.



Killaloe Bypass Section

Kincora: Accom. Wks. to CPO 101 (Ballyvalley House) nearing completion. Vehicle Restraint System (VRS) installed. Fencing nearing completion. Landscaping in progress. Pic 104



Main Cut to Hill Road: Finishing works to footpath and cycle track nearing completion. Awaiting line marking and road studs.



Hill Road to Creeveroe Road: Main line substantially complete. Minor pavement works outstanding at junctions.



Creeveroe Road to Shantraud: Substantially complete.



Shantraud Roundabout: Roundabout substantially complete and open to through-traffic.



Shannon Bridge Crossing Link

Shantraud to Clarisford Junction: Paving to binder course laid.



Clarisford to West Embankment: Drainage complete. Remaining section of walls to embankment nearing completion. Kerbs laid to embankment and road preps for tarmac in progress.



Shannon Bridge

Top handrail to pedestrian guard rails being installed. Pavement binder course laid. Shared facilities complete. Painting and concrete repair snagging in progress.



R494 Upgrade

Section 7 (South of Rail Bridge): Substantially complete.



Section 7 (North of Rail Bridge): Mainline substantially complete. Watermain and road re-surfacing to local tertiary road outstanding. Accom. Works nearing completion.



Section 6: Mainline substantially complete.



Section 5 (Chainage 1350-1750): Culvert installation in progress. Road construction activities to northern lane well advanced with pavement basecourse layer laid except at culvert location.



Section 4 (Chainage 950-1350): Accom. Works to Fort Henry Estate in progress. Road construction activities to northern lane well advanced with pavement basecourse layer laid except for culvert location to Fort Henry Estate.



Section 3 (Chainage 650-950): Culverts complete. Road construction activities outside Larkins well advanced with Pavement Basecourse layer recently laid to southern lane.






Sections 2: Accom. Works in progress. Road open to two-way traffic.



Section 1 Roolagh Roundabout: Testing and Commissioning Works to Pumping Station continue. Accommodation Works to local properties at an advanced stage. Road pavement binder layer laid to R494 northern lane of roundabout. Road construction activities continue on R494 southern lane. Drainage and service installation in progress on R496 arm of roundabout (R496 closed to facilitate these works). Pavement binder layer laid to bridge arm of roundabout. Pic 59




	<p><u>Kilmastulla Bridge</u> Substantially complete.</p>  <p><u>Rail Bridge</u> Substantially complete.</p> 
	<p><u>RW03</u> (Shannonside Business Park): Boundary wall to Access Ramp in progress.</p>  <p>Additional project specific information including monthly drone footage, traffic management plans etc. is available on: https://www.clarecoco.ie/services/capital-projects/roads-and-bridges/killaloe-bypass-shannon-bridge-crossing/</p>
<p>Kilkee Flood Relief Scheme</p>	<p>Planning application lodged with An Bord Pleanála on 2nd of October 2024. The period for public submissions elapsed on 15.11.24. Two submissions were received. Tenders for the Archaeological testing works have been received and are currently under review. Clare County Council continue to liaise with property owners for the necessary temporary and permanent land acquisitions required as part of the scheme.</p>
<p>Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF)</p>	<p>The tender for the infrastructural element of the scheme was published on eTenders on the 25th of October with a submission return date of 2nd December 2024. Following receipt of tenders RPS will complete a tender evaluation and recommendation for the preferred contractor. Currently over 70% of the land parcels required for the road have been acquired/agreed terms including the parcel of lands where the first approx. 225 housing units will be delivered. There is positive engagement with all remaining landowners, and to that regard we are hopeful of reaching terms by agreement in the coming weeks. Discussions continue with the Department of Housing / LIHAF Management Committee. Work has commenced on a revised Grant Agreement which will enable us to move forward with the Infrastructure & Housing delivery in 2025.</p>
<p>N19 Shannon Airport Access Road</p>	<p>As part of Phase 3 - Design & Environmental Evaluation, the project team have recently published an Update for the project. Updated drawings are available at the below link with hardcopy maps on display at Clare County Council’s Head Office in Ennis and Shannon Municipal District Office. This Update is also available to view on the project website www.shannonaccess.ie On the 25th of October a project briefing to the Shannon MD was conducted with a full Council briefing also held on 18th of November. The design team have further progressed the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and some additional environmental mitigation measures have been identified as part of this process. An additional area of low canopy tree planting is proposed between Fergus Road and Drumgeely Road and this area has now been identified on the updated drawings. The design team are now working towards the finalisation of the Statutory Documentation required as part of the proposed planning application for submission to An Bord Pleanála.</p>

