

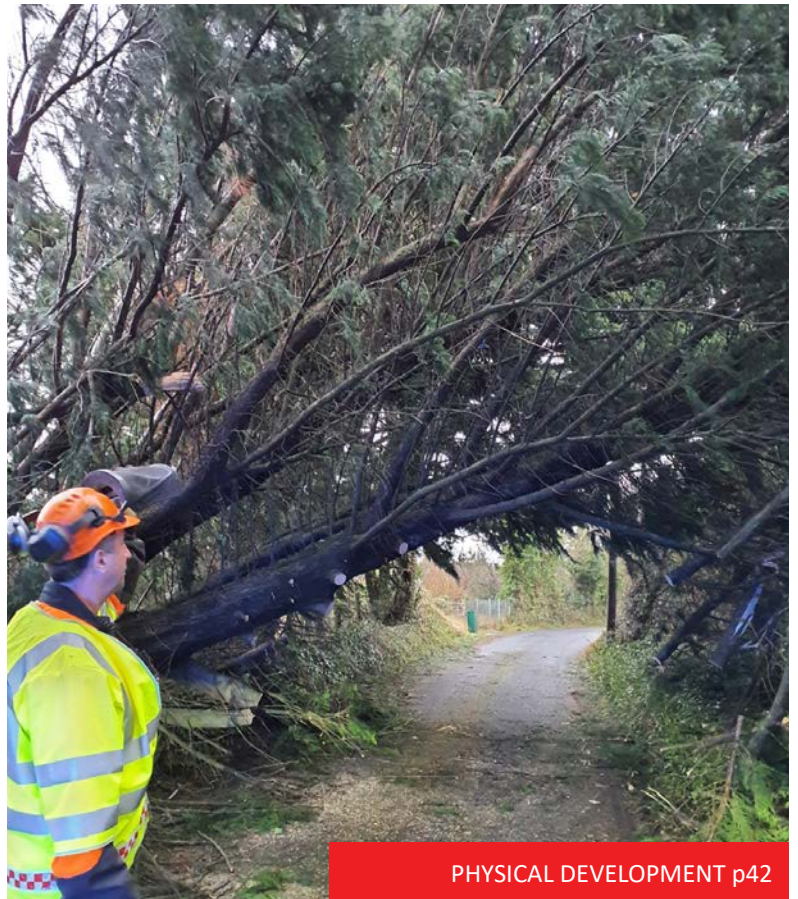


COMHAIRLE | CLARE
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

TUARASCÁIL MHÍOSÚIL ÓN PHRÍOMHFHEIDHMEANNACH

MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Feabhra / February
2025



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RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Storm Eowyn community support and resources

Clare County Council coordinated a local level response to the needs of people who were significantly impacted by Storm Éowyn.

A Storm Éowyn Community Helpline was set up. Helpline Number: (065) 6846386 (8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.)

Community Response Hubs were established across County Clare providing people with facilities for personal hygiene and power sources. These hubs were also be a source of information and supports as required, with Clare County Council having a staff presence at each of the locations between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., including weekends.

Community Response Hub Locations

- Community Centre Ennistymon (V95X8XC) – Open 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
- Kilrush Golf Club (V15W025) – Open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Lough Graney Community Centre, Flagmount/Killanena (V94 YT52) – Open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00. p.m.
- Cnoc na Gaoithe, Tulla (V95 Y5N5) – Open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00. p.m.
- Doolin Hotel (V95DE2X) - Open all day Tuesday 28th January to Thursday 30th January
- Imperial Hotel, Lisdoonvarna (V95HF5X) - Open all day Friday 31st January to Tuesday 4th February
- Cross Digital Hub (V95DXP2)- Open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Other satellite centres provided through local Community Centres and local GAA Clubs:
- Ennis - Lees Road(V95 W560) (shower facilities) Open Thursday, Friday, Saturday & Sunday 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p. m.
- Killaloe - Smith O'Brien GAA (V94 8K52) (Power, Water, Showers Contact Patrick Ahern (083 457 2389) – call to request access
- Killaloe - Clooney Quin GAA (V95 YY51) (Power, water, showers, Wi-Fi) Haulie Hannon 086 345 623 3and Martha Deegan 087 279 9978 - call to request access
- Killaloe - Whitegate GAA (V94 KX56) (Power, Water, Showers, Washer/Dryer) Contact John O'Brien 086-3846052 or Kieran Gibbons 086-4040039 - call to request access
- North Clare - Kilfenora Community Centre (Power, Water) John Hawe on 086 0817993 - call to request access
- North Clare - Tubber GAA & Camogie Club (Power, Water, Tea/Coffee, Wi-Fi)
- Shannon - Clonlara Community Sports & Leisure Centre (V94Vxd4) - Open from to 1:00 p.m. to 9:00. p.m. (Power, Water, Tea/Coffee, Showers, Wi-Fi) Betty Noonan 089 257 5725
- Shannon - Gaels GAA Club (Power, Water) Peter O'Connell 087-7784754 call to request access
- Shannon - Wolfe Tones na Sionna (V14 RX78) Open (Power, Water, Tea/Coffee, Showers) Contact Ann Marie Lally 086 867 4325 call to request access
- West Clare - Ballyea GAA (V95 TN83) (Power, Water) Contac Fiona Whelan 086 1000787
- West Clare - Killimer GAA (V15 EW29) (Power, Water, Showers) – Contact Sean 083 056 1359 or Angela 086-8417296 – call to request access

- West Clare- Inagh Community Centre (V95 YH29) (Power, Water, Showers, and Kitchen facilities to cook meals) Contact Anne 0872864995 or PJ 0868235991 call to request access

Water

A **temporary water supply** was provided by Uisce Éireann at the following locations:

- Ballyvaughan Church Carpark
- Fanore O'Donovan's Pub
- Doolin McGann's Pub
- Lisdoonvarna The Pavilion
- Miltown Malbay GAA Pitch
- Lahinch Beach Carpark
- Ennistymon Water Bottle Refill Station
- Flagmount O'Meara's Shop
- Killaloe GAA Pitch
- Cratloe Woodcock Pub

HEALTHY CLARE

Healthy Clare Funding

Funding: Following a meeting of the Health Clare Working Group, Healthy Clare will continue to support the delivery of the following core programmes for 2025.

1. Clare Sports Partnership Links Programme.
2. Clare Garden Festival.
3. Active Ennis Water Stations.
4. Clare Echo Health and Wellbeing Page.
5. Healthy Clare Calendar.
6. North Clare Meals on Wheels.
7. Health and Wellbeing Page (Local Media).

Healthy Clare Micro Fund: Programmes funded through the 2024 Healthy Clare Micro Fund in January have included the following projects.

1. **Tommy White Memorial Fund:** Delivery of outdoor walks and cookery for wellbeing.
2. **Killaloe/Ballina Active Retirement:** Delivery of fitness programme.
3. **Mid West Simon:** Outreach activity and field trips.
4. **Slainte An Chlair:** Delivery of Bone Strengthening Classes.
5. **Active Age East Clare:** Wellbeing Workshops.
6. **Kilkee Housing Association:** Chair Yoga for Older Adults.
7. **Clare GAA:** Metal Health Wellbeing Signs for Clubs.
8. **Clare Walks:** Guided walks and mindfulness for Mental Health.
9. Bridge Active: Chair Yoga.
10. **Broadford ICA:** Delivery of keep fit classes.
11. **Shannon FRC:** Mindfulness and Children's Yoga, Chair Yoga for Adults.

Others Funding Sources and Initiatives.

- **Creative Ireland Funding.** Healthy Clare was successful in securing €6,000 from Creative Ireland. This funding will be used to support the Healthy Clare Micro Fund and to further explore the 2024 'Living Well Beyond the Menopause' programme.

Clare Wellness Café: First Fortnight Event.

Healthy Clare supported the promotion of the launch of First Fortnight which took place in glór. The Peer-Led Wellness cafe in glór Ennis hosted the first event of 2025 on Monday January 13th- an open coffee morning as part of First Fortnight Festival January 2025. First Fortnight is a charity which tackles mental health stigma through arts and cultural action. The theme of the event was "What is a Wellness Cafe" and offered a chance for peers and newcomers including staff of services and organisations to meet together, hear from the development group about their experience and the benefits of attending a Wellness cafes, along with a poem and song.

Campaigns

Not Around Us

The 'Not Around Us' campaign features a central logo with two stylized figures and the text 'NOT AROUND US'. Above it is the Irish text 'COINNIGH UAINN É'. To the right is the 'hi Healthy Ireland' logo. Below the main logo is a crossed-out cigarette and the text 'I GHEB CLÁR SÁBÓ & TUBAC TOBACCO FREE CLARE'. At the bottom, there is a row of partner logos including CYPSC, Clare County Council, and the Government of Ireland. A green box at the bottom contains contact information: 'For more information contact Healthy Clare e: healthyclare@clarecoco.ie | @healthyclare'.

On the 1st January Tulla FC became a smoke free club, showing their commitment 'to reducing the use of tobacco smoking due to its proven harmful health effects by adopting a Smoke Free Policy (including Electronic Cigarettes/Vaping) at Tulla United AFC Grounds in The Cragg. The aim is to protect the health of all individuals involved with the club as well as visitors to the grounds by keeping them safe from all smoke related harm.' They were provided with Not Around Us Signs from Healthy Clare. It is hoped that more clubs will follow the example set by Tulla FC during 2025.

Free Period Poverty Initiative



Healthy Clare has completed 2024 reporting on the Department of Health Period Poverty Programme. An application has been made to the Department of Health to secure a further €15,000 to continue the scheme into 2025. In 2024, over 1,100 packets of products were distributed.

A short survey was sent out to stakeholders who support the initiative with really positive feedback.

'Initiative well received by the lifeguards.'

'It's fantastic, preventing girls from getting caught short and allowing those who can't afford products to have them.'

'Amazing feed back especially from the Youth Groups.'

'Ladies have expressed their appreciation for the products to our Staff.'

'The availability of free period products is welcomed by all.'

Healthy Clare Promotion



Newsletter: The Healthy Clare newsletter is distributed to over 300 contacts and services who in turn share amongst their networks. A further 200 copies are printed each month. The newsletter is a resource for communities to see what is going on in their areas and throughout the county.

Calendar: 2000 copies of the 2025 Healthy Clare Calendar were printed and all have been distributed.

Social Media: Healthy Clare is continuing to grow its Social Media presence across Facebook and Instagram.

Banner Bulletin: Healthy Clare has started featuring in Clare County Council Banner Bulletin with a focus on Seasonal Health and Wellbeing.

Healthy Clare welcomes the opportunity to promote community wellbeing events. Please contact healthyclare@clarecoco.ie to submit material.

CORPORATE SERVICES

Freedom of Information & Data Protection:

Previous years and 2025 to date - statistics to 27th January 2025

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Freedom of Information Requests	152	176	119	156	135	8
Freedom of Information Internal Review Applications	6	13	8	4	5	0
Appeals handled by Information Commissioner	1	4	2	4	4	0
Data Access Requests - Subject Access Request	5	6	10	10	13	2
Data Requests - Erasure Request	0	1	1	2	0	0
Data Access Requests - Third Party Access Requests e.g. Gardaí	20	27	27	29	29	1

Communications

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

12 media releases were issued during January 2025, including:

- Killaloe MD publishes first of its kind Socio-Economic Profile.
- Clare County Council Winter Maintenance Plan
- Lecture Series at Clare Museum – Stairway to Heaven: The Archaeology of Skellig Michael

A number of releases issued this month related to severe weather warnings including the Orange Snow and Ice warning at the beginning of the month and the Red Wind Warning, Storm Éowyn, at the latter end of the month.

Social Media

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

In January 2025, the Communications Office:

- Posted times 42 on Facebook, with a total of 21,854 followers
- Posted 58 times on X (formerly Twitter), total followers is over 8.8K.
- 42 Posts on Instagram followers are now 4,291

Storm Éowyn

Due to the Status Red weather alert the offices of Clare County Council were closed to the public on Friday 24th January. A Customer Helpline Support was put in place during Storm Eowyn from 8am to 8pm on Friday 24th January to logs calls relating to storm damage and coordinate responses with relevant Municipal Districts and Fire Service.

A Storm Éowyn Community Helpline was set up at Áras Contae an Chláir on Monday 27th January with five Community Response Hubs established in affected locations across the county. The helpline, 065 6846386, was active from 8am to 8pm to provide advice and direction to supports available for the duration of the humanitarian response.

CULTURAL SERVICES – LIBRARY, ARTS, MUSEUM & ARCHIVES MANAGEMENT

Clare Libraries



De Valera Library programme of events

The programming of events and activities in the new DeValera Library has commenced for 2025 with the first of 3 workshops called “Outspoken” aimed at LGBTQIA+ people in Clare and people who have migrated to live in Clare from other countries and was hosted in the library by renowned poet Sarah Clancy. This free event invited community members to explore their creativity in 2025 in collaboration with the Ennis Book Club Festival. The library was also delighted to host the launch and exhibition of a captivating series of photographs showcasing portrait images of LGBTQ+ community members from across the county. The portraits were all captured during Clare’s Pride celebrations with the aim of increasing visibility and understanding from the community. The exhibition was supported by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and the photographer was Debbie Hickey.

Young parents and their babies/toddlers can now avail of the “My Baby and Me/Hug your book” 13 week course in association with the LCETB. This free course aims to help parents who want to make reading fun and learn new ways to support their children’s literacy

skills through fun and rewarding activities. It will also help to support children’s language and literacy development as well as social and emotional needs. Week 1 of the Irish Language comic book club got off to a great start with 12 children working in Irish, learning all about different comic book styles, drawing techniques and developing storylines to produce their own mini comic book. Participants will then work together to create a web comic containing the comic strips and a visual dictionary, which will be uploaded to the Clare Libraries website and shared with Foras na Gaeilge.

Online Resources usage

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



Marketing & Social media

The digital signage screens in Scariff, Shannon and DeValera libraries which relay messages to the public were updated with events for January, Sensory Box Posters informing the public of services for those with diverse sensory needs were designed, printed and delivered to Miltown Malbay library. The library website was updated with news on the official opening of De Valera Library page. The “Ireland Reads” events were updated on the library website. Ireland Reads is an Initiative of the Government of Ireland to celebrate the joy of reading. Book reviews for the public were collated

which informs the public in their choice of reading materials and work on book promotions for the year is ongoing.

	Total Followers	New Followers	Post Reach/ Impressions	Post Likes
	8,270	70	75,900	894
	2,469	69	10,264	389
	2,152	13	1,500	16

Library Activities in Figures

Total number of in branch events	194
Total audiences at in branch events	2,809
Total number of outreach events	15
Total audiences at outreach events	148
Total number of deliveries	12
Total number of class novels issued	5



Giant lego in Scariff Library

Right to Read/ Adult Literacy for Life

The Clare Libraries “Right to Read Action” Plan 2025 was submitted, detailing all collaborative activities planned for promoting literacy by the Literacy network for the coming year.

Local Studies



Local Studies Centre has received 50 books, part of the personal collection of Paddy Hogan, Clare TD, Playwright, Barrister, Cathaoirleach of Dáil Éireann, donated by Senan Hogan. Another archival collection has been added to the Local Studies holdings.

Local Studies hosted an exhibition and talk by Cumann Merriman on Brian Merriman and the Ennis Court of Poetry on Saturday the 25th. Several contemporary manuscripts will be on display and a manuscript transcribed by Mícheál MacConsaídín in 1818 has been scanned. Mícheál MacConsaídín was also known for his wide knowledge of Irish and as a first-class scribe. He copied in neat lettering a complete replica of "Cúirt an Mhean Óiche" and Sean O'Conaills "Tuireamh na hÉireann". He is also credited with having written down much Ossianic verse, several local poems, and romantic tales from the old Irish. This digital document is available for consultation in the Local Studies Centre.

The Local Studies Librarian gave an outreach talk to St Caimin’s Secondary School in Shannon as part of their History Week. Work is ongoing on upgrading the Local Studies Website.

Clare Archives

Refurbishment works in the Archives section in Beechpark are nearly completed. The works included internal upgrades and new shelving. In January, there were the usual archival queries and there were also overseas researchers using Clare Archives. The audit of the external hard-drives is complete and the backup of hard-drives will commence.

Clare Arts Office

A total of 473 people visited the new art gallery Súil in January. Cultúrlann Sweeney, Kilkee hosted two films and three panto performances, a wildlife talk and a yoga retreat. Three radio interviews

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

took place on Clare FM and one on Scariff Bay Radio. Two artist clinics took place in advance of the Arts Grants and Short Film Scheme. One artist's webinar with clinics for artists also took place online.

The Arts Office continued to assist the locations manager of '2 Kids walk into a Bank' starring Liam Neeson with locations in East Clare as well as a cookery / food programme in Ballycuggeran. The Arts in

the Community programme continued in St. Joseph's Hospital, Ennis and in Raheen Hospital. Consultations with organisations in Shannon continued as part of the "Creative Places" research programme and three groups of Clare Youth Theatre continued to meet weekly.

Two artists residencies began – one in Shannon and one in Toonagh whilst the first "Arts and Disability" project began with Ennis Voices for Autism.

Social Media Stats:

Facebook 23/12/24-20/1/25					
	Views	Post reach	Page Likes	New Page followers	Total followers
Clare Arts Office	39,650	21,474	2913	25	3,448
Cultúrlann Sweeney	9,908	3,654	1.8k	79	1,317
EASI Studios	1	10	143	1	152
Tulla Stables Artist Studios	10	70	646	4	665
CYT - Clare Youth Theatre	-	111	543	2	584
Riches of Clare	168	68	2.8k	0	2.8k
Clare culture night	263	112	1204	0	263
Embrace Arts Programme	11	5	555	0	565
Arts In Clare Group					3,486
Clare trad Group					2,757
Súil	2,600	448	13	10	79
Instagram 23/12/24-20/1/25					
Account	Views	Followers	Reach		
Clare Arts Office	4,511	926	2,017		
Culture Night	3	225	3		
Súil	2,578	79	448		

Clare Museum

The curator has applied for funding to create a Virtual Reality exhibition in relation to the John Philip Holland exhibits held by Clare

Museum. All the events for the upcoming St Brigid's Day festival are booked out. Museum staff did an outreach visit to St Caimin's College in Shannon to assist students with their Classroom based assessments as part of the curriculum.

