



Annual Report 2022



COMHAIRLE | CLARE
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

June 2023



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INTRODUCTION BY THE CATHAOIRLEACH AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

We are very pleased to welcome Clare County Council's Annual Report 2022, which highlights progress on a number of major projects during the year and outlines the activities of the Council in many important service areas.

Clare County Council continues to advance projects large and small the length and breadth of the county, working with our communities and stakeholders to deliver results for people in Clare.

The Council is responsible for delivering services to approximately 127,900 individuals, with a staff of 979 and an annual expenditure of €225.6m during 2022.

As a progressive local authority our purpose and vision is to be responsive and agile while leading the development of our county.

The challenges in recent years have been far-reaching and ever-changing. The Covid-19 pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine have had a global and local impact like nothing that has gone before.

We would like to pay tribute once again to

the tremendous efforts and sacrifices of all of our front-line workers, communities and individuals throughout the pandemic response.

Clare County Council commemorated those who died and those who were bereaved during a Covid-19 Ceremony of Remembrance and Reflection at Áras Contae an Chláir in March. The ceremony also acknowledged the individuals who cared for the dying and for their families, and those who gave crucial supports to vulnerable members of the community.

Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Áras Contae an Chláir was lit up in the Ukrainian colours, and the Ukrainian and Clare flags were flown outside the building, as a demonstration of solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

In March, the crisis escalated and displaced people from Ukraine arrived in County Clare. Clare County Council's housing team initially coordinated the emergency response.

Community Response Fora that had been

established in counties across the country in response to the Covid-19 pandemic were re-activated to meet the emerging needs presented by the war in Ukraine.

In July 2022, a new directorate was established in the Council to focus the response required to meet the deepening crisis. The functions of the directorate grew over the months to December in line with the demands and complexity of the international challenge being presented to the community in County Clare.

The county was home to around 4,000 displaced people from Ukraine by year's end. Clare has been hosting one of the largest numbers of Ukrainian people displaced by the war in the country. We wish to acknowledge the efforts of host families, volunteers, community groups, social enterprises and service agencies, which have been central to the response.

We would also like to take this opportunity to welcome people from Ukraine and all parts of the world who have made this county their home in 2022.

In the area of physical development, the 2022 Schedule of Municipal District Works provided for a Roadworks Programme which had a total fund of €48.4m, which was completed successfully. Works included strengthening/surface dressing of more than 269km of the road network, continuation of the enhanced bridge remediation programme with works carried out on 24 bridges, and completion of six safety improvement schemes.

Progress continued throughout 2022 across a range of major capital projects being managed and delivered by the Project Management Office (PMO). Much progress was made by the PMO team during the year on its portfolio of projects, including national and non-national roads projects, flood relief schemes and greenways.

An Bord Pleanála confirmed the CPO for the N67/N85 Ennistymon Inner Relief (Blake's Corner) project in late 2022, however, its

decision was subsequently challenged in the High Court, the outcome of which is awaited. The contract for the Killaloe Bridge and Bypass project was awarded in March and construction work commenced on site in August. And the long awaited and crucially important Springfield Flood Relief Scheme was substantially completed in late 2022.

Water and wastewater operations saw works completed in a number of areas in 2022, including significant mains replacements in a number of locations. Under Irish Water capital projects, wastewater treatment projects for five coastal locations, where untreated sewage is currently discharging to the sea/estuary, continued to progress during the year.

During 2022, €790,000 was spent in progressing upgrade works on 15 schemes under the Multi Annual Rural Water Programme 2019-2021.

Diverse activities continued in the Environment Section, including waste enforcement, waste management, environmental awareness, energy, climate action, gardening, scientific services (laboratory, water, air), veterinary services and Blue Flag beaches. The 2022 work programme was largely driven by an extensive regulatory framework including new legislation such as the Circular Economy and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2022, and the Solid Fuel Regulations 2022.

Clare County Fire and Rescue Service attended 1,117 call-outs in 2022 resulting in an increase of 24.1% on the number for 2021. There was no fire fatality in 2022 in County Clare.

National Fire Safety Week took place from 17th–23rd October. A Fire Safety campaign involved fire fighters visiting the homes of older people and carrying out 'Home Fire Safety Checks'.

In November 2022, Clare County Fire and Rescue Service attained reaccreditation to the ISO 45001 Health and Safety Management System Standard for the implementation of their Safety Management System throughout

the Service following an audit by the National Standards Authority Ireland.

Regional Major Emergency Management training resumed in 2022, and Clare County Council participated in a number of emergency exercises during the year.

The new Civil Defence headquarters is proving to be a huge asset to both the unit and the principal response agencies (An Garda Síochána, the National Ambulance Service and Clare County Fire and Rescue Service). Members of Clare Civil Defence responded to 130 separate requests for assistance in 2022.