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

	Positive discussions continue regarding the necessary Land Transfer Agreements between The Minister for Transport, The Shannon Group and Clare County Council and as always, further information and associated literature on the project can be accessed via the scheme website www.shannonaccess.ie
Remediation of sites containing ACM	A Planning Application in respect of the remediation of the subject sites is currently being prepared, and will be submitted in coming months, with a view to approval in 2025. The sites continue to be routinely monitored and maintained as required by Council staff in accordance with approach following as agreed with the EPA.
Shannon Town & Environs Flood Relief Scheme	Clare County Council have reviewed the updated Options Report and returned comments to the consultant. Our review of the Buildability Report has also been returned to RPS for amendments. The project description has been finalised which will allow the progression of EIAR chapters 5 to 14. Topographical surveys and wintering bird surveys are ongoing. An Interface Meeting with the N19 project team was held on 1st of November.
West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 1: Kilrush to Kilkee)	The review of Phase 2 by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) is ongoing. The Project Agronomist and Project Liaison Officers, will be in contact with landowners / farmers to arrange meetings on site to assess the potential impacts of the proposed development in line with the 'The Code of Best Practice for National and Regional Greenways 2021'.
West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 2: Ennis to Ennistymon)	Work continues on development of the third non-statutory public consultation on the 'Emerging Preferred Route Corridor'.
West Clare Railway Greenway (Sections 3 & 4: Ennistymon to Milltown Malbay to Moyasta)	The design team continue to develop potential route options to allow potential route corridors to be put on public display in the second non-statutory public consultation.
Other Greenway Proposals	No update this month.

General Design Office

Vandeleur Gardens Yard Wall and Storage Container	Revised Part 8 planning application to include greenhouse restoration being prepared to be submitted early December 2024. Fire Safety Certificate for storage container completed and submitted to building control November 2024.
Town and Village Renewal Scheme	Parteen - Contractors works are complete, electrical sub-contractor works to public lighting columns complete. Awaiting public lighting connection by ESB networks.
Scarriff Rural Regeneration Project - Phase 1 Buildings & Car Park	<p>The formal appointment of the main building contractor has been approved for the Scarriff Rural Regeneration Project - Phase 1 Buildings & Car Park. Work is due to commence in January 2025 with a 16 month contract duration. The tender price was €2,872,400.00 Ex VAT. Works will consist of the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out complete alterations and additions to the existing buildings. • The change of use of the former Supermacs building to Digital Hub (Office). • The change of use of the former Merriman Tavern building to Enterprise Centre/Community Space. • Construct a public car park on adjacent green field site and provide pedestrian/vehicular access from the L4024 roadway. • Provide pedestrian access to the proposed car park from R352 roadway and the rear boundary wall of the former Merriman Tavern building. <p>The General Design Office will project manage and inspect the construction works to completion.</p> 

FIRE & BUILDING CONTROL SECTION

National Long Service Awards

On the 14th November last, the Long Service Awards for Fire Service Personnel took place in Trim, Co. Meath. This scheme administered on the Minister's behalf by the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management, provides for the award of a medal and certificate in respect of 20 years' service, an emblem and certificate for 30 years' service and a ribbon bar and certificate for 40 years' service.

The criteria for eligibility for awards under the scheme are that:

- both whole-time and retained personnel, at all levels of the service, are eligible to receive an award;
- an award will be made to eligible personnel currently serving in the local authority fire service and emergency control rooms and to those members who have retired from the service. Posthumous awards may be proposed for personnel where the nominee had sufficient eligible service at the time of their death;
- awards will be made for aggregate service in the fire service, whether in Ireland, the U.K. or any other country.

There were 4 Clare recipients of these awards on this occasion:

- Kilkee Sub Station Officer Robert Fitzgerald (30 Years Service);
- Chief Fire Officer Adrian Kelly (30 Years Service);
- Senior Assistant Chief Fire Officer Tom Burke (20 Years Service);
- Former Firefighter Paul Moroney (20 Years Service)



Pictured: L-R: Senior Assistant Chief Fire Officer Tom Burke (20 Years Service); Former Firefighter Paul Moroney (20 Years Service); Cllr. Alan O'Callaghan, Cathaoirleach Clare County Council; Kilkee Sub Station Officer Robert Fitzgerald (30 Years Service); Chief Fire Officer Adrian Kelly (30 Years Service).