KILLALOE MD

Elected Members of Killaloe MD agree New Strategic Plan for Killaloe MD 2024-2029

Enhancing the delivery of services at a local level and supporting the communities, towns and villages of East Clare as places to live, work and recreate are some of the objectives set out in a new Strategy and Workplan by the Elected Members of Killaloe Municipal District.

The 'Elected Members of Killaloe Municipal District – Strategy & Work Plan' is a new strategy and work programme for the future planning, growth and development of East Clare with a specific focus on regenerating towns and villages and supporting the growth of tourism in the area and strengthening local democracy. The strategy, which follows the success of the previous Strategy

was adopted by the Elected Members at the January meeting of Killaloe MD and sets out to further align local Killaloe MD level priorities and strategic objectives with new national and county policies. This strategy sets out a shared vision between the Elected Members and staff of Killaloe Municipal District, setting out strategic objectives and priorities for East Clare and the supporting projects and mechanisms required for implementing and achieving those objectives.

"This new plan has responded to updated national policies and guidelines. Strengthening local democracy and the enhancement of services delivered to the people at Municipal District level is a key consideration. The strategy and work plan also reinforces the critical role that the Killaloe Municipal District Office in Scariff and all Local Authority staff play in the planning and delivery of services at the local level for the betterment of East Clare and the county.



Elected Members of Killaloe MD and Brian McCarthy Senior Planner and Declan Flanagan a/Senior Executive Engineer, Killaloe MD at launch of the Killaloe MD Strategy and Workplan 2029.

Killaloe MD publishes first of its kind Socio-Economic Profile.

Killaloe Municipal District (MD) of Clare County Council published a Socio-Economic Profile in January one of the first of its kind in the country. The independent report undertaken by People and Place consultants on behalf of Killaloe MD, offers a comprehensive overview of the district and draws from the latest data available from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) Census 2022 and a range of other authoritative datasets. It provides a detailed analysis of the district's demographic, economic, and social characteristics.

Launched at the January MD Meeting, The purpose of this document is to provide a solid evidence base to support future decision-making within the Killaloe MD. It is designed to serve a diverse audience, including elected members, local community groups, businesses, students and researchers and indeed the general public, as interested parties can gain insights into the development of Killaloe MD and engage more meaningfully with their community and MD

There are many positive indicators of strong and sustainable development within the Killaloe MD with consistent growth in population, increasing levels of employment and many positive social characteristics such as high levels of education attainment, broadband access and levels of working from home.

Key statistics from the report indicate that

- Population growth between 2016-2022 within the Killaloe MD was recorded at +8.8%, higher than both the county (+7.7%) and the national rate (+8.1%). Across the four MDs, only the Ennis MD had a higher growth rate at +9.8%. Over the five year period (2016-2022), the population in the MD has increased by over +1,700 persons;
- The largest settlements within the MD are Killaloe (1,666), Quin (922), Scarriff-Tuamgraney (854), Tulla (697), Kilkishen (651) and Crusheen (649);
- With 17% of the population in the County at 27,871, Killaloe MD has been growing since 1991 at a much higher rate the

both the state and the rest of the Clare. Much of this growth has been driven primarily by net migration.

Local community groups and organisations are also encouraged to utilise this profile to advocate for resources, plan community projects, and address local needs effectively, local entrepreneurs and companies able to leverage this data to understand the local market, identify opportunities for growth, and make informed investment decisions. The General Public: Residents and interested parties can gain insights into the regions development and engage more meaningfully with their community.



With the newly published Killaloe Socio-Economic Profile were left to right: Faolán Hamilton, Spatial Planner, People and Place Limited, Cathaoirleach of Killaloe MD Cllr Pat Hayes, Cllr Conor Ryan, Justin Gleeson Director People and Place Ltd, Cllr Tony O'Brien, Cathaoirleach Clare County Council Cllr Alan O'Callaghan, Cllr Pat Burke, and Brian McCarthy Senior Planner & Killaloe MD Coordinator.

Killaloe - Ballina Town Enhancement and Mobility Strategy

Killaloe Courthouse

Killaloe Courthouse, derelict and vacant for several years since its last use, has been the focus of a feasibility study led by Killaloe MD to define how best to re-use and reimagine the building and grounds. The building is a Protected Structure and its location, within the heritage town centre of Killaloe, provides a key opportunity to revitalise and reimagine the building, while also encouraging footfall and activity to this area of the town centre. The building was identified as an Opportunity Site in the Killaloe-Ballina Town Enhancement and Mobility Strategy

In January, following the receipt of Town and Village Renewal Grant funding, Hourigan Drake Architects completed a Feasibility Study on the proposed re-use of the Courthouse. The feasibility was undertaken over a number of months and included significant public consultation and engagement with Departments in the Local Authority.

The feasibility study comprised 3 main elements: 1) detailed surveys of the property 2) Property feasibility study and 3) Public realm areas to front and rear of the property

View 1 - The Courthouse and public realm

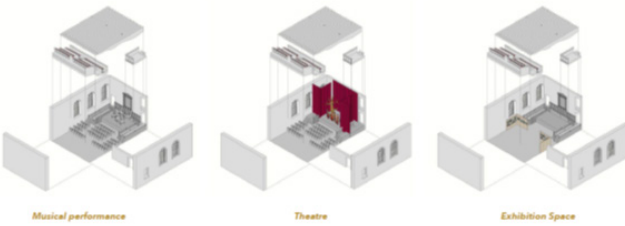


Killaloe Courthouse | Design Statement

DRAKE HOURIGAN ARCHITECTS

The Courtroom

The courtroom will have many uses. Flexibility will be designed in. Some of the uses include performance of music, theatre, comedy, school groups and film screenings. The space will also be designed to facilitate visual art exhibitions by creating a foldable partitioning system that can be opened out for temporary exhibition or folded back against the wall partition when not in use. Some alternative spaces shown here.



Musical performance

Theatre

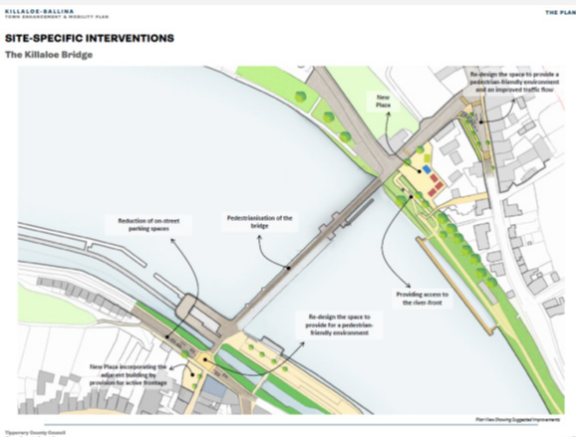
Exhibition Space

Killaloe Courthouse | Design Statement

DRAKE HOURIGAN ARCHITECTS

The feasibility study, together with an economic and financial appraisal, architectural history, QS report, and feasibility study identified the reuse of the Courthouse and an extension as a Cultural and musical venue. The proposed redevelopment and reuse of the Killaloe Courthouse as a Cultural Venue is grounded in an identified community need and a viable and sustainable financial model. The feasibility study concluded that supported by a strong governance structure and with the buy in from the local community from the outset, the project will clearly deliver lasting benefits to Killaloe Ballina and the wider area to justify the upfront investment and create long term economic and social return.

Killaloe Bridge Opportunity Site



THE PLAN

DRAKE HOURIGAN ARCHITECTS

The new Killaloe bypass and the new River Shannon crossing provide an exciting opportunity to reimagine the existing Killaloe Bridge. This now offers a once in a generation opportunity to change the operation and function of the bridge and as such it facilitates the full pedestrianisation of the bridge.

The analysis completed in support of the bypass predicts a 40% reduction in traffic using the existing bridge as a direct result of the bypass. The Killaloe-Ballina Plan proposes to reduce the vehicular dominance on the bridge and provide enhanced walking and cycling facilities in both towns and

Removing traffic using the bridge allows for the bridge surfacing to be updated to make it a pedestrian friendly space area and support the proposals at either end of the bridge, which focus on pedestrians and cyclists. In particular the proposed new arrangement will enhance the attractiveness so the historic bridge and viewpoints from the bridge to St. Flannan’s Cathedral, Killaloe, Ballina and the River Shannon for residents and tourists. The Plan indicates that once the bypass / new bridge crossing is operational, it is proposed to implement the new arrangement for the bridge – which will be subject to detailed public consultation with the local community and key stakeholders.

Following an informal consultation event in Killaloe which was well attended (SEE PHOTO), the month of January focussed on detailed consultation with Emergency Services and a number of Key Stakeholders and traders and retailers from both communities. A formal process, including community consultation, to close the existing bridge to vehicular traffic and provide pedestrian and cycle access will commence in February under Section 38 of the Roads Act.

RRDF Application

Killaloe MD are preparing an RRDF application on behalf of Clare Co. Council and Tipperary County Council for the enhancement of the public realm and a number of town centre economic development and tourism opportunity developments. The focus in January was undertaking background economic appraisals to assist in the preparation of the funding application. In addition a number of community groups and stakeholders were met. It is anticipated that an application for RRDF Funding will be made on or before 15th March.

Crusheen Mobility Plan

Following a 2nd round of public consultation including an evening event in Crusheen, during which staff from Killaloe MD and the consultant team discussed with the local community their Ideas and Emerging Options for the Crusheen Mobility Plan, in January an on-line survey concluded. The survey sought the view of residents on a range of proposed enhancements, including proposed enhancements to footpaths and streets, and possible new pedestrian crossings, cycle paths and bus shelters. Over the last week, the results of the community wide on-line survey were collated and are being assessed with a view to ascertaining the community's preferences. It is anticipated that the views of the community will directly inform the preparation of a Draft Plan due in March.



Tuamgraney Trail Head & Trail Linkage Project

Following an Application under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) approved funding of €192,000 was received for Tuamgraney Trail Head & Trail Linkage Project. The project will provide an outdoor recreation and amenity project enabling direct walkable access from the settlements of Scarriff/ Tuamgraney to the existing 12km section of Killaloe/Lough Derg/ Ogonelloe greenway and walking trail.

The successful receipt of the funding is testament to the long standing communications of engagements between Killaloe MD and local groups, in particular Tuamgraney Development Association, advocating for its completion. The project will be undertaken by the outdoor staff of Killaloe MD and in January detailed survey work of the route was undertaken in advance of preparation of plans for consent and construction.

Bodyke Public Realm and safety enhancements

The focus of the Outdoor Staff in Killaloe in January was on the completion of Low Cost Safety Works in Bodyke – see 2 photos. The enhancement of pedestrian footpath and safety works, together with junction works in the village is part of Killaloe MD’s engagement with the community regarding enhancements of the public realm in the village. January also saw the completion of survey and submission of a Part VIII application for a car-park and cycle park in the village centre of Bodyke.



Storm Éowyn

Over the weekend of 24th – 26th and throughout the following week, Killaloe MD outdoor workers undertook significant repair and road clearance of storm damage arising from Storm Éowyn. East Clare in particular experienced significant damage from fallen trees and the outdoor workers worked tirelessly to assist communities and residents to access roadways, homes, farms and businesses.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

STORM ÉOWYN

In the last week of January, the Social Directorate focussed its attention on the challenges brought by the high-speed winds on our communities by Storm Éowyn. The team and crews in north Clare faced some of the greatest impacts of the storm and worked with our communities, councillors and partner agencies to prepare for the storm and respond to the aftermath. This work continues across the north Clare area.

Our amenity facilities were closed during the red weather warning and on Saturday the Ennis Leisure Facility re-opened while our teams in Active Ennis assessed damage and removed fallen trees in Lees Road which re-opened on day two after the storm.

Our staff worked as part of the emergency telephone line teams and our Clerks of Works and technical teams assessed and responded to the numerous calls that came in through the

emergency lines relating to our housing tenants – it is estimated that 5% of our stock has been affected.

Damage caused ranged from a small number of properties where sections of tiles were stripped by the wind to larger numbers where one or two tiles or ridge caps were dislodged. Boundary fencing has been knocked down in a number of properties and a small number of block boundary walls were also blown over.

All calls have been assigned to contractors on the Council contracting framework for resolution with the priority to make safe in the first instance, repair roof damage as the priority and lastly to address boundary walls and other damage issues.

We continue to work to record, assess and resolve all issues and acknowledge the engagement and patience of our tenants, councillors and contractors during this period.

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

Clare County Council Housing Grants online application

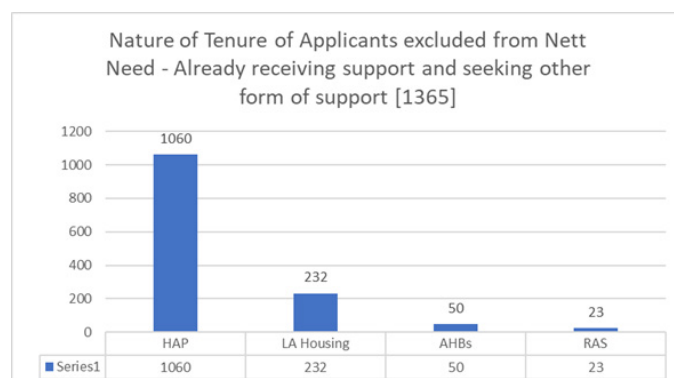
The Council has launched a new online portal for our Housing Adaptation Grant for Older People and Disabled People. The availability of the grant application online portal will greatly reduce paperwork, improve the speed of grant processing and allow applicants to see the progress of their grant throughout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

Social Housing Demand

The highest demand throughout the county remains for 1 and 2-bedroomed properties. There are 2,177 applicant households (78%) who have a requirement for this property type.

Current Housing need as of 24/01/2025

Total Households on List	2,794	
Transfer Applicants (see below)		1,365
Net Need	1,429	



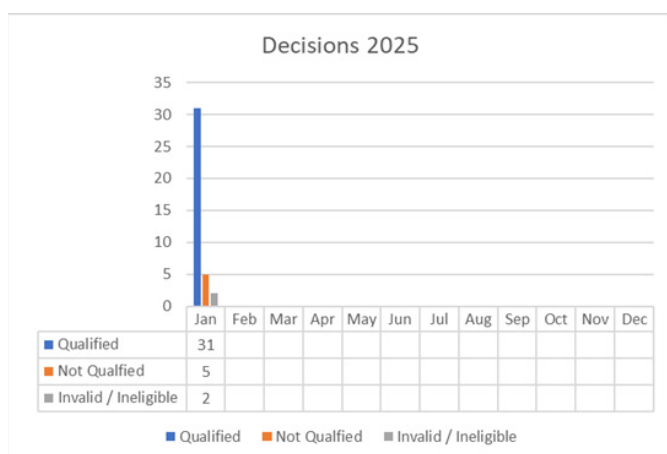
Housing need by Area of choice and number of beds approved:

Count of FIRST AREA OF CHOICE	BEDS APPROVED			
	1 and 2 beds	3 beds	4 and 5 beds	Total
ENNIS	972	184	65	1221
SHANNON	170	36	14	220
CLARECASTLE	154	26	8	188
INAGH/ENNISTYMON/LAHINCH	121	24	6	151
KILRUSH	91	26	7	124
FEAKLE/SCARIFF/WHITEGATE	80	22	3	105

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

MEELICK/PARTEEN/WESTBURY	66	24	11	101
MILTOWN MALBAY/MULLAGH/QUILTY	68	11	1	80
KILKEE/CROSS/CARRIGAHOLT	59	15	1	75
COROFIN/RUAN	64	13	1	78
NEWMARKET-ON-FERGUS	53	13	3	69
KILLALOE	49	14	2	65
LISDOONVARNA/BALLYVAUGHAN	43	13	3	59
SIXMILEBRIDGE	34	14	4	52
COORACLARE/DOONBEG	33	10	5	48
TULLA/KILKISHEN/BROADFORD	32	8	1	41
CLONLARA	25	6	1	32
KILDYSART/BALLYNACALLY	21	4	3	28
QUIN	17	4	2	23
KILMIHIL	9	4	2	15
KILMALEY	11	2		13
KILFENORA	5	1		6
Grand Total	2,177	474	143	2,794

Newly Qualified Applicants



Housing Allocations

Properties in the new social housing development at Harveys Quay, Parnell Street Car Park Ennis, have been allocated and the new tenants received the keys to their new homes on 22nd January last. This development comprises 4 no 1 bedroomed apartments. This new development is centrally located and services such as education, employment and shops are all within walking distance therefore reducing reliance on cars. Furthermore, repurposing this vacant building will make the town more attractive which in turn means more benefits to our local economy.



The new social housing development at Droichead Nua, Ballyminogue Scarriff is completed, and the tenants received the keys to their new homes on 10th and 13th of January. This development comprises 16 no apartments and 2 no 3 bedroomed houses.



Zea, Festo and Zuri Kitta receiving her keys from Kevin Kelleher Estate Manager

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



Ms Catherine Tobin receiving her keys from Kevin Kelleher Estate Manager "In accepting her keys to her new home Ms Tobin stated "I am absolutely thrilled to receive the keys to my

new home, and would like to express my thanks to the staff in the Allocations Team"

Clare County Council continues to work with the Approved Housing Bodies in relation to the delivery of social housing. Phase 3 of the social housing development located at Acha Bhile, Lahinch Road Ennis was recently advertised on our CBL site. This development which is being delivered by Cluid Housing and comprises 10 no 3 bedroomed houses. In excess of 200 expressions of interest were received for this development which the Allocations Team are currently assessing.



Tenant Purchase Incremental Scheme

There remains significant interest in the LA Tenant Purchase Incremental Scheme. We currently have 27 open cases at various stages of the process. The sale of seven properties under the tenant purchase scheme completed in 2024. It is expected that the sale of an additional 3 properties will be completed within the 1st quarter of 2025.