Ennis was crowned 'Ireland's Friendliest Place' at the AIBMS Retail Excellence Awards ceremony in 2022, while the town was also awarded the 'Purple Flag', which is an international accreditation awarded to places that meet or surpass the standards of excellence in managing the evening and night-time. The 'Ennis Age Friendly Town Strategy' picked up the Age Friendly Environment award at the National Age Friendly Recognition and Achievement Awards, while the county town continued its success in the Tidy Towns competition, being named Ireland's Tidiest Large Urban Centre in 2022.

This year saw the introduction of a new Climate section within the Physical Development directorate. The Climate section's role is to mainstream climate action and climate awareness within all services and directorates of Clare County Council.

The Social Directorate, which comprises Housing, Cultural Services and the Killaloe Municipal District, continued its work in the provision of appropriate housing supports to those in need and in enabling and fostering access for all of our citizens to information, learning, arts, cultural and recreational opportunities.

There was strong delivery of social housing in 2022. A combination of new properties constructed by the Council and by approved housing bodies (AHBs), turnkey solutions

and void refurbishment programme saw the allocation of homes to 439 households during 2022.

The year saw the delivery of 262 new properties through a combination of 118 new builds provided by the Council, 66 new builds through AHBs, 64 turnkey solutions and a number of one-off acquisitions.

During the year, 72 vacant and nine acquired (unoccupied) properties were refurbished and made available for reallocation throughout the county.

In October 2022, we welcomed Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage Darragh O'Brien TD to Clare to formally launch the Cnoc na Scoile, Baile na mBan and Cúinne an Bhroic developments.

The issue of defective concrete blocks in Clare had come to the fore in late 2021 with much engagement with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage seeking extension of the Defective Concrete Blocks Scheme to Clare. Housing staff were involved in the preparation of various technical reports on this matter with Clare being accepted onto the proposed Enhanced Defective Concrete Blocks Scheme for private dwellings, due to commence in Q1, 2023.

Clare County Council continued to engage with the Department in relation to the Enhanced Defective Blocks Grants Scheme in 2022.

2022 saw an increased number of presentations to the Homeless Action Team, along with an increased level of complex needs and challenges being presented by service users. The team continued to work towards building a service that can appropriately meet the needs of homeless clients in Clare.

Post-Covid-19 the library service is returning to an increase in usage as the public return to using public spaces. The contractors for the new Ennis library and art gallery commenced work on site in April, 2022. The revised estimated completion date is October 2023.

Arts Council supported programmes in 2022

resumed in person post-Covid-19. The Arts and Education programme delivered arts projects with 19 artists in 28 primary schools. The Embrace Arts and Disability Programme delivered 15 arts projects in disability settings with 11 artists.

Ennis Mela and the House! open air spectacle both won awards at the Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government awards in 2022. Culture Night in September returned in person with 37 Clare events attended by 3,000 people. Artist studios operated at 100% capacity.

glór celebrated its 21st birthday at the end of November, and marked it with a special performance entitled glór at 21, which showcased some of the recent projects and commissions that glór has been instrumental in, and featured over 50 artists.

Clare County Council maintained its focus on providing quality public services by working closely with community groups, organisations and businesses to deliver positive change for communities in the county.

The Department of Rural and Community Development channelled a number of funding programmes through the Council in 2022, including the Town & Village Renewal Scheme, CLÁR and the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme. Funding of €597,500 was approved under the Council's Community Support Scheme in May 2022.

Clare County Council co-ordinates the delivery of the Clare Age-Friendly Strategy 2018-2022 with eight agencies leading or supporting the delivery of the various actions. Among the actions in the strategy that were progressed in 2022 was the launch of Shannon as the world's first Age Friendly Airport in conjunction with Ireland West Airport. And in October, Clare County Council hosted the National Age Friendly Recognition and Achievement Awards in Dromoland Castle on behalf of Age Friendly Ireland.

The Council was requested by Cabinet to

commence discussions with Shannon Group in relation to the proposed transfer of Shannon Heritage DAC County Clare-based tourism sites to Clare County Council, including as part of the proposed transfer at national level from the Department of Transport to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

In July 2022, Clare County Council submitted a Due Diligence report to government. A final report, in the fields of Finance, IT, HR and Legal, was submitted to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Department of Transport in which a funding package to support the upgrading and maintenance of the sites for three years was identified.

County Clare has now established itself as a remote working friendly county. The 11 DigiClare hubs located throughout the county have become very popular with individuals, teams, groups and companies in providing a network of affordable and flexible remote working facilities enabling both Clare residents and visitors to work locally in an environment that provides global connectivity through high-speed broadband.

Four Clare Joint Policing Committee (JPC) meetings were held in February, April, September and November of 2022. The aim of the JPC is to serve as a forum for consultations, discussions and recommendations on matters affecting the policing of Clare County Council's administrative area.