Inter-Agency Major Emergency Exercise at Shannon Airport

Clare County Council participated in an Inter-Agency Major Emergency Exercise at Shannon Airport on the 20th November 2024. Participating agencies included Shannon Airport, Clare County Council, Health Service Executive, National Ambulance Service, An Garda Síochána, AirNav Ireland and Air Accident Investigation Unit. The tabletop format exercise focussed on the aftermath of a large passenger airplane crashing off the runway with 203 people on board.



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Fire & Building Control Section	Oct 2024	Nov 2024 (Up to 21.11.24)	Year to Date 2024
Number of Emergency Calls Attended	149	51	1084
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Received	12	5	102
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Granted	7	3	82
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Invalidated	0	1	5
Number of Disability Access Certificates Received	8	10	60
Number of Disability Access Certificates Granted	2	0	46
Number of Commencement Notices Received	37	36	455
Number of Dangerous Structures/Places Complaints	0	0	17

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

CLARE CIVIL DEFENCE

Operational Duties:

- Civil Defence provided medical cover at a number of events in November including Clare Club Championships - multiple matches (Cusack Park); Ireland Vs Scotland Shinty Match (Cusack Park); Turning on of Christmas Lights (Ennis) and Escorting Santa to turn on Christmas Lights (Newmarket On Fergus).
- Clare Civil Defence was tasked by the Clare Garda Division to assist with a missing person search in the Doolin area. Search teams carried out a number of searches at different locations.
- Clare Civil Defence was tasked to assist Galway Civil Defence in the search for two missing swimmers in the Galway area.
- Clare Civil Defence Volunteers assisted the HSE with the transporting of staff to palliative care patients in remote areas.

Members Training & Professional Development

Members participated in weekly training set out by Civil Defence Instructors.
CDOA Conference, Training Seminar & Trade Show (Kilkenny)

Exercise Mike Whiskey

Clare Civil Defence hosted a Regional Competition in Clare (Exercise Mike Whiskey) with teams from Limerick and Galway travelling to Clare to participate. Competitions took place in the morning at 3 separate sites covering all disciplines. A Foot Drill Competition and Teambuilding Exercise took place in the afternoon, followed by dinner in the West County.



Health & Safety

Safety Management systems of a number of Departments within the Physical Development and Social Development Directorates, including Civil Defence, were audited by the NSAI for compliance with ISO 45001:2018. Civil Defence were highly praised by the auditor for the various safety initiatives in place, together with overall compliance by staff & volunteers with Clare County Council's Safety Management System.

ENVIRONMENT

Environmental Awareness

An Taisce Green Schools Programme

This month our Environmental Awareness Officer (EAO) provided in person An Taisce Green School program support visit to St Flannan's College (Ennis) and Doora National School.

All post primary schools were contacted to ascertain if they were participating in the An Taisce Green School programme. Of the 17 post primary schools in Clare 16 are registered with the An Taisce Green Schools Programme. The sole school not registered was contacted and the principal has agreed to re-engage with the Programme. Of the 16 registered schools 10 schools are actively working on the Green Schools programme. The five remaining schools are long term deferrals. Three of these schools have since advised of their intention on re-engaging with this programme.

St John Bosco Community College are the most advanced post primary Green School having achieved 7 Green Flag awards.



Relove Paint initiative

Environmental Awareness and Waste Management teams recently visited the Mungret Recycling Centre operated by Limerick City and County Council, and Tait House Community Enterprise to explore their Relove Paint collaboration. The purpose of this visit was to assess the potential participation of Clare County Council in the Paint Reuse Network. This network is a membership-based organisation comprising various Irish groups and organizations dedicated to reducing paint waste. It promotes the reuse and redistribution of paint for the benefit of local communities and the environment. The Paint Reuse Network is coordinated by The Rediscovery Centre, with support from Ireland's Regional Waste Management Planning Offices.



Community support

A presentation, recycling workshop, Leave No Trace activity and "Race against Waste" was provided to the Seanchóill Youth Club. The event was well received with approximately 25 in attendance, and included awareness raising around littering, illegal dumping, our scientific services, dog control, the importance of clean air as well as waste prevention and management.



Awareness Campaigns

During the month of November awareness campaigns were delivered on dog owner responsibility, clean air and cigarette butt littering. Campaigns included social media and print media promotion with the Clare Champion and the Clare Echo.