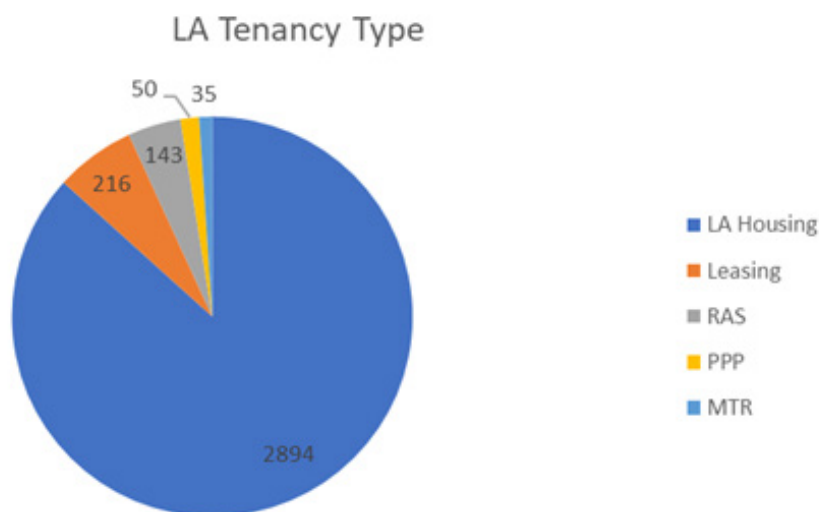
Having consulted with elected members in relation to maintaining our newer stock we have agreed that properties purchased or built since 1st January 2016 will not be available for sale under this scheme. This can be reviewed at end of current Housing Delivery Plan period in 2026. We have also agreed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

24th January, 2025			
MD	Allocated	Occupied	Total
Ennis MD	4	1,277	1,281
Killaloe MD	1	372	373
Shannon MD	2	744	746
West Clare MD	3	952	955
Grand Total	10	3,345	3,355

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



There are 142 RAS, 218 leases (123 Long term and 95 short term leases) There are 1060 HAP tenancies. Approved Housing bodies are providing approximately 1,080 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	6	1	0	10
Derelict Properties	0	0	0	0	0
Projects	6	5	1	2	14
Casual Vacancies	24	20	12	8	64
TOTAL	33	31	14	10	88

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 in 2024. A number of further Repossession Applications will be going through the Courts in the coming months.

The team continue to be extremely active in carrying out tenancy visits. 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 anti-social behaviour 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
Complaints rec'd in relation to breaches of Tenancy	64
Referrals to TSS (including Tulsa)	1
Tenancy Notifications/Warnings issued	3
Abandonment Notices issued	0
Keys collected from Casual Vacancies	4
Repossession Orders	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:

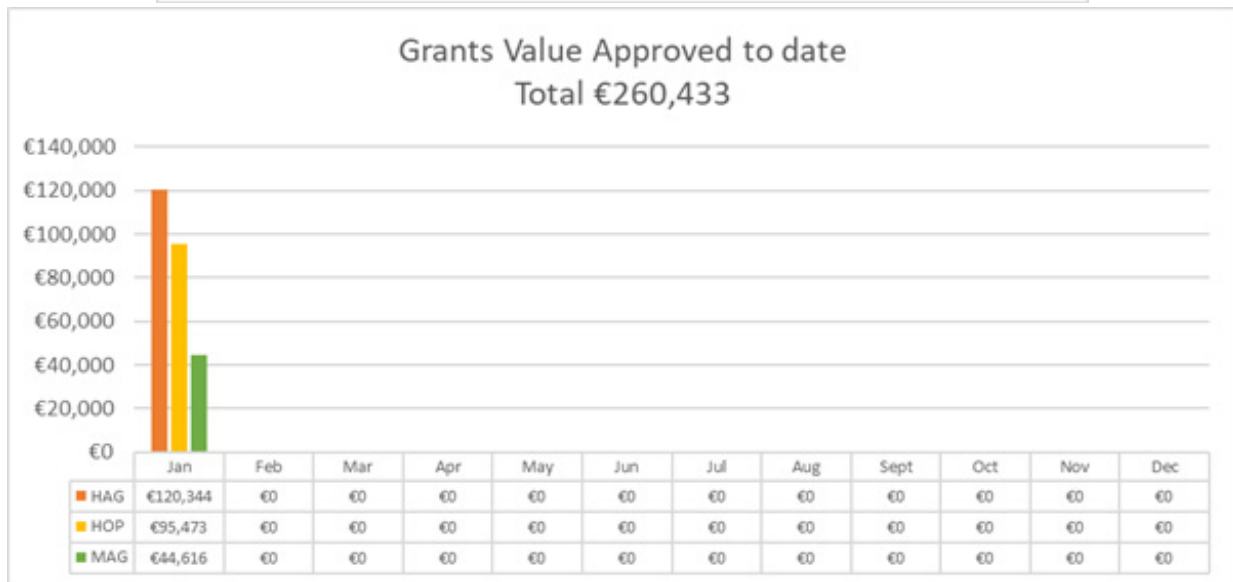
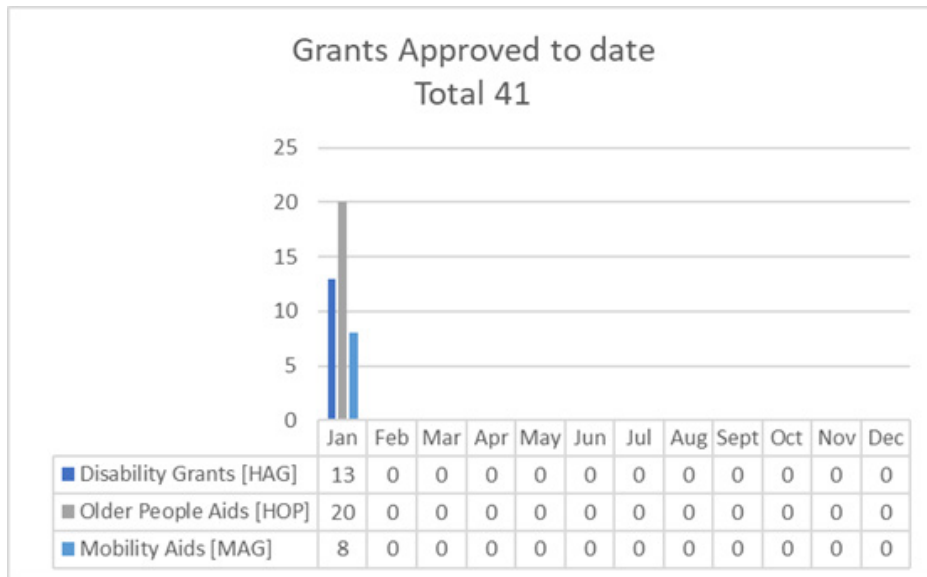
Inspections have commenced for 2025. These inspections were carried out on HAP, RTB, RAS and Leased properties, as well as in response to complaints that were received. The team continue to follow up where properties do not meet the minimum rented standards.

Housing Grants:

The revised application form for **Housing Adaptation Grant for Older People and Disabled People** is available on Clare County Council's website.

The online facility is also available at the following link: [Housing grants | Housing | Services | Clare County Council](#)

Grants Approved 2025:



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 70 Local Authority Home Loans Approved in Principle. Updated figures are outlined as follows:

1 Application received to date in 2025	40 Applications received in 2024
70 Local Authority Loans Approved	5 Local Authority Loans Drawn Down in 2022, 12 Drawn Down in 2023 and 12 Drawn Down 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/>. 2 LAPR Applications have been received to date in 2024.

Traveller Accommodation

The first meeting of the LTACC, since the adoption of the new Traveller Accommodation Program 2025 –2029, was held in January 2025 whereby the actions of the program will continue to be monitored and delivered upon. An additional €80k has been made available under the National Preferential Mobile Home Scheme for Travellers in 2025 which will be allocated in line with terms and conditions of the scheme to suitable applicants.

The Homeless Action Team

The level of complex cases presenting to the Homeless Action Team in Clare has continued to increase. Additional demands are being placed 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, Health supports, 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 Hospital discharges, Prison releases, Family or relationship breakdown, addiction or mental health concerns, dual diagnosis, and a further increase in the number of households presenting from the Travelling Community.

The level of aggression being experienced by the Homeless Action Team staff and supporting agencies staff which increased in 2024 needs to be monitored and addressed in 2025. There has also been a level of non-engagement by service users along with refusals of Emergency Accommodation Support offers in this quarter.

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 Homeless services. 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 to adopt a collaborative approach to the tackling of Homelessness.

Emergency Accommodation Status as of 10th January, 2025

	Families	Adults	Dependents	Providers
Laurel Lodge	0	13	0	1
Laurel Lodge	0	5	0	1
LL Winter Initiative	0	8	0	1
Cusack Lodge	5	8	13	1
Westbrook	0	18	0	1
Ashford Court	12	17	14	1
Clann Nua	0	13	0	1
EA Families	16	22	26	8
EA Individuals	0	29	0	9
TOTAL	33	134	53	25

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

Exits from Homeless Services:

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

During the period 13/12/24 to 10/01/2025 the following exited from homelessness:

Moved to A.H.B Housing	5
Moved to Temp. Accommodation	4
Admitted to hospital	1
Excluded	1
Residential Treatment	1
Tenancy LA	0
Returned to family/friends	1
Other	7

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).

Properties in Shannon are currently available for applicants on our online portal and an open evening was held in Shannon last week which was very well attended by interested households. The scheme on Lahinch Road will be advertised this week with the online applications portal opening on February 27th. CCC are currently engaged with 4 other developers, that have expressed interest in affordable housing, for potential inclusion on the scheme.

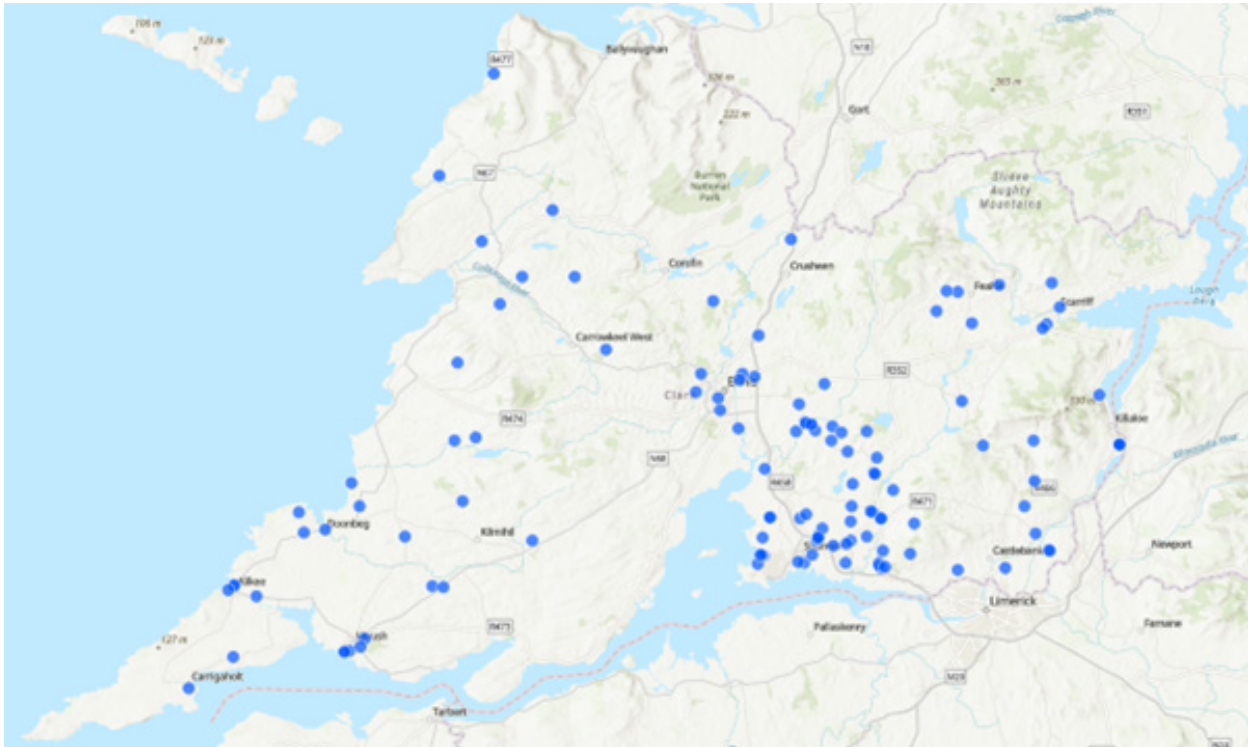
There is an online information portal at <https://affordablehomes.ie/> providing general information to the public with regards to affordable housing.

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

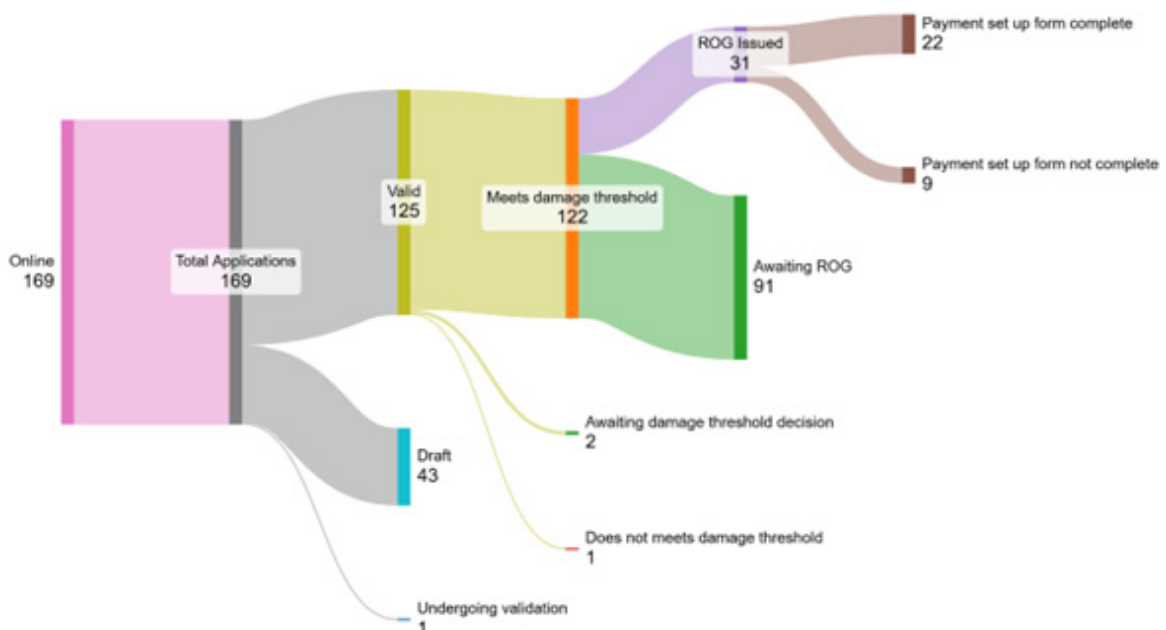


Applications to the scheme can be submitted on-line through our website. The website includes supporting information to further assist homeowners regarding the application process. Clare County Council DCB Team have also included a video on our website called "how to make on application" to further assist 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 31 Remedial Option Grants, with the total value of €9.19m awarded by the housing agency and are awaiting input from the Housing Agency to further process 91 applications with grant amounts to follow.

DCB Application Flow Chart



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CCC intend to hold further information evenings in 2025 to target people with limited digital resources and/or capabilities, to assist them further in making an application and other elements of the DCB application process.

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:

Housing capital schemes are progressing well and are at varying stages of design and construction across the County Clare. Doonbeg and Gort Road projects are under construction and these projects are continuing to progress well. Other capital projects are expected to commence in Q1 2025.



Progress on Doonbeg housing development



Progress on Gort Road housing development

Approved Housing Bodies

The Approved Housing Bodies continue to work towards the delivery of an ambitious programme in 2025. 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.

SHIP Capital	No. approved	Current stage	Start Date	Completion Date
Main Street Clarecastle	1	Under Construction	Q1 2024	Q2 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	Q2 2025
Main Street Clarecastle	7	Turnkey – Complete	Q2 2024	Q1 2025
Béal an Inbhir, Kilrush	28	Turnkey – Under Construction	Q2 2024	Q2 2025
38 St Patrick’s Terrace, Kilrush	1	Under Review	Q2 2025	Q4 2025
Gort Rd. Ennis	20	Under Construction	Q3 2024	Q4 2025
Doonbeg Lands	8	Under Construction	Q4 2024	Q4 2025
Shallee Drive / Cloughleigh Rd	5	Await Stage 4 approval by DHLGH.	Q1 2025	Q1 2026
Back Road, Kilrush	12	Await Stage 4 approval by DHLGH.	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
Drumcliff Rd, Ennis	26	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH. S179A under judicial review	-	-
Subtotal	151			

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Approved Housing Body Projects	No. approved	Current stage	Start Date	Completion Date
Acha Bhile, Lahinch Rd., Ennis (Cluid Hsg. Assoc.) CALF Turnkey	10 (Phase 3)	Under construction	Q1 2024	Q1 2025
Millbank, Roslevan, Ennis (Co-Operative Hsg. Ireland) CALF Turnkey	10 (Phase 2)	Under construction	Q2 2024	Q3 2025
Loughville, Ennis (Tuath Housing) CALF Turnkey	34	Under construction	Q1 2024	Q3 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	Q1 2026
71 Shannon Heights, Kilrush (Sophia Hsg. Assoc.) CAS Renewal Const.)	1	At procurement stage	Q2 2025	Q1 2026
Bruachlan, Westbury (Cooperative Hsg. Ireland) CALF Construction	22	Planning granted	Q1 2025	Q1 2026
Subtotal	92			
Total	243			

UKRAINIAN SERVICES TEAM

The CSO figures show there were 612 Temporary Protections granted nationally in the past month with an average of 22 granted per day, the number of new arrivals into the Country has reduced by 178 people compared to the weekly figures outlined in the previous Monthly Management Report. There are currently 5,117 Ukrainian Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTP's) living in County Clare, representing a decrease of 178 people in the County compared to figures released previously. There are 1,445 people accommodated in 26 multi-occupancy facilities located throughout the County - this reflects a decrease of 107 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 it's launch in November 2022, we currently have 257 homes offered resulting in an increase of 2 properties compared to figures released previously. We currently have 2 new properties offered that will be available during the month of February. To date our Matching & Relationship Manager has facilitated the accommodation of 506 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 in early 2025.

LOCAL AUTHORITY INTEGRATION TEAM

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.

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, childcare 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 on integration@clarecoco.ie
22nd January LAIT organised a meeting with the Irish Red Cross, Offer a Home, and LAIT to discuss ways forward for future collaboration and to support any families resettled by the Irish Red Cross in the County.