Access to Information on the Environment (AIE)

Our Environmental Awareness Officer is the designated Information Officer (AIE Officer) under the Access to Information on the Environment Regulations for Clare County Council. To date for 2024, 15 AIE requests have been received with 8 requests granted, 2 part-granted, 4 refused, 1 withdrawn. During 2024, 1 AIE request went for internal review and subsequently appealed to the Office of the Commissioner for Environmental Information (OCEI).

Gardening

Notable works completed in November include the seasonal pruning and shaping of plants within the Remembrance Garden.



This important task ensures that the Garden shall maintain its unique character and provide a welcoming outdoor space for staff and visitors to Aras Chontae an Chlair.

Also, during November, the Gardening Team undertook a planting programme near the Holy Family National School, Ennis, to compliment the works recently completed as part of the Safe Routes to School Programme.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT



Other public enhancement works completed in November included the planting of the recently redeveloped Drumgeely Neighbourhood Centre, Shannon.



Back in the Gardening Nursery, spring bedding plants for 2025 have been planted and will require ongoing protection and maintenance through the winter period to ensure a healthy stock of plants for early season planting in public spaces and hanging baskets.

Water Enforcement and Laboratory Monitoring Scientific Services

The table below summarises the work of the scientific teams to date in 2024:

Water Monitoring & Enforcement Scientific Team	October 2024	Total to date 2024
Bathing Water Monitoring	Monitoring season finished for 2024	182
Domestic Wastewater Treatment Plant Inspections (NIP Plan)	19	94
Public queries processed regarding DWWTs grants	3	34
Monitoring Inspections of Section 4 licenced premises	4	75
Planning applications (Agriculture)	3	42
Planning applications (Domestic)	36	384
Planning applications (Large Developments)	1	28
Planning applications (Forestry)	11	77
Pollution complaints received	10	123

Private Commercial Drinking Water Supplies	39	62
Private/Public Group Water Scheme supplies	34	227
Rivers	50	243
Farm Inspections (NAIP) (Routine Planned & Unplanned)	27	103

Waste Enforcement

Multi-Agency inspections with the Southern Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authority (WERLA)

On Thursday, November 14th a multi-agency inspection took place at 3 Clare sites of interest. In attendance were members of An Garda Síochána, WERLA, and Clare County Council. The 3 sites in question had been reported as being sites of ongoing waste mis-management. Two of the three sites had been the subject of previous enforcement action. WERLA agreed to accompany us on our inspections as the issues were potentially serious. The local Gardai were also attended at one site. As a result of these inspections, a Notice under the Waste Management Act was served on one landowner, an external certified vehicle assessor will assess the vehicles on the second site to determine if they are End of Life Vehicles (ELV's) and a post-inspection letter issued to the owners of the third site. Follow up actions are ongoing.

Inspections of Permitted and Unpermitted Sites

Inspections of 3 permitted and 3 unauthorised facilities were carried out by the Waste Enforcement team in November. Follow-up enforcement action is ongoing in the case of the unpermitted sites. The permitted sites were inspected to monitor compliance with their permit conditions, to achieve positive environmental outcomes for the receiving environments. 1 warning letter, 1 Section 14 Notice, and 1 Section 55 Notice were issued under the Waste Management Act because of these inspections.

The tables below summarise the work of the Waste Enforcement team in November 2024, in response to complaints:

Waste Enforcement Complaints	November 2024	Total YTD 2024
Litter	16	92
Dog Fouling	3	43
Waste Presentation	3	28
Dumping	48	670
CRM complaints (total)	111	1,694

Waste Enforcement Inspections	November 2024
Cert of Registration	2
Waste Facility Permits	1
Unauthorised Sites	3

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Air Pollution Act (1987) (Solid Fuels) Regulations 2022

A Solid Fuel retailer register has been compiled for Co. Clare. Retailer compliance checks and inspections have been carried out. We also undertook household surveys as part of a recent project to ensure compliance with the above regulations.

Waste management

Below is a table indicating waste materials collected at all our Civic Amenity Sites for October, which is the most recent dataset available.

Civic Amenity Site Waste Streams (KG)	
Item	October (latest Data)
Bulky items	41,700
Cardboard	23,302
Dry Recyclable	388
Paper	15,400
Green Waste	57,940
Mattresses	4,660
Municipal Waste	127,006
Plastic	1,200
Timber	116,880

CLIMATE ACTION



A number of projects have commenced as part of the Community Climate Action Programme with some projects already substantially delivered. These include:

- the installation of solar lights by Doonbeg Tidy Towns.
- Trillick GAC in County Tyrone who are working with Crusheen GAA club on a Shared Island project have completed a walking track around their pitch. Crusheens project is in development.
- Mike McTigue Community Centre have retrofitted their community centre with seven new triple-glazed windows which will result in increased energy efficiency and lower bills.
- Scariff Rugby Club have retrofitted their main pitch lighting to LED lighting as part of the programme.
- Ennis Men's Shed have installed a Solar PV system on their workshop as part of their project.