30th January LAIT TEAM are collaborating with Intreo (Department of Social Protection) and Shannon Chamber in delivering a recruitment resource event which for companies seeking to acquire new talent in a cost-effective way and why they should consider linking with Intreo, a public employment service operated by the Department of Social Protection which offers employment services and support to employers to build a more skilled, diverse and inclusive workforce at minimal cost. This event will also include an introduction to the Local Authority Integration Teams (LAITs) and their role in the Community Integration Forum, and in supporting people living in IPAS accommodation find and use local services, such as healthcare, education, employment, and community activities. This event is being hosted by Shannon Chamber in EI Electronics in Shannon.



SPORTS & RECREATION



Active Ennis Leisure Complex

Gym & Pool Report

Membership January Special offer

Our "New Year! New You!" membership campaign launched in December proved highly successful throughout January. The initiative offered competitive dual-tier membership options: Three-month membership at €120 and Twelve-month membership at €380.

January's membership drive aligned with our revenue objectives while maintaining competitive positioning in the local market. The tiered pricing strategy successfully attracted both short-term and annual membership commitments.

Healthy Clare Blog

We issued two blog posts to the healthy Clare newsletter for January, "Benefits of strength training for bone health" and "What are Macro and Micronutrients".

The Banner Mile

Insert image the banner mile

The Banner Mile Swim Challenge program began in January and has shown positive engagement this month. The program is being actively promoted through social media channels and emphasises building swimming confidence, structured training progression and gives participants professional training.

Schedule & Delivery

- Training sessions are conducted every Wednesday at 8pm
- Program runs through to March 12th, 2025
- Sessions are being delivered across multiple locations:
- Shannon Leisure Centre (Tues 9am-4pm)
- Lahinch Leisure Centre (Wed 8am-4pm)
- Ennis Leisure Centre (Thurs 8am-4pm)

Storm Éowyn

In the wake of the red weather alert issued due to storm Éowyn our facilities fortunately experienced no structural damage. However, there were many fallen trees particularly in the Lees Road facility. In The Active Ennis leisure facility, there were two fallen trees while in Lees Road six trees had fallen across the main entrance and numerous others across

the walking paths in the wooded area.

The teams responded quickly to assess the facilities and after the assessment of Ennis Leisure and the cordoning off of the trees the facility re-opened the day after the storm. For Lees Road the staff planned works and cleared section-by-section, allowing the facility to partially re-open on Sunday the 26th of January – We were fully re-opened by Wednesday 29th with all the paths cleared.



Football Report Active Ennis Leisure Complex.

Total Footfall was 14414 for December down 38% from November (22957). The average Footfall per day was 465 down 40% compared to November (765). The highest total recorded footfall was on Saturday December 7th (765). The lowest footfalls fell on the 24th 25th and 26th of December due to the facility being closed for Christmas. The overall lower footfall can be explained by closure and shorter hours during the holiday season and less swimming lessons taking place.

Lees Road

Lees road had 12,682 vehicle entries to the park in December which was a decline compared to November (18000) and saw an average of 409 vehicles per day.

Kilrush

January saw the completion of new sports facilities in the Kilrush facilities MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area). The installation features a well-maintained tennis court complete with properly installed tennis nets and posts. A basketball/football area was also installed

Facility Features

Tennis Court

- Professional-grade court with regulation line markings
- Sturdy net installation system
- High-quality synthetic surface

Multi-Sport Area

- Integrated goal posts for football/other sports
- Fenced perimeter for safety
- Floodlight posts visible for evening use

www.activeennis.ie www.activekilrush.ie

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



ESF+ Sport4Empowerment Programme

General update on your operational plan:

- The Pilot with Swim Ireland continues: The 7 Traveller men completed the initial lessons, mixed ability within the group; a further 4 lessons are required to bring 2 up to an equal standard. Still need to get pool time suitable to the group.
- The pilot project in Lisdoonvarna targeting Ukrainian Refugees in conjunction with Weightlifting Ireland is going to be expanded. Currently one iteration with a group of cancer survivors who formed a Dragon Boat club with Clare Sports Partnership assistance will be the first group this will now commence on 12th February.
- Couch to 1Km commencing 21st Jan for Housing First Group.
- Fabio has commenced his work experience with Clare Sports Partnership, and through this experience, I hope to empower him to merge his personal talents and knowledge of the community to co-design a programme specifically for the Roma community. After focus groups with Roma Youth we have designed a Yoga (Namaste Yoga Ennis) for the teen girls and Strength and Fitness for Boys (with Spartan Fitness) – aiming for a late January start. Many of the Roma community leave Ennis for the Christmas period and its lead up to return to Slovakia/ Czech Republic.
- Further liaising with GAA Games to develop an adult introduction to GAA aimed at International Protection Applicants. Designing an introduction to GAA for Adults. The ultimate aim is to create a football team comprised of 'New Communities', with an exhibition game in Cusack Park. Going to join CLDC and CISC on their outreach to gauge interest and find a suitable location to host. Still progressing – gathering expressions
- Have been approached by GAA to run a Cul Camp over the Easter for IPA's children, Sponsored by Kelloggs. Will be coordinating 3 other camps via ESF officers in other counties for same cohort. Meetings with Hartnell Wilson – Social Impact Communications for GAA/Kelloggs about finalising details.
- Research Funding – The collaboration with Clare Haven on the 'Participatory levels of Children from domestic violent household in team sports' is being proposed to their board and they are considering ethical concerns.

- Liaising with Clare Traveller CSP to do 'walkability audits' from traveller-specific accommodation using the National Roads Authority templates - 4 completed.
- A formal referral system to the ESF+ role from SICAP, Local Area Employment Service, Employability, Traveller CPD, Focus Ireland, and Probation Service has been initiated. This is for individuals who present to these services, have had training, are interested in training, or need support getting active/sport again. 12 clients have been referred and met so far. This will be expanded to include the Links Worker client base and internally referred.

Active Communities (Walking/Running/Cycling/ Swimming):

1. **Bike Week 2025 Event Application:** Bike Week 2025 application for 2025 closed on Wednesday 11th of December for Schools, clubs, and communities to submit their proposed events. There was a total of 17 applications submitted.
- **Swimming Initiatives:**
 - **Banner Mile for January:** The Banner Mile event, aimed at swimmers of all abilities, sold out within 24 hours. The Banner Mile is on in three locations: Shannon, Lahinch, and Ennis.
 - **Shannon Swimming & Leisure Centre:** Started on 7th January 2025 for 11 weeks, at 7:45 PM. 18 people registered
 - **Lahinch Leisure Centre:** Started 8th January 2025 for 10 weeks, at 8:00 PM, 12 people registered.
 - **Active Ennis:** Started 9th January 2025 for 10 weeks, at 8:00 PM, 12 people registered.
- Lahinch is also considering hosting the main swimming event in March 2025.
- **Step Into Clare:** Winter Walking Programme commenced on Saturday 21st of December for 4 weeks over the Christmas period! 18 people registered and choose their own distance to walk at their own pace & in their own time.

Community Sports Hubs:

1. **Shannon Sports Hub:**
- **Teen Girls Introduction to Boxing Programme:** A boxing programme for teenage girls commenced on 18th November 2024 and finished up on the 16th December 2024 at Shannon Boxing Club.
 - **Shannon FRC Homework Club:** I attended the Homework Club activity evenings at the Shannon Family Resource Centre on Monday Tuesday, 3rd December. The sessions involved team-building activities and games, offering students a chance to bond and socialize in a supportive environment.
 - **HSE Health & Wellbeing**
I attended the HSE health and wellbeing day at Wolfe Tones GAA club in Shannon. I represented Clare Sports

Partnership at a stand on the day & I instructed a strength & conditioning workshop for 15 people on the day.

2. Kilrush Sports Hub:

I had no programmes on in Kilrush over the Christmas period however I started organising for January 2025.

- **2025 Programmes:** Three programmes are planned for early 2025:
 - **Taekwondo for Women 18+:** Commencing 14th January 2025.
 - **Couch to 5K:** Run by West Clare Tri Club.
 - **Strength and Conditioning Programme for Parents at St. Senan's:** Originally scheduled for mid-November, now rescheduled to 9th January 2025.

Ethnic Minorities:

1. Karate Classes for Ukrainians:

- **Anastasia from Northwest Clare FRC** is submitting an invoice for **€300** to cover the facility hire for the karate classes for Ukrainians in Ennistymon.
- **Ukrainian Integration Support Fund:** A funding application has been developed for ethnic minority groups, particularly Ukrainians. This initiative will support physical activity programmes and provide exercise equipment to enhance the integration of Ukrainians residing in the area.
 - Funding available: Up to €150 per applicant.
 - The goal is to expand outreach to more ethnic minorities and design further integration-focused programmes.

123 Move with Me Initiative:

1. Update on 123 Move with Me:

- **Train the Trainer Scheme:** On 26th November 2024, I met with Rachel from Limerick Sports Partnership to develop the Train the Trainer Scheme. This programme will focus on equipping key workers and healthcare professionals to deliver physical activity initiatives.
- **Equipment Packs:** I am reviewing the current stock of equipment packs, ensuring their contents are suitable for upcoming projects. We are considering an initial rollout of 30 packs per LSP to facilitate training for key workers and primary healthcare projects.
- **Scheduling Meeting:** Rachel and I will meet with John & Phelim in mid-January to finalise the presentation and delivery details for the programme rollout.

Meetings:

I attended 2 meetings in December South Clare CFSN meeting on the 3rd of December in St Caimins in Shannon & the Traveller interagency meeting on the 4th of December in the Clare Education Centre.

Sports Inclusion

- Inclusive gymnastics with Ennis Gymnastics Club has changed to Monday / Tuesday evenings. 70 children

attend these sessions

- Eire Og / Corofin GAA and Wolfe Tones GAA All-stars Inclusive Clubs are now running outdoor sessions for over 40 children with a disability
- Parteen Meelick have started their All-Stars inclusive club journey with CSP, which will be developed in the months ahead.
- Derg AC have received funding through Dormant Accounts SIDP for an inclusive Athletics and Cycling Programme
- Clare Comets basketball all-stars continue to run their indoor sessions on Saturdays in Ennis National School
- Both Derg AC (Saturday mornings) and Tulla AC (Thursday evenings) continue to run sessions for over 40 children with a disability.
- In conjunction with Clare Co Co and Movement Experts Ireland, Clare LSP is running an inclusive whole-school physical activity programme
- Following the success of the autism programme with West Coast Surf Club, we are investing in a wheelchair-type surfboard for people with a physical disability. In the coming months, we plan to upskill and train volunteers, with the aim of having new participants in the water by April 2025.

Older Adults

- The weekly exercise classes that support our tutors in delivering to over 300 older adults in County Clare are on-going
- Banner Balance (a falls prevention programme) for older adults continues to run weekly with 12 participants in conjunction with the HSE.
- Work is continuing to engage with active retirement groups across the county; new two active engagement groups (Clonlara) will have physical activity built into their weekly meetings thanks to CSP

Outdoor Recreation:

- The December CORC meeting was held on 12/12/24. We received a full update from Humphrey on the what the draft plan was looking like and the emerging themes. It created an engaging and lively discussion on many varied points including the challenges and strengths and weaknesses of Clare. A consensus was reached on some major points. The draft plan was expected to be sent out the following week.
- The draft plan and discussion document has been sent to the committee in early January for preliminary feedback before a draft goes out to the public and stakeholders that have yet to consult.
- The next meeting is Thursday 30th of January to comment on the draft discussion documents.

Schools:

- Borrowing of playground markings and sports hall

athletics packs by primary schools will resume in 2025

- Badminton Shuttle Time course delivered by Badminton Ireland took place in Colaiste Muire, Ennis on Dec 4th. 22 girls participated in this course
- Delivered an Active Storytime workshop online for Galway LSP on the evening of Dec 4th
- Badminton Shuttle Time course delivered by Badminton Ireland took place in Scariff Community College on Dec 5th. 22 students participated in this course
- Pilot primary school Cricket programme delivered by Munster Cricket in St. Senan's primary school in Kilrush concluded on December 3rd
- TY Sportshall Athletics programme began in St. Joseph's Secondary School in Spanish Point concluded on Dec 19th

Community Youth: (Teen boys/Teen Girls)

- Teen boys and teen girls programme will resume in 2025

Website/Social Media

- Website kept up to date
- Social media posts being scheduled/shared as required
- Attended the final Communications meet up on December 12th

Men on the Move:

- Kilrush Men on the Move programme took place during December where 10 men took part for 6 weeks with 2 sessions per week. The participants were then offered a space in KFitts follow on Men on the Move programme.
- Kilkee Men on the Move programme took place in Evan Garvey Fitness during the month of December again for 6 weeks with 2 sessions per week. The male participants were introduced to the fitness class Hyrox during the programme and many of the participants have signed up to the follow on Hyrox classes.

Women in Sport:

- The Women in Sport Leadership course continued with 2 more workshops taking place around the topic of Sport Psychology with Nollaig O Sullivan. The ladies discussed positive mental health techniques and explored areas around female athletes and coaches in male dominant settings. All the ladies enjoyed the workshops. The ladies will continue on their course with in-person workshops scheduled to take place in January.
- St Josephs Secondary School in Tulla completed a Her Moves Yoga workshop in partnership with Zara from Namaste Yoga. 35 girls took part in the event.
- The Her Moves Teen girls wellness event which was due to take place in December was postponed due to the red weather warning and will now take place on January 18th.

Club Development:

- We were in contact with multiple clubs over the course of the month of December to discuss the possibility of collaborations between clubs, communities and ourselves on various programmes. Some suitable programmes were identified such as couch to 5 k programmes, try it out sessions for teen girls and women in sport programmes which could be ran during the spring.
- There has been a further 2 applications for the ad hoc club grant. We have compiled a document outlining each project which will be brought to the team for discussion at the January staff meeting.
- Safeguarding 1, 2 and 3 courses were organised and advertised out for the coming months, with the first course already reaching full attendance.

West Clare Links Project:

- The community-based women and men on the move programmes continued for the month of December. 3 of the programmes finished up before Christmas and a follow on post exercise mood and substance use survey was then sent to all participants. We are still collecting the data from the final programmes which will then be compared to the pre-exercise survey results.
- A community-based yoga programme in partnership with the West Clare Family Resource Centre and Celia O Grady Yoga began in December and will continue until the end of January. The programme is aimed at people over 50. The programme could take 12 people and was fully sold out within 2 days.
- Two more of our referrals decided to join community-based programmes including the new yoga programme.

NORTH CLARE LEA

Clean up following Storm Éowyn

Outdoor crews were mobilised right throughout the weekend of 25th & 26th January to deal with fallen trees throughout North Clare arising from the aftermath of storm Éowyn. Before and after works at:

Lisdoonvara



Tubber



New Quay



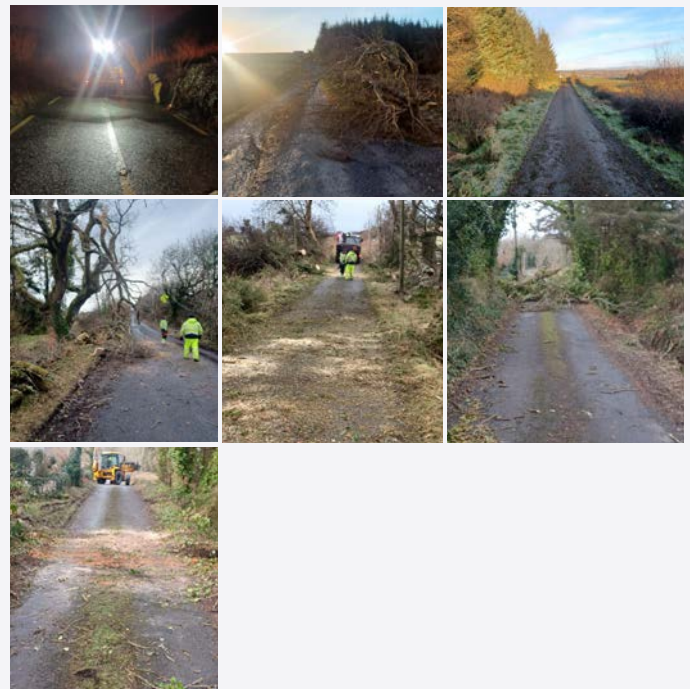
Dysart



Maurice Mills



Ennistymon & surrounds



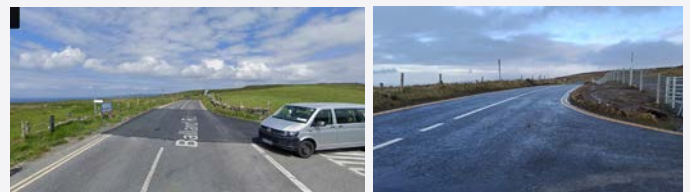
Liscannor Pier

Repair works have commenced at Liscannor Pier to deal with substantial storm damage caused



Low Cost Safety Scheme

Luogh South Doolin before & after



North Clare Integrated Transport & Traffic Plan

The North Clare LEA have been very proactive on continuing on delivering on objectives in order to improve Transport & Traffic related issues in North Clare.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

January has been a challenging month due to weather events which necessitated in the closure of the attractions. In spite of these challenges the team regrouped, and business continued at the attractions.

The Clare Collection

VIP Canadian Travel Professionals visit County Clare



Visit Clare was delighted to host CG Journeys, together with Tourism Ireland, Delta Airlines and Absolute Ireland Travel on this exclusive FAM trip to Ireland for Canadian travel professionals. The group spent 2 days experiencing attractions, accommodation, experiences and dining in Clare.



Bunratty Castle & Folk Park warmly welcomed the group of Canadian travel professionals to the visitor experience this month. Guests were treated to a captivating private tour of the historic Bunratty Castle, followed by a delightful exploration of the vibrant Folk Park. Throughout their visit, they were entertained by the park's talented animation team, who brought the past to life with engaging performances and demonstrations.

Immerse Yourself in Medieval Magic: Special Offer on Bunratty Medieval Banquets



For a limited time, Bunratty Castle & Folk Park is delighted to offer a discounted rate on tickets to its world-famous medieval banquet. On selected dates throughout January and February 2025, step back in time and experience a truly unique evening at the iconic Bunratty Castle. Begin your journey with a welcoming goblet of mead before entering the grand banquet hall for a sumptuous four-course feast. As you dine, be enchanted by the captivating songs and music of the talented Bunratty Entertainers. Ticket includes a pre-dinner reception, a four-course meal, house wine, and an unforgettable show. For more information and to avail of this special offer visit www.bunrattycastle.ie

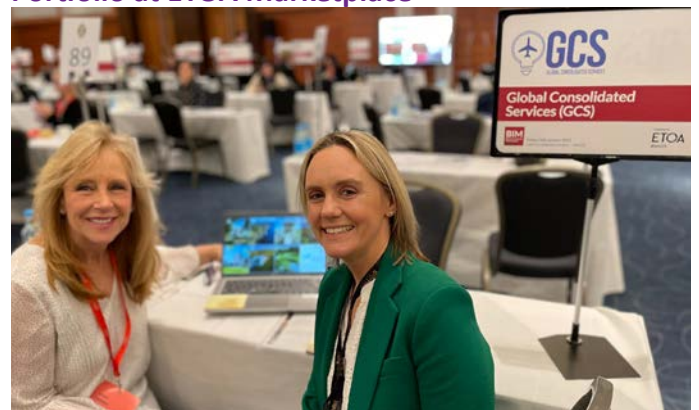
Clare Tourism Development Showcase County Clare in Glasgow



This month, Clare Tourism Development joined a delegation of Irish tourism businesses in Glasgow, to participate in Tourism Ireland's Celtic Connections Workshop. This B2B event brought together influential tour operators, travel agents, and renowned travel and lifestyle journalists from Scotland, the north of England, and across the United Kingdom.

The workshop provided a valuable platform for Clare Tourism Development to connect with key industry players, foster new relationships, and showcase the unique charm and allure of County Clare to the UK market.

Clare Tourism Development Showcases Vibrant Portfolio at ETOA Marketplace



Clare Tourism Development had the pleasure of showcasing its diverse portfolio of attractions at the esteemed ETOA (European Tour Operator Association) Britain and Ireland Marketplace which took place in London this month.

This event provided a valuable platform to reconnect with valued trade partners and esteemed industry colleagues. It was an opportunity to share the exciting developments and innovative plans that are enriching the visitor experience across the Clare Tourism portfolio.

Tourism Ireland Marketing Plans 2025 Launch



C Gleeson, F McKenna & Deirdre O'Shea at the Tourism Ireland Marketing Plans Launch

Members of the Tourism Development Directorate attended the Tourism Ireland event in Dublin on Tuesday, 14th of January where Tourism Ireland launched details of their marketing strategy and plans to promote the island of Ireland overseas in 2025. The event consisted of a range of speakers providing incredible insight into the opportunities for 2025 and the key figures from 2024. One-to-one networking meetings took place with Tourism Ireland representatives discussing potential opportunities for Clare Tourism sites in the coming year.



Laurie Skelton, Digital Marketing Executive Clare Tourism West, Sharon Malone, Assistant Sales & Marketing Manager Clare Tourism West and Northwest and Alan Kiely, Digital Marketing Executive Clare Tourism Northwest in attendance at the launch of Tourism Ireland Marketing Plans 2025.

CMT Travel Trade Workshop Stuttgart

The CMT Travel Trade Workshop in Stuttgart is the world's largest public event in the tourism and leisure sector, held annually in January. Melanie Lennon, Sales & Marketing Manager of Clare Tourism Development attended the event from the 18th to 20th of January representing County Clare, its breathtaking landscapes, rich culture and the Clare Collection. The main focus of the CMT is on showcasing the latest trends and offerings in tourism and leisure. Visitors to the event showed a keen interest in travelling to Ireland in 2025.



Melanie Lennon, Sales & Marketing Manager Clare Tourism West & Northwest pictured at the CMT Trade Travel Event in Stuttgart.

Inspiring Sustainable Tourism Conference at the Armada Hotel Spanish Point



Clare County Council via Visit Clare was one of the main sponsors for the Inspiring Sustainable Tourism Conference which took place in Clare, on 23rd January at the Armada Hotel.

This annual Inspiring Sustainable Tourism Conference was a thought-provoking, educational and inspirational day with amazing speakers, panel discussions and vibrant networking opportunities. The list of speakers included Darina Allen, Co-Founder Ballymaloe Cookery School, Brendan Dunford, Founder of Burren Beo Trust & Farming for Nature, John Burke, CEO of Armada, Fiona McKenna, Sustainable Destination Development Office of Clare Tourism Development along with other inspirational speakers.

The conference provided an opportunity for Fiona McKenna, Sustainable Destination Development officer, with Clare Tourism Development DAC to update those present on the journey for Clare to secure Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) certification for Clare.



Sharon Malone, Assistant Sales & Marketing Manager, Clare Tourism West and Northwest, Darina Allen, Co-Founder, Ballymaloe Cookery School and Brigid Forde, Cliffs of Moher Experience.

Weather warnings at the Cliffs of Moher Experience

The Cliffs of Moher Experience was affected by adverse weather conditions in January 2025. At the beginning of January, the Cliffs of Moher experienced significant snowfall and black ice on site and in the surrounding areas. Due to the weather conditions, The Cliffs of Moher Experience made the decision to close for the safety of all staff and members of the public alike.



Snowfall at the Cliffs of Moher Experience.

Pilot Shuttle Bus Service at the Cliffs of Moher Experience

As part of the Cliffs of Moher Experiences’ sustainable transport plans, a Pilot Shuttle Bus Service is being introduced to serve the towns of Lahinch, Liscannor, Doolin, Miltown Malbay, Lisdoonvarna, and Kilfenora, with stops at the Cliffs of Moher Experience.

The Hop-On-Hop-Off Shuttle is a convenient transportation service designed to enhance the travel experience for tourists and locals alike. It offers flexible routes, allowing passengers to explore key attractions, towns and villages at their own pace. A tender to appoint a bus provider for this service is now live. The tender reference number is 4909943.



Expressions of Interest

Clare County Council has a requirement for bus operators to operate a shuttle between towns and villages in the hinterland of the Cliffs of Moher Experience on a pilot basis for the 2025 and 2026 tourism season.

Interested parties can view this opportunity on eTenders:
Title: Provision of Cliffs of Moher Shuttle Bus Service
Resource ID: 4909943

The pilot Shuttle Bus Service is being introduced to serve the towns of Lahinch, Liscannor, Doolin, Miltown Malbay, Lisdoonvarna, and Kilfenora with stops at the Cliffs of Moher Experience.



Expressions of interest invited for the Cliffs of Moher Experiences Pilot Shuttle Bus Service.

Expressions of interest – Irish Musicians, dancers and other artists.

The Cliffs of Moher Experience are seeking expressions of interest for talented Irish Musicians, dancers and other artists to perform on an ad-hoc basis for events and dates throughout 2025 at the Cliffs of Moher Experience.

Expressions of interest can be submitted via marketing@cliffsofmoher.ie or by post to the following address: Unit 1, Deerpark West, Cliffs of Moher Office, Ennistymon, Co. Clare. V95 FR1X. To learn more, visit: <https://www.cliffsofmoher.ie/expressions-of-interest-invited/>



Expressions of Interest Invited

Clare County Council are seeking expressions of interest for talented **Irish Musicians, Dancers and other artists** to perform on an **ad-hoc basis** for events and dates throughout **2025** at the Cliffs of Moher Experience.

Please submit your expressions of interest to Marketing@cliffsofmoher.ie by **Wednesday, February 19th 2025 at 5pm.**



Expressions of Interest invited for musicians, dancers and other artists to perform on an ad-hoc basis for events throughout 2025 at the Cliffs of Moher Experience.

Burren Ecotourism Network January Meeting

The Burren Ecotourism Network monthly meeting took place on the 22nd of January 2025. Sharon Malone, Assistant Sales & Marketing Manager Clare Tourism West and Northwest was in attendance representing the Cliffs of Moher Experience. The meeting explored winter messaging, future events, the benefits of Shannon Airport and environmental clean ups. Members of the Burren Ecotourism Network were requested to support each other’s social platforms and upcoming events for the 2025 season.

Visit Clare

Ballycuggaran, Fáilte Ireland, Platform for Growth



Works are progressing with PS Carmody Contractors for the construction of the Fáilte Ireland Ballycuggaran Sports Activity Facility on the shores of Lough Derg. Developed in conjunction with Fáilte Ireland as part of a €19m investment in similar facilities across the country, the shared community development will provide hot showers, changing and toilet facilities, secure storage, induction spaces, equipment washdown and orientation points.

The facility will be fully wheelchair accessible and built using sustainability best practices such as solar heating panels to meet ‘Nearly Zero Energy Building Standards’.

Nestled at the foot of the rolling hills of East Clare on the shores of Lough Derg, Ballycuggaran is one of only nine International Blue Flag beaches in Clare and has become increasingly popular in recent years as a location for other water-based activities such as kayaking and paddle-boarding.

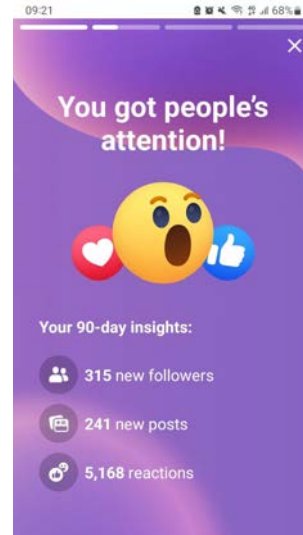
Tourism Department is supporting the Design Team on this project on the financial reporting and claims to Failte Ireland.

Reset and Refresh social media series



The paid and weekly promotions, reset and refresh series, continues across the Visit Clare platforms, driving traffic to the www.visitclare.ie website. The paid promotion has generated 80,153 views with 545 link clicks direct to the website. It will be in place to end of April.

90-day Insight on Visit Clare meta business suite:



- ✓ 315 new followers.
- ✓ 241 new posts.
- ✓ 5,168 reactions.

Visit Clare signage at Shannon Airport



Keep an eye out for our new messaging as you arrive or depart from Shannon Airport this year! This signage compliments our messaging within the airport.

We're delighted to be able to welcome so many visitors to our beautiful Banner County—over 2 million passengers passed through Shannon Airport last year!

Holiday World Show, RDS Dublin, 25th -26th January:



The Visit Clare team participated at the Holiday World Show in Dublin on 25th and 26th January, supported by local tourism providers. It was a great opportunity to promote activities, accommodation, attractions, and dining, across the County. 39% of visitors attend this event to plan their next holiday.

Walking in Clare: Discover nature's wonders on foot:

EXPLORE EAST CLARE
Treks, Tracks, and Trails for All Levels of Fitness

WALK FINDER:
EXPLORE EAST CLARE'S BEST WALKS
Find the perfect walk to suit your interests and fitness level.

WALK NAME	KM/MI
1 Ballycuggeran	4
2 East Clare Way	5
3 Kiltaloe - Balina	6
4 Broadford - O'Callaghans Mills	7
5 O'Callaghans Mills - Tulla	8
6 Tulla - Feakle	9
7 Feakle - Flaggmount	10
8 Flaggmount - Whitegate	12
9 Whitegate/Mounshannon - Scarriff	13
10 Scarriff - Kiltaloe	14
11 Cratloe Forest Park Walk	15
12 Cahermurphy Loop walk	16
13 O'Briensbridge Loop walks	17
14 Parteen Loop	19
15 Old Barge Loop	18
16 12 O'Clock Hills	20
17 Blue Route	21
18 Purple Route	22
19 Red Route	23
20 The Lough Derg Way	24
21 Limerick City to Chelera	25

East Clare is a walker's paradise, offering a variety of routes that showcase the region's stunning landscapes and rich heritage. From tranquil lakeside loops along the shores of Lough Derg to scenic riverside paths by the River Shannon, and invigorating hill walks with panoramic views, there's something for every fitness level and interest. Highlights include peaceful forest trails, scenic canal routes, challenging hill climbs with breathtaking vistas, and buggy-friendly paths perfect for families.

Whether you're drawn to short strolls, looped tracks, or long-distance treks, East Clare's diverse terrain—spanning the hills above Lough Derg, the serene woodlands, and charming villages—promises a rewarding experience. For those seeking a challenge, Moylissa, the highest point in Clare, rewards with breathtaking views across the surrounding landscape.

Content is progressing on the VisitClare.ie website and a DL leaflet to promote walks in Clare. Explore the beauty of County Clare through a diverse range of walking experiences, from scenic coastal routes and peaceful lakeside paths to dramatic clifftop views and lush forest trails. Whether you enjoy loop walks, linear routes, town strolls, beach walks, or long-distance hikes, Clare has something for everyone, including dog-friendly options.

Once complete, you will find links to a range of possibilities along with helpful ideas and tips to make the most of your walking adventure in Clare:

- ✓ Explore County Clare's Walking Trails.
- ✓ Discover County Clare with Guided Walks.
- ✓ Stay safe and walk smart in Clare.
- ✓ The Woof Guide – Four Paw Adventures.

Save the Date: Clare Tourism Together Networking Event, 6th March 5pm – 8pm

Save the date!
Clare Tourism Together 2025

Tourism Together 2025
Visit Clare in conjunction with the Clare Tourism Advisory Forum cordially invite you to join us for this year's Clare 'Tourism Together' Networking Event 2025.

Reception & Speed Networking

- What's new for 2025?
- Are there innovative ways we can address today's tourism challenges?
- How can we achieve our vision of Clare becoming an internationally certified destination in sustainable tourism?

Key Speakers & Topics
Hear from key motivational speakers to include:

Eoghan Corry
The lead travel commentator in Ireland, as well as being a historian, author and broadcaster.

Eoghan O'Mara Walsh
The CEO of the Irish Tourism Industry Confederation. Eoghan is passionate about Irish tourism and has worked in the sector for 20 years.

Sustainably Yours
Updates on the NETC Certification in County Clare.

Event Details
Where? Inn at Dromoland, Newmarket on Fergus.
When? Evening of the Thursday, 6th March, 2025, from 5pm to 8pm.

Register Online
Be sure to register by Friday, 21st February, 2025 by 5.00pm. Don't miss this opportunity to connect with local experts and the best of the industry!

Register Here!

What You Can Expect

- Connect with industry experts and your peers.
- Consider innovative ways to address challenges in the industry.
- Stay up-to-date on Clare's progress towards NETC Certification.
- In profile interview with Director of Services for Tourism Development.
- Free promotional collateral and resources for your business.
- Refresh samples of Burren Oil/Oilood, locally sourced produce as well as Wildie Irish Chocolates, hand-made sweet treats.
- And more!

The Tourism Department and the Clare Tourism Advisory Forum have issued an open invitation to the local tourism industry to the 2025 Clare 'Tourism Together' Networking Event. This event is a significant opportunity to network, gain fresh insights, and contribute to the growth of tourism in the County.

Event Overview:

- **Occasion:** Clare 'Tourism Together' Networking Event 2025.
- **Location:** Inn at Dromoland, Newmarket on Fergus.
- **Date & Time:** Thursday, March 6, 2025, from 5pm to 8pm.
- **Registration is FREE:**

Event Highlights:

- **Interactive Networking:** A welcoming reception and speed networking session aimed at fostering deeper connections.
- **Motivational Speakers:** Eoghan Corry, the lead travel commentator in Ireland and Eoghan O'Mara Walsh, the CEO of the Irish Tourism Industry Confederation as well as an update about County Clare's journey towards the prestigious Global Sustainable Tourism Council certification.

Register for FREE (Deadline, Friday, February 21st, 2025): www.visitclare.ie/tourismtogether.

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

10 Ways to Make the Most of Your Local Bus in County Clare

ESSENTIAL Tips for Using Local Bus Services in County Clare

Contact Details for Providers of Scheduled Bus Services in County Clare

EXPLORE CLARE BY BUS
Scheduled Bus Services for Visitors and Locals, Connecting You to Every Corner of Clare

We recently completed new content for the website and as a DL leaflet, spotlighting connectivity in Clare. There are over 70 of Clare's towns, villages, and hidden gems just a bus ride away. Taking the bus offers a relaxing and **eco-friendly way** to explore Clare, with countless destinations to uncover along the way. Whether you're a local rediscovering favourite spots or a visitor experiencing the county for the first time, Clare's bus network opens up a world of possibilities. Thanks to services from **TFI Local Link, Bus Éireann, Expressway**, and the **Big Green Bus**, you can journey through Clare's unique landscapes and visit charming villages and top attractions with ease.

We have linked to inspiring ways to use the bus to experience Clare's best, from iconic landmarks and local markets to hidden treasures. You'll also find links to helpful tips on using the services and a listing of the destinations accessible by bus, along with links to each service provider,

<https://visitclare.ie/bus/>

This leaflet has been circulated to each service provider for their dissemination.

KILRUSH LOCAL ELECTORAL AREA, WEST CLARE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

January weather has proven challenging for West Clare between the cold spell earlier in the month and Storm Éowyn, the repercussions of which staff are still dealing with. The response from the staff has been immense with staff working out of hours to assist in the clean-up, the response and to ensure access to the road network.

Extreme cold weather – Jan 6th to Jan 10th:

The extremely cold snap of weather between the 6th & 10th January was flagged as an Orange level weather alert. The snow & frosty conditions led to dangerous conditions for all road users, travel disruption, and animal welfare issues for farmers. While the treating of priority roads was organised by our Roads & Transportation colleagues in Ennis, crews from the West Clare MD were involved in treating areas not treated as part of the Winter Maintenance Plan, particularly roads and footpaths near community facilities such as schools, doctors' surgeries, churches etc.



Storm Éowyn

Storm Éowyn hit Clare on the night of the 23rd of January, this red level wind warning was necessitated as the storm is one of the worst the Country has experienced with wind speeds recorded at the Cliffs of Moher site showing gusts of ~180kph at 3am before the power outage. We anticipate that gusts of ~200kph were experienced in this area albeit wind speed was not recorded after the power outage. The area staff were fully engaged for the clean up operations as significant number of trees fell blocking public roads.

Schedule of Municipal District Works 2025:

In the last month the West Clare MD has continued to carry out drainage works, and road surface preparation works prior to the commencement of the 2025 Schedule of MD works.