Mike McTigue Community Centre replaced seven old windows with new triple glazed units to improve the energy efficiency of their centre.



Scariff Rugby Club have retrofitted their pitch lighting with new energy efficient LED lights



Ennis Men's Shed have installed a solar PV system on their workshop

Light Up Your Bike

Clare County Council participated in the TFI Smarter Travel Programme's Light Up Your Bike awareness campaign. With the mornings and evenings getting darker as we head into the win-

ter months, it's important that cyclists are visible on their bikes with front and rear bike lights. To support this the Climate Action Team provided a set of front and back lights to staff of Clare County Council who completed a short quiz on the importance of using bike lights while cycling. As part of the awareness campaign posters were placed on the Climate Action Noticeboard and an email was sent out to all staff.



Older People's Council Presentation

The Climate Action Team delivered a presentation to the Clare Older People's Council (OPC) on climate action at their November 12th meeting. The presentation focussed on the Clare Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 and addressed the key objectives and actions for Clare County Council in the area of climate action with members of the OPC engaging with questions and feedback in relation to themes such as energy, transport and education. Members of the OPC were presented with copies of the Climate Action Plan, Greener Clare reusable coffee cups and SEAI temperature charts following the presentation.

Walktober Step Challenge

Clare County Council participated in Walktober, a fun team Step Challenge that takes place in October each year led by the National Transport Authority. Walktober was open to staff and students of workplaces and third level campuses that are partners of the Smarter Travel programme. Congratulations to the team members of 'Take a Walk on the Rural Side' who won the Greener Clare prize draw, while topping the Clare leaderboard was 'Walk Step Lovers' with an average of over 400,000 steps accounted for. Clare County Council were well represented in the national competition with four teams entered who collectively accounted a total of over 6 million steps, enough to travel from Loop Head to New York.



Reduce Your Use

Clare County Council will once again partake in the Reduce Your Use Campaign. Reduce your Use is a joint initiative of SEAI and the Office of Public Works which supports public bodies to run a winter energy awareness campaign for staff and to undertake recommended actions on heating, lighting, operating hours and audits. The campaign will run from October 2024 to March 2025 and will provide energy awareness materials and support to energy teams in each local authority. The Climate Team will be engaging with staff over the winter months on this campaign.



Energy

Clare County Council, like all public bodies, is obliged to improve energy efficiency by 50% and reduce carbon emissions by 51% by 2030. To this end, it will be necessary to implement numerous projects across the organisation. One such project is the potential to install a solar photovoltaic (PV) array on the roof of the Buttermarket building. Given that the building is a protected structure, it is necessary to seek a declaration as to whether proposed works would materially affect the character of the structure in accordance with Section 57 of the Planning and Development Act. Following approval of the business case for this project, an application has been submitted with a decision expected before Christmas.

An Energy Awareness Day was held in Aras Contae an Chláir on Thursday 26th September. Staff from the Climate and Energy Team were on-hand to discuss and provide information on all

matters energy and sustainability. An overview of the final energy usage by the organisation for the calendar year 2023 was presented. This also included infographics on the organisations progress on the glidepath to meeting 2030 energy efficiency and decarbonisation targets.



(HVO) The Machinery Yard is continuing with the trial of replacing road diesel with Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO). This is beneficial from an emissions perspective given that diesel emits approximately 2.7 kilograms of carbon dioxide equivalent (kg CO₂e) per litre compared to zero emissions from HVO. To-date, over 330 tons of carbon dioxide emissions have been avoided compared to the same period last year. This is not only beneficial for the environment but also contributes to the efforts of Clare County Council as an organisation to reducing our carbon footprint.

Thermal heating for the Aras is provided by gas boilers and a biomass woodchip boiler. Natural gas emits approximately 2.1 kg CO₂e per cubic metre compared to zero emissions from woodchips. The Facilities Team has therefore agreed to trial the sole usage of woodchips for the winter period ahead. During this trial period, the gas boilers will only be used in an emergency. It is hoped that the results of this trial will emulate the success of the HVO trial in the Machinery Yard in further contributing to the reduction of the organisation's carbon footprint. Results will be published in Q2 2025.