Recruitment Competitions January

Eligibility Exercises & Desktop Shortlisting

- Administrative Officer
- Technician Grade I (Civil, Architectural & Building)
- Staff Officer
- Senior Staff Officer
- Assistant Chief Fire Officer
- Environmental Control Officer

Interviews

- Acting Senior Executive Officer
- Assistant Engineer
- Resident Engineer
- Administrative Officer - Final Interview

The following competitions were advertised:

- Senior Enterprise Development Officer
- Beach Lifeguards & Senior Beach Lifeguards
- Beach Operative Panel
- Harbour Controller - Doolin Pier
- Traffic Warden - Cliffs of Moher
- Caretaker - Traveller Accommodation Unit
- Retained Part-time Firefighters (Shannon, Killaloe, Kilrush & Kilkee)
- Acting Senior Executive Health & Safety Officer - Confined
- Plant Operator A - West Clare MD - Ennistymon - Confined

TRAINING PROGRAMMES / WEBINARS / CONFERENCES/ INFORMATION SESSIONS

JANUARY

- Basic IT Skills
- Climate Action Awareness
- Grade 5 & Analogous Officer 2-Day Training
- Grade 6 & Analogous Officer 2-Day Training
- IPA A-Z January to March 2025 Series
- Irish Language Courses - 10-Week Upper-Beginner Follow on Course
- 10-Week Intermediate Course
- Minute Taking for Meetings

Essential Skillz on-line Courses:

- Health & Safety Induction
- Slips, Trips & Falls

Health & Safety:

- Banksman
- Manual Handling - Ennis
- Manual Handling - Scariff
- Safety Health & Environment for Construction Site Managers
- Site Dumper New Entrant

Employee Wellbeing

In January the Wellbeing Hub focus was Physical Activity.

PROCUREMENT

The following Clare County Council tender competitions were published on eTenders in the period from 1st January to 27th January inclusive:

Tender Name	RFT ID	Response deadline	Procedure
Grassland Management Contract for Shannon Municipal District for 2025	4947166	05/02/2025 12:00	Open
Beechpark Machinery Yard and Site Upgrade - Mechanical and Electrical Engineering Design and Certification Services	4972402	31/01/2025 13:00	Open
Beechpark Machinery Yard and Site Upgrade - Civil and Structural Engineering Design and Certification Services required for a building and site upgrade.	4969698	31/01/2025 00:00	Open
Energy Consultant for Energy Audit Framework Agreement for Clare County Council	4948724	19/02/2025 12:00	Open
24-024 - Additional Parking at Gort Road Industrial Park, Ennis	4932031	21/02/2025 12:00	Open
Provision of Cliffs of Moher Shuttle Bus Service.	4909943	12/02/2025 13:00	Open

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Town Centre First Supporting and empowering Town Teams

Further training sessions to assist Town Teams are being organised in Kilrush, Lisdoonvarna and Tulla under the Town Centre First to build capacity. This training will provide vital support, advice and templates all geared at empowering Town Teams going forward.



Kilrush Town Team

THRIVE Ennis - Town Centre First Heritage Revival Scheme



A Part VIII Planning application was lodged by Clare County Council on 20th December 2024 to bring forward designs to regenerate/adapt The Cloister, a significant heritage building and national monument in Ennis, which will be brought back into use while addressing community needs.

The Council expects to apply for Thrive Stream 2 funding in March 2025 to bring this project to fruition. THRIVE is funded by the government under the ERDF Regional Programmes through the Southern Regional Assembly.

A draft Integrated Urban Strategy focussed on heritage is in preparation and stakeholder engagement sessions will be held in late February once a draft is available. This Strategy will be a good opportunity to highlight potential heritage buildings that could benefit from future Thrive funding streams.

FORWARD PLANNING

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 the Department of Rural Regeneration and Community Development with respect to due diligence on the projects funding allocation. In addition, Enterprise Ireland are concluding their analysis of the Smart Regions funding scheme to establish if the Kilrush Maritime Training Centre project can apply to this scheme to cover the remaining funding gap.

Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary

Clare County Council acting as Lead Authority on the SIFP Steering Group and Environmental Sub-Group are currently working on the preparation of a Request for Quotation for the preparation and delivery of an anthropogenic background noise map for the Shannon Estuary. The preparation of this map is timely given the presence for the first time in Irish recorded history of a humpback whale in the Shannon Estuary. The first sighting of the whale was on November 26th, 2024, where it was originally filmed off the Shannon Ferry in the waters between Killimer and Tarbert and the following day the 27th off Ardmore Point, Co. Kerry. The whale continues to thrive in the estuary where it can be seen breaching, making blows and feeding. The Shannon is a busy estuary for large cargo ships carrying thousands of tonnes of material to and from the terminals located in the estuary (Moneypoint, Aughinish, Foynes and Tarbert) this is in addition to the Tarbert to Killimer car ferry together with pleasure boats all which use the waters. This can make for a very noisy underwater environment for marine mammals with anthropogenic noise proven to impact marine species through temporary or permanent threshold shift. Even at low frequency (e.g. 35khz) you can have Temporary Threshold Shift (TSS). Shipping noise is continuous and effects communication therefore there has never been a more important time to understand the background noise levels within the Estuary.



Humpback Whale in the Shannon Estuary Source: Clare IWDG Marine Planning

The Draft Programme for Government 2025 Securing Irelands Future addressees the issue of accelerating renewables with a commitment that this government will; Fast-Track Offshore Wind Development by prioritising the publication of Designated Maritime Area Plans (DMAPs) and ensure the relevant agencies are sufficiently resourced to accelerate these developments. In addition, it gives specific mention to the Shannon Estuary and its role in realising the potential for renewable energy through the inclusion of a commitment to; Work to progress recommendations of the Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce central to renewable energy planning, recognising the region’s potential. Delivery of these actions will be central to realising the vast potential for Renewable Energy off the west coast of Ireland which can be serviced through the Shannon Estuary.

Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT)

The Residential Zoned Land Tax came into effect on 1 February. The purpose of the RZLT is to activate land that is zoned and serviced for residential or mixed use to increase housing sup-ply and to ensure the regeneration of vacant and idle lands in urban locations. Local authori-ties are responsible for the preparation of mapping and identifying lands considered ‘in scope’ and the Revenue Commissioners are responsible for the collection of the tax. RZLT is an annual tax charged at 3% of the market value of ‘in scope’ lands. The Final RZLT Map for 2025 be published on 31 January 2025 and will show lands subject to the tax. The RZLT an-nual review process also commenced on 1 February 2025 with the publication of the Annual Draft Map for 2026.

There is an opportunity to make submissions on both maps up until 1 April 2025. In relation to the Final Map 2025, landowners may request the local authority to change the zoning sta-tus of land included on the map. In relation to the Annual Draft Map 2026 landowners and members of the public can make submissions regarding the inclusion or exclusion of lands to the RZLT map. Both RZLT maps will be published on the Clare County Council website along with infor-mation on the RZLT and how to make a submission. Maps are also available for members of the public to view at the Council offices and libraries around the county.



Find out more at www.gov.ie/rzlt



Riailtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

CONSERVATION AND BUILT HERITAGE

Historic Structures Fund (HSF) 2025 and Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) Historic Thatched Buildings Stream 2025

The 2025 Historic Structures Fund (HSF) and Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) Historic Thatched Buildings Stream was announced by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in November 2024. The closing date for applications to Clare County Council was 17th January 2025. Applications received under both schemes are currently being assessed and will be forwarded to the Department for final approval. It is anticipated that the successful applications will be announced in late February/ March.

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	January 2025 up to & including 28/01/2025	Total (Valid) Year to date 2025
No. of Section 57 Declaration Requests received	3	3

BIODIVERSITY

‘Seeds of Hope’ Conference and ‘Return to Nature Clare Church Biodiversity Project 2025’

Clare County Council’s Biodiversity Officer has signed up six new parishes in the Diocese of Killaloe to participate in the ‘return to Nature Clare Church Biodiversity Project’ for 2025. This brings the total of parishes in Clare to 16 which includes 18 churches and community groups. An online session was hosted on the 15th of January with participating community members and parish priests and reverends in attendance. The initiative is led by Clare County Council and the six new parishes signed up to the initiative include:

- Shannon (SS John & Paul Church/Mary Immaculate Church) - Shannon Tidy Towns
- Killaloe (St. Flannan’s Cathedral Church of Ireland) - Dean. Richard Marsh and Killaloe Community
- Spanish Point (Christ Church (Church of Ireland)) - Spanish Point Community
- Quin (St Mary’s Catholic Church, Quin) - Quin Tidy Towns
- Tulla (SS. Peter & Paul, Tulla) - Tulla Tidy Towns
- Doonbeg (Church of Our Lady Assumed into Heaven) - Doonbeg Tidy Towns

On Saturday, 25th of January, Clare County Council’s Biodiversity Officer gave a number of work-shops and presentations at the ‘Seeds of Hope’ conference in Mallow, Cork. The conference was well attended with community groups from Kerry, Cork, Limerick, Tipperary and Clare present. The conference aimed to promote biodiversity actions on church grounds. The ‘Return to Nature Clare Church Biodiversity Project’ was used as a flagship project for community groups across Munster to follow and outcomes and learnings of the project were shared with other dioceses. The conference was organised by the Laudato Sí Working Group and Bishop Fintan Monahan was in attendance. The Heritage Council’s Biodiversity Officer Network is seeking to adopt the Clare Church Biodiversity Project in other counties/LA’s in 2025 including Limerick, Cork City, Galway City, Mayo, Leitrim, Wexford and Kilkenny.



Clare County Council’s Biodiversity Officer presenting at the conference held in Mallow, Cork.



Munster Dioceses ‘Seeds of Hope’ Conference

World Wetlands Day Event 2025

Clare County Council’s Biodiversity Officer has organised an event to celebrate World Wetlands Day scheduled for the 4th of February. The event will see the launch of the Clare Wetland Story Map, the launch of the new wetland guidelines aimed at community groups and landowners ‘Community Action: A Beginner’s Guide to Wetlands’ which was carried out in conjunction with the Community Wetlands Forum, Clare County Council and Monaghan County Council. The event will also provide an update on the Clare Wetland Field Survey 2024. Speakers will include Laurence Fullam of the Community Wetlands Forum, Patrick Crushell and Poppy Overy of Wetland Surveys Ireland and Barry O’Loughlin Biodiversity Officer with Clare County Council. This event is aimed at communities and landowners undertaking biodiversity actions in their locality and to promote wetlands as an educational resource.

The Clare Wetland Story Map is a new online digital interactive map that profiles ten wetland sites the public can visit and value in County Clare. It also includes a description of wetland habitats found in County Clare and a list of resources for communities, schools and landowners. The new wetland guidance ‘Community Action: A Beginner’s Guide to Wetlands’ is aimed at community groups and landowners who wish to embark on a wetland conservation project and to encourage the promotion of wetlands in their local area. This could range from including wetlands in Community Biodiversity Action Plans, undertaking a conservation project to hosting walks and talks. An update on the Clare Wetland Field Survey will also be provided by Wetland Surveys Ireland.



World Wetlands Day Event 2025

Biodiversity Project nominated for All-Ireland Community and Council Award

The 'Return to Nature Clare Church Biodiversity Project' has been nominated for this year's All-Ireland Community and Council Awards under the category 'Best Environmental/ Ecological Project'. This is main nomination representing Clare County Council at the awards ceremony which is scheduled to be held in Cork on the 22nd of February 2025. The project is led through the role of Clare County Councils Biodiversity Officer working in partnership with twelve community groups (ten parishes) and the Diocese of Killaloe to carry out biodiversity actions on church grounds in County Clare. The ten Clare parishes are: Broadford; Clarecastle; Kilmaley; Inagh-Kilnamona; Mullagh; Cooraclare; Miltown Malbay (including Moy); Kilkee; Kilrush; and Killimer. The project is funded through the Local Biodiversity Action Fund (LBAF) (administered by National Parks and Wildlife Service) and Clare County Council. The role of Biodiversity Officer is funded by the Heritage Council in partnership with Clare County Council.



Coverage of the 'Return to Nature Clare Church Biodiversity Project' nomination for an All-Ireland Community and Council award as featured in the Irish Independent (January 2025).

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT - PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The table below shows the number of planning applications processed during the month of January, up to and including January 27th. Fifty nine percent of planning applications received in January were received by electronic means.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS	January (to 27/1/25)	2024
No. of planning applications received	55	55
No. of Planning Decisions made	51	51
No. of decisions notified by An Bord Pleanála	4	4
No. of pre-planning enquiries received	15	15
No. of Section 5 applications	7	7
No. of Section 97 Exemption Cert applications (in respect of Part V of the Planning & Dev Act 2000)	1	1
Submissions received regarding Compliance	17	17

PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

January Statistics (01st of January – 28th of January inclusive)

New Complaints Received	7
New Files Opened	5
Files Closed	3
Warning Letters Issued	8
Enforcement Notices Issued	0
Legal Proceedings	0

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

- Mentoring:** LEO Clare commenced the year with a substantial demand for one-to-one mentoring support. Thirty clients were assigned expert mentors to assist them in enhancing their businesses.
- Training:** In January, LEO Clare provided an extensive array of training courses and programmes covering areas such as Starting Your Own Business, Bookkeeping, Social Media, Digital Marketing and Ideation. Approximately 90 individuals availed of these training supports during January & an additional 36 individuals attended 'Lunch & Learn' events held throughout the county.
- Productivity Supports:** With rising prices affecting all businesses, LEO Clare has various productivity supports to assist businesses offset higher input costs. In January, LEO Clare have processed applications for 3 Digital for Business, 2 Green for Business, 2 Energy Efficiency Grants, 1 Lean for Digital and 1 Grow Digital Voucher.

‘Lunch and Learn’ events

LEO Clare organised three 'Lunch and Learn' events in Ennis, Shannon and Killaloe. These sessions provided businesses with the opportunity to enjoy lunch while gaining valuable insights into LEO services, including the new Energy Efficiency Grant and the Grow Digital Voucher. The events were well-attended, with participants subsequently signing up for several support services. LEO Clare plans to host two additional sessions in February in Ennistymon and Kilrush.



Finbar Tuohy, LEO Clare, hosting a ‘Lunch & Learn’ session in Ennis in January 2025).

Showcase 2025

Businesses from Clare had the opportunity to meet buyers from all over the world this week as part of the Showcase 2025 at the RDS in Dublin. There were over 100 Local Enterprise Office supported businesses from across the country present at the event with 3 in attendance from Clare.

Rowena Sheen Jewellery, Quin Art and Siar Photography were all exhibiting at the Local Enterprise Showcase, that saw over 3,350 buyers from retailers across the globe attend the three-day event in Dublin looking to secure new sales & partners for the year ahead. This year in the Business of Craft Awards, the Sustainability Champion category was awarded to **Rowena Sheen Jewellery**, who is supported by Local Enterprise Office Clare. Rowena designs and creates unique handmade jewellery which is made from native, sustainably sourced Irish materials, in her studio in Ennistymon.



Deirdre Keating & Helen Pilkington, LEO Clare with Rowena Sheen at Showcase 2025).

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Property Transactions and Conveyancing

The Table below shows the number of property transactions completed by Property Management Unit up to 24th January 2025 and the corresponding figures for 2024.

The property market in the County continues to be quite active, albeit that there is a shortage of supply, particularly in the residential sector. The Property Management unit continues 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	January 2025	Year to date 2025	Full year 2024
Lease / Sub Lease of Property / Building			6
Licence to use property / building	2	2	14
Grazing Agreement for Lands	0	0	22
Deed of Transfer signed	0	0	9
Contract for Sale / acquisition signed	0	0	1
Deed of Right of Way / Wayleave signed	0	0	6
Deed of Rectification / Variation signed	0	0	4
Allotment Agreements signed	0	0	40

Valuation Services Framework

Following a Tender process, work is nearing completion on the award of the Framework Contract for Auctioneering and Valuation services. The award of the contract will be notified to the approved service providers.

Shannon Allotments

Due to the recent storm Darragh and storm Éowyn, repairs to fencing and fence posts are needed at the Shannon Allotments. Works will be carried out as soon as possible and consultation with the Allotment Association will be held in advance of same.

Grazing of Lands

The advertisement for the annual grazing of Council owned lands was published in January with a closing date of 27th January, 2025. Following the opening of the Tenders, grazing agreements will be entered into for an eleven month period.

DERELICT SITES

The Derelict sites team are currently dealing with 272 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 January 2025 and year 2025 to date and the comparative figures for the full year 2024. The engagement with owners has proved very positive and helpful in addressing issues.

Derelict Sites	January 2025	Year to date 2024	Full Year 2023
No. of new files opened	0	35	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	0	43	24
No. of Section 11 Notices issued - Measures required to render the site non-derelict	0	27	6
No. of files closed / property removed from Derelict Sites Register	2	26	15
No. of Notices served to Compulsorily Purchase derelict sites (CPO) (see note below)	0	7	10
No of Vesting Orders signed	0	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. The Table below sets out the status of CPOs commenced by the Derelict Sites Team since 2022 to the current year.

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 sale closed in August 2024- New owner has commenced works
		2 - works have commenced and CPO parked for now
2023	10	6 - At Vesting Stage and lodged in Tailite Éireann
		1 – CPO completed and property was sold at auction in October 2024 and approved by elected members in December 2024
		1 - Title received in December 2024 and following clear out, will be on the open market in Spring 2025
		1 - Objection received and is under appeal. Further work is needed on this one
		1 – Works are being commenced
2024	7	5 - At Vesting Stage and lodged in PRA
		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 process will be re-commenced in January 2025.
2025	0	A number of CPOs will be progressed throughout 2025.

In addition, the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund will provide funding for CPOs on a rolling basis in the town of Ennis with the objective being that these properties would then be sold on the open market. 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 has been lodged with Tailite Éireann. A particular focus on properties in the town of Ennis has resulted in a number of properties coming to market or making plans for site development.

Derelict Site Levy

Determination of valuations on the derelict sites which are on the Derelict Sites Register commenced in 2023 and notices of valuation have been issued to 18 property owners in 2024. Three owners appealed the valuation to the Valuation Tribunal and while decisions are awaited on two appeals, one appeal by an owner was 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 2025 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 23rd January 2025.

Derelict Sites Levy	January 2025	Year to date 2024	Full Year 2023
No. of properties on which the levy has been billed	10	9	0
Amount billed in respect of Derelict sites Levy	€173,950	€124,110	0
Number of properties on which valuations have been requested	3	26	8
Number of properties on which notices of Valuation have been issued to owners	5	18	6

VACANT PROPERTY REFURBISHMENT GRANT - FOR DERELICT AND VACANT PROPERTIES

The Council welcomes the inclusion in the draft programme for Government of the intention to extend the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant to 2030. If there are any changes to the scheme, the Vacant homes Team will ensure that they are communicated as soon as they are announced.