WATER

Rural Water Programme

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

This month we received an update from the Department in relation to the Multi-annual Rural Water Programme 2024-2026. The Department has decided to take a phased approach to approval of funding with a focus on water quality issues for the first phase, namely Measures A1, A2, A3, A6 and A7. Funding applications for the Taken in Charge of Public Group Water Schemes under Measure A6 are not part of this first phase of funding. In addition, the Expert Panel is continuing its work in its evaluation of applications received under Measure A4, A5 and A9. We have informed all successful Group Water Schemes.

Group Water Scheme Taking in Charge applications continue to be progressed by the Clare Rural Water Team. The Rural Water Team is working with Group Water Schemes in assessing the need to carry out emergency works and applying to the Department for exceptional urgent capital works for once off funding as they arise.

Applications for Group Water Scheme annual subsidy which is available to fund operational costs of group water schemes providing water for domestic use continues to be processed by this office, 26 applications have been received for 2024.

All applications under the 'Grant for Improvement Works to a Private Water Supply' under the Rural Water Programme continue to be processed by the Rural Water Team, 36 applications have been received to date in 2024. Post works final inspections for 2023 works within the last 12 months are ongoing.

SHANNON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Pride of Place

The 2024 Award Ceremony was hosted by Monaghan County Council in association with Co-operation Ireland, on Saturday, November 2nd with the event livestreamed on the Pride of Place website. It was great to see Bunratty, and Newmarket on Fergus were the entries from the Shannon Municipal District Area, and we acknowledge and thank them for all their hard work and dedication which culminated in their nominations. I have no doubt that these applications lay a foundation for future entries into the competition which will result in a future award.



An Choill Bheag

Is a project currently being run by the EEU of An Taisce and LEAF Ireland - An Choill Bheag (AnCB) initiative. These are small, dense, biodiverse native woodland habitats planted on school and community grounds, providing a space for people and wildlife. It involves communities and students in every stage of the process: from planning and planting through to maintenance. An Choill Bheag (AnCB) is based around practical sustainable tree planting. These habitats provide an educational and recreational resource for schools and communities, enabling people to participate in Citizen Science, Woodland Skills, Nature and Wellbeing. Planting little woods also helps mitigate climate change, increases biodiversity, provides space for pollinator plants to grow, provides an outdoor learning space and much more. Shannon Municipal District Office has engaged with An Taisce to deliver this project over the last 18 months, initially four schools agreed to participate in Shannon Town: St John's, St Senan's, St Conaire's and St Aidan's. A planting session took place on the 14th of November. Cathaoirleach of the Shannon Municipal District Pat O'Gorman and Leas Cathaoirleach Donna McGettigan assisted the staff and children of S Aidan's National School plant trees on the day.

Councillor visit to Ardnacrusha Power Station

The elected Members together with staff from Shannon Municipal District recently attended a briefing with ESB engineering staff on the operations of the Ardnacrusha Power Plant. The role of Parteen Weir was discussed as well as the importance of ensuring a coordinated approach by all the relevant Agencies to flood risk management.

A guided tour of the facility was also provided which proved very informative. The Ardnacrusha Hydro Station was the first electricity generating station operated by the ESB and was pivotal in the development of Ireland in the 20th Century and beyond.





Works underway

Maintenance of Drainage through the Shannon Municipal District has been ongoing. Three private contractors accompanied by our own crews have focus on Southeast Clare and the Shannon Industrial Estate, Shannon Town and the Shannon Graveyard. This involved jetting underground systems and removing vegetation from open drain channels.



A footpath project has commenced in Cratloe. 200m of footpath have been completed in the vicinity of Setright's Cross, this includes preparation works for a new Pedestrian Crossing which will greatly enhance pedestrian safety in the area.



Low-Cost Safety Schemes are nearing completion on Bealach Bri and Ballycasey in Shannon. The Ballycasey project has seen a significant upgrade to the junction with the Shannon Springs Hotel, the introduction of a Pedestrian Crossing, and upgrade

of a footpath leading to the Smithstown Industrial Estate. This project will facilitate the safe movement of cyclists and pedestrians across a busy road for both leisure users and business commuters.



We have been active updating the 30kph signs in Shannon and Westbury. These signs reinforce the statutory speed limit and incorporate additional messages highlighting children at play and advising of a Slow Zone. The signs are more visible and enhance the safety message at the entrance to our housing estates.