The level of approvals of the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant by Clare County Council has is at €19.87 million as at 25th January 2024 (330 grant applications approved or 66% of all applications), 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.

The Grant is making a real difference in boosting 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.

A number of walk-in advice clinics were held in late 2024 with over 50 property owners coming in to meet the Vacant Homes Team for advice regarding making their applications, information required etc. These were held in Ennis, Milltown Malbay, Scariff and Sixmilebridge. Any applicant can meet with the Vacant Homes Team in Áras Contae and 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	116	€7.14 million	37%
Ennistymon LEA	65	€4 million	20%
Ennis LEA	49	€2.9 million	14%
Killaloe LEA	60	€3.6 million	18%
Shannon LEA	38	€2.25 million	11%
Grand Total	330	€19.87million	100%

We continue to have high levels of enquiries and applications for the Croí Cónaithe Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant and have passed the figure of 500 applications in early January 2025. 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 to five weeks.

At the end of January, we have paid out €4 million to 71 property owners in County Clare who have completed works and many others are in the process of submitting their claims for payment. The final site inspections are organised and the administration of the financial and legal elements of the grant are completed. The level of claims for payment is increasing every day and the Team work closely with owners on this process.

Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan

A new loan has been launched by Government called the Local Authority Purchase and Ren-ovation 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 Refurbishment Grant to get this loan. The Housing Department will administer this loan and work closely with the Vacant Homes Team.

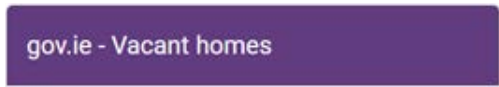
Other Points of Information

1. Changes to the grant were announced in late 2024 to be in line with the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EU/2024/1275). In order to meet the timeline in Article 17(15), the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant will no longer fund the installation of stand-alone boilers powered by fossil fuels, for new applications from 1st December 2024. This is being notified to all new applicants.
2. The breakdown of applications between urban and rural

areas has remained consistent - 56% of applications are for rural areas of the county and 44% for properties in towns and villages.

3. 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.
4. 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.

Full details of the scheme and eligibility criteria are published on the Council’s website. The contact email address for further information and guidance on the grants scheme is vacanthomes@clarecoco.ie.



ENNIS MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Following the Christmas Holidays, the Ennis Public Realm Contractor returned to site on Monday January 6th 2025 with new works commencing at the junction of Station Road and O’Connell Street along with closing out of other existing works areas throughout the town. Along with the normal day to day and various project works, the Area Staff were significantly called upon to deal with the fallout from Storm Eowyn later in the month and the consequential damage and humanitarian issues arising in its aftermath. I would like to thank all staff involved along with our colleagues across the organisation and indeed the various external agencies that we engage with in such events.

Some of the key works progressed throughout the MD area in the past month include the following:

Trip Hazard Repair & Surface Water Works

Trip hazard repair works were carried out in multiple locations around Ennis Town Centre including Lower Market Area, Tobartescain, Abbey Street and Bank Place. Other defect repair works including surface water infrastructure on Cusack Rd. New surface water infrastructure was also constructed to alleviate localised flooding concerns in Cahercalla Rd, Glenina and Cloughleigh Rd Ennis.



Illegal Dumping Clean Up’s

Having been brought to the attention of Ennis MD, our maintenance crew carried out clean ups of multiple incidences of illegal dumping in around Ennis. These areas included Lower Market St Carpark, Cappahard and Clancy Park estates. Each incident was reported to Clare County Council Environment Dept for further investigation. Some of these cleanups were co-ordinated with An Garda Siochana and local community groups.



Pothole Repair Works

The outdoor crews are continuing their schedule of road defects and pothole repair works in the Ennis area. With adverse weather conditions encountered in December and January and with more events on the horizon, incidences of road defects are likely to come to light more frequently. Our crews have undertaken repairs this month in areas including Kilrush Rd, Clon Rd Business Park,



Phoenix Court, Dalcassian Drive, Bishops court, Abbey St Carpark and Brookville estate Ennis.

Ennis MD Winter Maintenance Works

Ennis MD crews, during adverse weather conditions throughout December and January, carried out winter maintenance measures on public roads and footways which fall outside the routes as identified under the countywide Winter Service Plan. These works included cleaning of drainage gullies and salting of roads. These works extended to the Ennis town area and surrounds, and also heavily trafficked footpaths in areas of the town centre including churches, nursing homes and schools.



Traffic Light Upgrade Works – Carmody Street Ennis

Following critical failure of the traffic lights at the junction of Carmody St, O’Connell St and Turnpike Rd, civil and infrastructural works were scheduled and carried out with immediate effect. These works included new underground ducting and cabling, new light heads, vehicle loop detectors and push buttons. There has also been a new connector cable linking both this junction and the 4-way junction at the Kilrush Rd to allow for a more efficient traffic flow in the area. Permanent reinstatement works to the carriageway are to follow in February.

Ennis Flood Relief Works



Tree removal works were carried out in the river Fergus where trees were damaged and displaced as a result of recent adverse weather conditions in the area. An external Contractor was appointed to secure and manage the trees on site. This intervention ensured the normal flow of water within the river was maintained and limited the potential risk and impact to bridge and flood relief infrastructure within the town.



New Speed Limit Signs

During January, Ennis MD Roads crews were busy installing poles and signs on the local roads throughout the Ennis Municipal District as part of the roll out of the new 60Km/H speed limits that come into force on February 7th 2025. The new signs are located on the intersection of all Local Roads with Regional and National Secondary Roads.



Christmas Lighting

All Christmas lighting was removed in advance of the commencement of the public realm works. Additional locations have been identified for the storage of the new items which were added to this year’s festive light offering including the 6-meter sustainable tree and the projector. We hope to see the projector lighting up O’Connell square again during the coming year during other holiday events.

Other Key Strategic works

In addition to the aforementioned, Ennis MD staff continue to work on a number of other key projects such as the Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA), the Town Bus Project and also, 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. These include the Ennis Public Realm Project, the LIHAF Access Road project, the THRIVE project at the Cloister and the Tulla Road and Clare Road Active Travel Projects, potentially new URDF applications, etc. We also work closely with our DAC colleagues in developing the ambitious plans outlined in the Ennis 2040 Economic & Spatial Strategy. Related to E2040 matters, Members will be aware of some staffing changes in recent weeks whereby former COO Kevin Corrigan and PM Rob Heneghan have moved on. We wish them well in their future endeavours. Council Head of Enterprise, Padraic McElwee has been appointed as Interim COO in the meantime.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

TRANSPORTATION

Roadworks Programme and Operations

The 2025 Schedule of Municipal District Works (Annual Roadworks Programme) will be developed as soon as the TII, DoT and NTA grant allocations are received.

Strategic Transportation

Active Travel	<p>The following is a brief overview of the activities within the Active Travel office:</p> <p>Active Travel Grant Allocations for 2025 were recently announced with a budget of €2,750,000 given for Co. Clare.</p> <p>Tulla Road Active Travel Scheme: The detailed design is now complete with the inclusion of Bus Stops, the scheme is gone out for public consultation.</p> <p>Limerick Road (incl. St. Flannans Drive) Cycle Scheme: The preliminary design is being presented to the NTA for approval during the first week of February. A public consultation phase will follow this as soon as approval to proceed has been received.</p> <p>Safe Routes To School program:</p> <p>Holy Family National School Phase 2: The detailed design for this scheme is nearing completion with tender for construction expected to issue during the second week of February.</p> <p>Ennis National School: Construction of this scheme is substantially complete.</p>
Public Lighting	<p>Whilst Maintenance continues on the repair and replacement of faulty lighting units on the non-network lighting columns through our maintenance contractor Electric Skyline, due to the impact of Storm Eowyn ESB Networks have issued a stand down order for works on all ESBN Network Lighting Columns and hence this shall impact upon repair times for some lighting units. Clare County Council continues to work with Electric Skyline in its efforts to minimise the number of outages countywide.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>The PLEEP (Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project) continues with the retrofitting of existing luminaires to LED in the Ennis, Shannon and Killaloe MD's. 1038 Luminaires have been retrofitted to date to the 27th January representing 32% of the overall no of units to be retrofitted in Clare as part of the PLEEP Project. Survey Works in West Clare continue ahead of the commencement of retrofitting works in 2025 in the area.</p> <p>Clare County Council are working with the PLEEP Team and Electric Skyline to maximise output of both work crews.</p>

Road Design Office

Project	Progress Update
Bridge Rehabilitation Programme	<p>2024 Bridge Rehabilitation grant was €615,000. The total grant money was claimed in 2024 for bridge repair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">AA Screening: Currently Preparing Tender Documents for 2025 Bridge Projects.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Application for 2025 Bridge Rehabilitation Grant has been submitted to the Department of Transport.
Safety Improvement Works on Regional and Local Roads	Low Cost Safety Schemes in 2025: The allocation for 2025 Safety Improvement Works on Regional and Local Roads is expected in February. Design work has commenced. The section 38 process has begun on the junction tightening and pedestrian crossing at Bóthar Luchra, Tullyvarra Road.
Default Speed Limits	Default Speed Limit Update: The MDs are continuing to erect new 60kph speed limit signs on the local rural road network in advance of the implementation date of the 7th February 2025. More detailed advice regarding the introduction of the 30kph urban default speed limits is awaited from the DoT.

TII Safety Improvement

HD17	N85 Clareabbey Roundabout Approval has been received from TII to make the appointment of engineering consultants to develop a preliminary & detailed design for pedestrian and cyclist facilities at this location. Periodic Special Speed Limits Periodic special speed limit signs have been installed on the N68 in the vicinity of Caherea National School and on the N67 in the vicinity of Rineen National School
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Health and Safety

The Health and Safety Team have completed their Annual Schedule of Safety Inspections, Safety Statement and Risk Assessment Reviews.

The following top-level H&S objectives approved by the Safety Management Committee in March 2024 have been completed;

- ISO 45001 Accreditation received in the Physical Directorate and Housing Department
- Development of a Work Programme to complete DSE Assessments for staff that are outstanding
- Continued Focus on digitalisation of elements of the Occupational Health & Safety Management System in order to improve efficiency, effectiveness and minimise paperwork through utilisation of the following;
 - ProWorks
 - ArcGis
 - Meta Compliance
 - Online E-learning Modules

The Health & Safety Team will now commence preparation of the Annual Safety Report 2024 in order to develop Top Level H&S Objectives for 2025.

CAPITAL DELIVERY / PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

Ennis Public Realm Regeneration (Project B)	The contractor remobilised in early January, with the ending of the 6 week construction stand-down. An intensive works programme has now being established with new civils and paving crews being deployed to the Cathedral area, to supplement other resources assigned elsewhere on O'Connell Street, Carmody Street junction and at High Street. The contractor also has completion crews dedicated to completing snagging works, and completing paving works where certain unfinished sections. In February, the contractor will be commencing works at O'Connell Square, in addition to advancing works at O'Connell Street/Market Street junction. The high quality Public Realm design ensures that a shared surface multi-modal pavement is in place throughout the town centre and indeed the benefits of this were clear to be seen and experienced throughout December 2024, as the O'Connell Street Thoroughfare was brought to life with visiting shoppers, and played host to many street events.
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This 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 scheduled for completion in 2025. Consultation with impacted traders and stakeholders is ongoing, and the contractor has appointed a Public Liaison Officer in this regard, in line with Works Requirements. A focused Stakeholder Consultation event was held on 9th December 2024 to review the updated phasing plan and inform stakeholders as to upcoming works phases. The contractor is also issuing weekly newsletters to inform of upcoming works. (Subscribe to ennispublicrealmb@shareridge.ie). The contractor, project team, and Clare County Council Resident Engineering staff are available to help traders and the public with any concerns and to mitigate impacts from the works wherever possible.

It continues to be necessary to close streets to allow these works to be completed safely, and the project team and contractor, together with Ennis MD are working hard to coordinate activities to keep traffic impacts to a minimum and ensure that Ennis is kept open for business throughout the remaining months of this project.

In areas of narrow street width works will be completed Out of Hours so as to minimise impact on trade and facilitate pedestrian movement through these street sections.

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

The Judicial Review process is ongoing.

Killaloe Bridge, Bypass & R494 Upgrade

Following the opening of the Killaloe Bypass in December work continues following the Christmas break on the remain sections of the scheme. Progress has been steady over the past month despite of some very challenging weather conditions.

Killaloe Bypass Section

Killaloe Bypass Section
Kincora: Roundabout and Bypass substantially complete. Accom. Wks. to CPO 101 (Ballyvalley House) ongoing.



Main Cut to Hill Road: Complete.
Hill Road to Creeveroe Road: Complete.
Creeveroe Road to Shantraud: Complete.
Shantraud Roundabout: Complete.

Shannon Bridge Crossing Link



Shantraud to Clarisford Junction: Pavement binder layer laid. Completion of watermain installation and surface water drainage on Clarisford Park Access Road. Shared facility & landscaping works progressing.

Clarisford to West Embankment: Pavement binder layer laid. Stonework erection to ST01 approach wall RHS. Shared facility & landscaping works progressing.

Shannon Bridge



Pavement wearing course laid. Final finishing, landscaping and snagging works ongoing.

R494 Upgrade

Currently progressing with Eir connections of ducting 'legs' to all properties. Preparation of sharded facility ahead of regulating and paving course. Domestic entrances and driveways are still ongoing with preparation works to verges and landscaping works commencing throughout the R494.

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

Section 7 (North of Rail Bridge): Mainline practically complete. Watermain installation to local tertiary road commenced which will be followed by road re-surfacing. Accom. Works to Shannonside and adjacent properties nearing completion.

Section 6: Mainline practically complete. Accom. Wks. nearing completion.

Section 5 (Chainage 1350-1750): Mainline practically complete. Accom. Wks. nearing completion.

Section 4 (Chainage 950-1350): Accom. Works to Fort Henry Estate in progress. Culvert installed.

Land drain installed. Kerbs slip formed. Pavement wearing course laid.

Section 3 (Chainage 650-950): Pavement wearing course laid.

Sections 2: Approx 50% of Pavement wearing course laid. Accom. Works in progress. Road open to two-way traffic.

Section 1 Roolagh Roundabout: R496 reopened. Accom. Wks at an advanced stage. Pavement base-course and binder layers laid. Pumping Station commissioning and making operational at an advanced stage.



Kilmastulla Bridge

Rail Bridge



Practically complete.



Practically complete.

RW03

Practically complete.

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/>

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Kilkee Flood Relief Scheme	<p>The scheme consultant is continuing to prepare the individual drawings for the necessary temporary and permanent land acquisitions.</p> <p>The appointed Archaeology contractor has applied to the National Monuments Service for the testing license. There are approximately two weeks of onsite testing involved and a further two weeks for reporting.</p> <p>The Planning application for the scheme is currently with An Bord Pleanála.</p>
Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF)	<p>Subject to satisfactory Contractor responses on specific tender queries, a recommendation to proceed with the appointment will be made to the Department of Housing / LIHAF Management Committee over the coming weeks.</p> <p>Currently over 80% 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 two remaining landowners, and to that regard we are hopeful of reaching terms by agreement shortly.</p> <p>Work has commenced on a revised Grant Agreement between the Council and Department of Housing / LIHAF Management Committee which will enable us to move forward with the Infrastructure & Housing delivery in 2025.</p>
N19 Shannon Airport Access Road	<p>Further engagement with the main project stakeholders occurred during the period and the design team continue to work towards the finalisation of the Statutory Documentation required as part of the proposed planning application for submission to An Bord Pleanála in 2025.</p> <p>As part of Phase 3 – Design & Environmental Evaluation, the project team have identified additional environmental mitigation measures of low canopy tree planting between Fergus Road and Drumgeely Road. An update to project drawings is available to view on the project website www.shannon-access.ie</p> <p>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.</p>
Remediation of sites containing ACM	<p>A Planning Application in respect of the remediation of the subject sites is being prepared, for submission in coming months. The sites continue to be routinely monitored and maintained as required by Council staff in accordance with approach as agreed with the EPA</p>
Shannon Town & Environs Flood Relief Scheme	<p>A meeting was held recently between Clare County Council, OPW, Shannon Airport Authority and National Parks & Wildlife Service. This has been the fifth meeting with NPWS to discuss the numerous environmental constraints and challenges on the scheme.</p> <p>CCC are currently reviewing the consultant’s proposal for a walkway user survey, planned to be carried out in the coming weeks.</p> <p>Much of the topographical survey is now complete with the remaining airside element planned for early February.</p> <p>The 2024/25 wintering bird survey is ongoing.</p>
West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 1: Kilrush to Kilkee)	<p>Further refinement to the alignment of the Greenway is ongoing. Once complete, the Project Agronomist and Project Liaison Officers, will meet landowners / farmers 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’.</p> <p>Completion of the final drafts of the ‘Options Selection Report’ and ‘Options Appraisal Report’ is ongoing.</p>
West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 2: Ennis to Ennistymon)	<p>Work continues on development of the third non-statutory public consultation on the ‘Emerging Preferred Route Corridor’. Public Consultation No. 3 expected Q2 2025, subject to peer review and TII approval process. Preparation of the Options Assessment Report well underway.</p>
West Clare Railway Greenway (Sections 3 & 4: Ennistymon to Miltown Malbay to Moyasta)	<p>The Constraints Study Report is being reviewed before submission to TII.</p> <p>Public Consultation 2 on the Route Options is being prepared.</p>
Other Greenway Proposals	<p>No update this month.</p>
Doolin Pier	<p>The MD are progressing construction of footpaths between Fisher Street and Doolin Pier. This has been identified as the immediate priority so as to ensure that pedestrian facilities are in place along this busy route.</p>

General Design Office

<p>Fáilte Ireland Platforms for Growth Facility, Ballycuggaran</p>	<p>The General Design Office are project managing and supervising the construction of the new Fáilte Ireland funded WC, Shower, Changing Room and Induction Space facility at Ballycuggaran, Killaloe. Works are progressing well with a completion date expected at the end of August, 2025.</p> <div data-bbox="513 403 1355 698" data-label="Image"> </div>
<p>Town and Village Renewal Scheme</p>	<p>Parteen - Project completed including handover.</p>
<p>Vandeleur Gardens Yard Wall and Storage Container</p>	<p>Briefing to elected members 21st January, part 8 to be tabled at the monthly council meeting on 10th March.</p>

FIRE & BUILDING CONTROL SECTION

Training Courses

Clare County Fire & Rescue Service personnel underwent the following training course during January - Climate Action Awareness Training completed in all 7 Fire Stations.

Storm Éowyn - Fire Service Response

In the early hours of Friday, January 24th, all on-call personnel were placed on standby at their stations from 2:00 AM to 11:00 AM to avoid the need for travel during the Status Red Wind Warning issued for Storm Éowyn. As part of the standard protocol for severe weather events, the Officers in Charge in each Fire Station carried out Dynamic Risk Assessments (DRA) for any alerts to assess whether it was safe to respond. During the storms peak, emergency calls were limited to life-threatening incidents, while other situations were prioritised and all addressed once the Red Warning had expired and conditions allowed for a safe response.

Across the county, Clare County Fire & Rescue Service, working alongside Clare County Council personnel, handled over 130 reports of storm-related damage by Friday afternoon. These included widespread fallen trees, road blockages, structural damage to buildings, as well as supporting ESB Networks and Uisce Éireann where possible. The Fire Services key objectives were to ensure that secondary roads remained passable, while also addressing local roads and infrastructure where needed, to support local and business continuity as travel resumed on Saturday morning. All seven brigades of Clare County Fire & Rescue Service responded to a significant number of emergency calls,

with recovery operations expected to extend into the following week.



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT



Fire & Building Control Section Main Activities	Dec 2024	Year to Date 2024	Jan 2025 (Up to 23.01.25)
Number of Emergency Calls Attended	178	1306	72
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Received	18	126	0
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Granted	12	102	4
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Invalidated	0	6	0
Number of Disability Access Certificates Received	8	68	2
Number of Disability Access Certificates Granted	7	54	0
Number of Commencement Notices Received	85	563	7
Number of Dangerous Structures/Places Complaints	0	17	0

(Note: In the Jan Monthly Report, the Dec figures related to 1st to 13th Dec due to timing of report)

CLARE CIVIL DEFENCE

Operational Duties:

- Civil Defence provided medical cover at the following events in January including Run Clare (Lisdoonvarna) and Clare Vs Kilkenny National Hurling League (Cusack Park).
- Clare Civil Defence were tasked by An Garda Síochána to assist with 5 missing person searches since 1st January 2025.

Members Training & Professional Development

Members participated in weekly training set out by Civil Defence Instructors.
Instructor Training ongoing.

Storm Darragh

Clare Civil Defence volunteers were deployed to assist the HSE (Health Service Executive) with the transportation of public health patients and transportation of staff to palliative care patients in remote areas.



Storm Éowyn

Clare Civil Defence volunteers were deployed to assist ESB crews in checking lines with a drone in areas that were difficult to access. Volunteers were also deployed to check in with some of the more vulnerable people in the community that had no power, water or phone service.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

John Cuddihy Volunteer of the Year Award

The John Cuddihy Volunteer of the Year Award held in the Civil Defence Headquarters was presented to volunteer Robert Cleary. John's family provided the prize and attended the presentation evening.



PROBUS Club Visit

Clare Civil Defence held an Open Day at the Civil Defence Headquarters for members of PROBUS. This is a local association of retired and semiretired professionals and business people who meet for fellowship and interests. The Open Day showcased the work that is carried out by Civil Defence members throughout the Country.

ENVIRONMENT

An Taisce Green Schools

Clare County Council supports and encourages active participation in the An Taisce operated Green Schools programme. Our Environmental Awareness Officer (EAO) carries out Green School assessments and makes recommendations to An Taisce on the awarding of a Green Flag. To date two school assessment visits have been undertaken in addition to a support visit to Ennis Community College.

January Awareness Campaigns

The following were promoted on social media (@GreenerClare / @ClareCoCo) and/or print media during January 2025.

- Christmas Tree Recycling
- Bin It – Butts belong in Bins
- Dog owner responsibility
- Clean Air

AIE Requests

Our Environmental Awareness Officer is the designated Information Office (AIE Officer) under the Access to Information on the Environment Regulations for Clare County Council. During 2024 15 AIE requests were received by Clare County Council and processed. There was one appeal to the Commissioner of Environmental Information during 2024. There have been 3 AIE requests received to date in 2025.

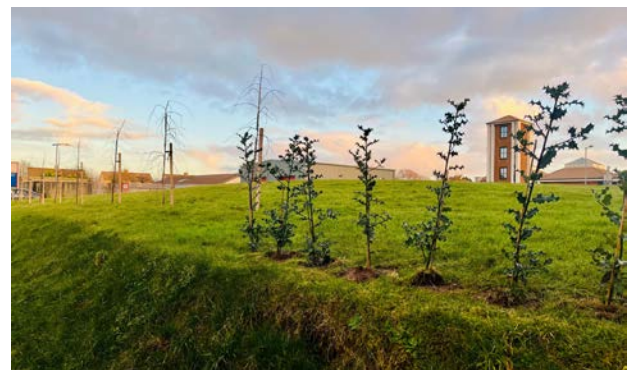
Gardening

The New Year is an ideal time for the planting of new trees, and with this the Gardening Team undertook the planting of a series of new trees and hedging around Áras Contae an Chláir (Gardening Photo 01). The planting consisting of birch and holly,

both native and pollinator friendly species.

There will be many long-term benefits associated with this new planting, including the improvement of the aesthetic of Council headquarters, together with encouraging local biodiversity, improving local air quality and positively impacting climate change through the uptake of carbon dioxide.

Given the relatively mild winter experienced to date, the Gardening Team has already commenced certain tasks more normally associated with the spring and summer. In January, the team commenced the weeding and preparation of flower beds.



This work is essential in ensuring strong plant growth during the summer season and typifies much of the unseen work that the Gardening Team undertake to ensure that Ennis and Clare look its best throughout the year.

The Christmas themed planters that were located throughout Ennis Town in December were very warmly received by both local businesses and the wider public. Given this success, the Gardening Team is committed to maintaining these planters at locations around the town and will work in collaboration with the Ennis Municipal District and Project Management Office, to

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

ensure the town continues to act as a welcoming space for business, tourists and the entire community.

Water Enforcement and Laboratory Monitoring Scientific Services

The table below summarises the work of the scientific teams to date in 2025:

Water Monitoring & Enforcement Scientific Team	January 2025	Total to date 2025
Bathing Water Monitoring	Monitoring season begins in mid May	0
Domestic Wastewater		
Treatment Plant Inspections (NIP Plan)	0	0
Public queries processed regarding DWWTs grants	2	2
Monitoring Inspections of Section 4 licenced premises	0	0
Planning applications (Agriculture)	3	3
Planning applications (Domestic)	33	33
Planning applications (Large Developments)	2	2
Planning applications (Forestry)	0	0
Pollution complaints received	5	5
Private Commercial Drinking Water Supplies	0	0
Private/Public Group Water Scheme supplies	0	0
Rivers	4	4
Farm Inspections (NAIP) (Routine Planned & Unplanned)	1	1

Waste Enforcement

Inspections of Permitted and Unpermitted Sites

Inspections of two permitted and four unauthorised facilities were carried out by the Waste Enforcement team in January. The unauthorised facilities were inspected as a result of complaints. Follow-up enforcement action was taken in the case of the unpermitted sites. Warning letters were issued. Follow-up inspections have taken place to monitor compliance. Two have been complied with. The other two sites are still within the timeframe for compliance.

The permitted sites were inspected to monitor compliance with their permit conditions, to achieve positive environmental outcomes for the receiving environments.

Enforcement Notices and Warning Letters

In January two warning letters were issued because of unauthorised waste activity. A further three warning letters were issued under the **Air Pollution Act, 1987, as Amended** as a result of complaints of unauthorised burning.

One notice was issued under Section 9 of the **Litter Pollution Act 1997, as Amended** and two notices were issued under Sec-

tion 14 of the **Waste Management Act 1996, as Amended**. These are being monitored for compliance.

Cleanups at Illegal Encampments

On Wednesday January 15th a joint cleanup took place at two illegal encampment sites in Ennis. Staff from Ennis MD (two crews and two engineers), Housing and Environment were present, as well as two members of An Garda Síochána. A trailer load of rubbish consisting of chairs, nappies, buggies and household waste was removed from the locations and disposed of at the Central Waste management Facility in Inagh. A significant investment of resources was put into cleaning these sites in December 2024.

Air Pollution Act 1987 (Solid Fuels) Regulations 2022

Follow-up inspections to check compliance with the Retail Register for Clare are ongoing and will continue. The register was compiled, and retailers were written to in 2024, advising them of their responsibilities under the above Regulations. Monitoring of door-to-door and online solid fuel sales is also taking place.

Waste Enforcement Complaints Investigation

The tables below summarise the work of the Waste Enforcement team in January 2025, in response to complaints:

Waste Enforcement Complaints	January 2025
Litter	5
Dog Fouling	6
Waste Presentation	0
Dumping	81
Waste complaints (total)	125

Waste Enforcement Inspections	January 2025
Cert of Registration	1
Waste Facility Permits	1
Unauthorised Sites	4

Waste management

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

Civic Amenity Site Waste Streams (KG)	
Item	December (latest Data)
Bulky items	37,560
Cardboard	21,840
Dry Recyclable	450
Paper	16,700
Green Waste	28,060
Mattresses	4,900
Municipal Waste	128,228
Plastic	1120
Timber	79,780

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Storm Éowyn

The 2024/2025 Irish storm season runs from Sunday 1 September 2024 to Sunday 31 August 2025 (inclusive). Storm Éowyn was the 5th storm of the season and it arrived in the early hours of Friday 24th January. The storm impacted services provided by the Environment Section such as opening of our Civic Amenity Sites. While there was only minor damage to equipment there were some fallen trees that required removal before it was safe for the public to access the sites. Electrical power to both Lisdeen and Inagh was cut off, however we were able to operate from on-site generators.



CLIMATE ACTION

Community

The Climate Team in Clare County Council collaborated with Ennis Tidy Towns to host a Tidy Towns Networking event. This was held on December 10th in the Civic Room in the Buttermarket Building and Tidy Towns Groups from around the county attended. The aim of this event was to enable tidy towns groups from around the county to network and build capacity. The evening was opened by Councillor Mary Howard who delivered a welcoming address. This was followed by a presentation by the Clare County Council Biodiversity Officer on what simple actions tidy towns groups can take. Clare Community Climate Action Officer gave a presentation on the Community Climate Action Programme focusing on the types of projects Tidy Towns Groups can undertake. Gabriella Hanrahan from Quin Tidy Village also presented on the evening about the actions they are currently undertaking. A series of follow up networking events is planned with the next one due to take place in February.



The Climate Team participated in a sustainable tourism workshop in Kilkee on Wednesday December 4th. The event was well attended by businesses and community groups from the peninsula. LEO presented on the opportunities present for businesses to leverage funding towards energy efficiency upgrades. The Climate Action Co Ordinator presented on the Climate Action Plan adopted by Clare County Council and focused on the benefits that can be reaped by acting on Climate.





COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION PROGRAMME



Community Climate Action Programme Update:

Group:	Project Details:	Current Progress:
BODYKE TIDY TOWNS	Water Refill Station, Pollinator Friendly Planting.	Planning stage of project
BRIDGE UNITED AFC	Solar PV, Cycle Parking, Recycling Station.	Planning stage of project
CARRIGAHOLT DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION LTD	Flood Gate, Native Trees, Bird Nesting Boxes, Wildlife Cameras, Bee & Bug Hotels, Educational Signage, Accessible Walkway Installation, Seating	Planning stage of project
CLARECASTLE COMMUNITY GARDEN	Community Garden and Polyunnel.	Planning stage of project
CLOONEY SPANCILHILL CDG	Community Planting, rainwater harvesting, Bike Parking.	Initial clearance works complete. Planting of native trees has commenced.
COLLEGE GREEN RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION	Native Planting in Housing Estate.	Community planting day to plant native woodland has taken place.
COROFIN TIDY TOWNS	Water Refill Station, Water Bottles.	Water refill station has been purchased. Awaiting installation
CRATLOE COMMUNITY COUNCIL	Planting, Rainwater Harvesting, Bike Repair Station.	Planning stage of project
DOONBEG TIDY TOWNS	Electric Bike, Solar Outdoor Light, Concrete Base for Bike Shed.	Solar Light installed in Fair green sensory garden.
ENNIS MENS SHED	Solar PV, Polyunnel, Rainwater Harvesting, Biodiversity Garden, Solar Water Feature.	Solar PV installation is complete on workshop.
ENNIS TIDY TOWNS	E-Cargo Bike, Bike Parking, Bike Locker, Water Refill Station	E-Cargo bike has been purchased and delivered to Ennis Tidy Towns.
INAGH DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION	2 Solar PV Projects, Reusable Cups, Rainwater Harvesting, LED Lights, Water Refill Stations, Bike Shelters, Fruit, Nut Trees & Native Hedgerows.	One solar installation complete
INCH TIDY VILLAGE	Rainwater Harvester for Community Garden.	Planning stage of project
LISDOONVARNA FÁILTE CLG	Native Town Park Planting and Works	Planting works have been complete at the twin wells.
MIKE MCTIGUE COMMUNITY CENTRE	New Windows, Attic Insulation.	Replacement of existing windows with triple glazed units complete.
OBAIR	Solar Panels for Meals on Wheels Delivery Vans.	Planning stage of project
RUAN TIDY TOWNS	2 Raised beds, Fruit trees, Vegetables, Pollinator Friendly Area, Water Station. Hedgerow.	Installation of raised bed complete
SCARIFF RUGBY CLUB	Replacement of LED lights for pitch.	LED Lighting retrofit works have been complete at Scariff Rugby Club.
SHANNON TIDY TOWNS	Pollinator Corridor, Raised beds planting.	Planning stage of project, works due to commence.
SMITH O'BRIENS GAA & CAMOGIE CLUB	Solar PV, Water refill station, Planting, Bike Parking.	Large solar PV installation complete in Smith O'Brien's GAA Club.
ST. JOSEPHS GAA MILTOWN MALBAY	Solar PV, Rainwater Harvesting, Bike Parking, 3x Composters	Planning stage of project
WATERWORLD KILKEE	Ground Mounted Solar PV and associated works.	Planning stage of project
WEST COAST SURF CLUB	Water stations (Lahinch & Spanish Point, 100 Water Bottles.	Planning stage of project

Energy

TRESS Project:

Tipperary Energy Agency (TEA), Vivid Edge and Technological University of the Shannon (TUS), supported by the EU LIFE Programme secured grant funding to carry out Investment Grade Energy Audits on selected public buildings in Munster. Clare County Council was successful in its application to have Ennis Leisure Centre and Aras Contae an Chlair included in the fully funded programme known as TRESS ((Transforming Renovation in the Atlantic Seaboard South). The Climate Department within Clare County Council has worked in close association with TEA over the past 18-months in the preparation of the preliminary design to allow the Investment Grade Energy Audit to be completed. Staff from TEA and Vivid Edge recently presented a summary of the outcomes for Ennis Leisure Centre to Clare County Council staff in the Civic Room at the Buttermarket building.



ISO Audit:

Clare County Council has an Energy Management System (EnMS) accredited to the International Standard ISO 50001 in operation since 2018. As part of the certification process, annual Surveillance Audits are carried out by the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI). The 2025 Surveillance Audit will constitute a one-day on-site inspection by an NSAI Auditor who will conduct a thorough examination of all documentation within the EnMS. It will also be necessary for selected staff within the organisation with responsibility for the energy usage of our Significant Energy Users to be available to allow the Auditor

to interrogate data analytics and operations. After conclusion of the on-site audit, the Auditor will prepare a report for NSAI giving a recommendation on whether the accreditation of the EnMS can be maintained for a further 12-month period.

WATER

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

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. In December the Clare Rural Water Programme Office held an update meeting in relation to the Multi-annual Rural Water Programme 2024-2026 announcement. The purpose of this meeting was to update the schemes recommended for funding under Measure A6 Taking-in-charge of group water schemes and assist in the development of a pathway to successful project delivery.

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. 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, 6 applications have been received to date for 2025. Post works final inspections for works within the last 12 months are ongoing.

SHANNON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Rural and Community Development Officer's funding advice clinics

The Shannon MD's Rural Community Development officer hosted two walk-in clinics in the Shannon Oakwood Hotel and Clonlara Community Centre. These clinics sought to advise and support community groups/organisations in project development and funding opportunities. These clinics coincided with the application periods of two funding opportunities for community groups: The Clare Local Area Grants Scheme (CLAGS) and the Local Enhancement Programme (LEP). Attendees were able to discuss these funds with the Rural and Community Development Officer and receive guidance on preparing funding applications. The clinics had a strong level of attendance from a broad range of community groups and organisations. This level

of engagement provides a strong foundation for future collaboration within the Shannon MD and the community groups.



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT



Storm water pumps on standby in the Shannon Industrial Estate.



Shannon MD Accreditation- Health and Safety ISO 45001

ISO 45001 is an occupational health and safety standard that provides a framework to improve employee safety, reduce workplace risks and create better, safer working conditions. Shannon MD have now been awarded the ISO45001 standard. The standard will remain in place for three years. There will be annual surveillance audits.

Maintenance works to pump number 1 at Storm Water Pump House 3 in Drumgeely. Storm water headwall for Pump House 3 in Drumgeely, Shannon.

Works Underway

Ongoing road maintenance, drainage works, footpath capital works, responding to events resulting from the extreme cold weather, review and maintenance works to storm water Pump House 3, Drumgeely, installation of new speed regulatory road signs throughout the municipal district.



- Newmarket on Fergus,
- Shannon town,
- Sixmilebridge,
- Cratloe
- Westbury,
- Clonlara.

Footpath Refurbishment at no. 3 to 7 at Fairyfield, Parteen. These works included drop kerbs and tactile paving at the entrance into the estate.

Construction of a new pedestrian crossing and associated works on Sli Lara Ballycasey Shannon.



Ramp installation as part of a new controlled pedestrian crossing and associated works on Bothar Na Laoiste, Ballycasey, Shannon.