The most significant tourism project ever to be undertaken in East Clare took a major step forward with the announcement of funding for the development of the Inis Cealtra (Holy Island) visitor centre in the heart of Mountshannon village. In November, the Department of Rural and Community Development allocated €3,906,252 to Clare County Council for the Inis Cealtra (Old Rectory) Visitor Experience. The local authority will match fund a further 20 per

cent, with 80 per cent of project costs to be funded by the Department.

It was wonderful to see Loop Head Lighthouse Visitor Experience swing open its doors to visitors in July, 2022, for the first time since 2019 and following a significant upgrade of the historic and popular West Clare visitor attraction.

In the area of tourism promotion, a delegation led by the Cathaoirleach Cllr Tony O'Brien, with officials and members from Clare County Council along with members of the Clare Tourism Advisory Forum, promoted County Clare as a desirable visitor destination to over 120,000 festival goers at Milwaukee Irish Fest in Wisconsin, US, in August.

County Clare also took centre stage to national and international television and social media audiences through live streaming of the KPMG Women's Irish Open, hosted in Dromoland Castle in September.

In 2022, the Cliffs of Moher Experience welcomed 1,094,259 visitors with an estimated additional 42,609 visitors accessing through the Cliffs of Moher coastal walk. Clare County Council supported by Fáilte Ireland is working, with a multi-disciplinary consultancy team, to prepare a new Cliffs of Moher Strategy 2040 including an overall site masterplan.

2022 was a busy year for the Council's Economic Development directorate, which comprises the Planning Department, Property Management Unit, Local Enterprise Office, Town Regeneration Team and the Shannon Municipal District.

A continued uplift in planning and development activity indicated strong signs of a growing economy in the county, while the process of preparing the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 continued during 2022. The Plan will be finalised in early 2023.

The preparation of town enhancement plans in 2022 for Ennistymon, Corofin and Sixmilebridge demonstrates Clare County Council's commitment to regenerating our

local towns and villages, focused on both community and economic development, to become better places to live, work and visit.

Despite many headwinds and challenges, businesses in Clare continued to demonstrate strong resilience and are a key driver of a successful local economy. The Council engages proactively in the emergence of new technologies and new economic opportunities such as future mobility, offshore wind, and the potential of the Shannon Estuary. The Clare Economic Task Force is a key advisor in assisting Clare County Council in identifying key economic opportunities in the context of an ever-evolving and unstable global economic backdrop.

Clare County Council's Property Management Unit advanced a number of capital property refurbishment and acquisition projects during the year. In line with the Government's campaign to reduce our energy usage, a range of measures were put in place in our corporate and other buildings to reduce usage on lighting and heating and IT-related equipment.

In 2022, 69 new derelict site files were opened representing a significant effort by the Derelict Sites Team to take action against derelict properties throughout the county. This is the highest level of activity in any one year since the Act was first introduced in 1990/1991, with 210 active files at the end of 2022.

As we emerged from restrictions encountered as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, 2022 was remarkably another successful year for Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Clare. Despite ongoing economic challenges such as Brexit, supply chain issues, rising energy costs and the pandemic, the number and, more importantly, the quality of projects applying for support was very encouraging. Training programmes remained a key activity with an increased focus on enhancing the skill set of small business owners and developing their capability to succeed in a very challenging economic environment.

During 2022, LEO Clare ran 79 training programmes with over 1,504 participants. Against the backdrop of economic turmoil, the number of Technical Assistance for Micro Exporters (TAME), priming and business expansion grants approved continued to improve with 31 enterprises receiving funding approval of just over €704,040.

We were delighted that the Council's work was recognised at the Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards in 2022 when the Council was named Local Authority of the Year. This prestigious award is an acknowledgement of the commitment and hard work of the staff and elected members of Clare County Council, who work in partnership to serve the people of Clare.

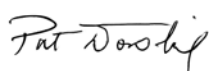
We would like to commend the staff and elected members, and acknowledge the valuable input and participation of our communities, partners and stakeholders across the range of our initiatives and activities.

We have a structure in Clare County Council which puts sustainable communities at our heart. Our communities will remain at the centre of everything we do to ensure our county continues to develop as a place to live, work and visit.

Le meas,



Cllr Tony O'Brien,
Cathaoirleach



Mr Pat Dowling,
Chief Executive





CLARE COUNTY COUNCILLORS 2022

Ennis Municipal District



Mary Howard
(FG)



Paul Murphy
(FG)



Tom O'Callaghan
(FF)



Mayor of Ennis
Clare Colleran
Molloy (FF)



Ann Norton
(NP)



Pat Daly
(FF)



Johnny Flynn
(FG)

Killaloe Municipal District



Pat Hayes (FF)



Joe Cooney (FG)



Cathaoirleach
Tony O'Brien (FF)



Chair
Alan O'Callaghan
(FF)



Pat Burke (FG)

Shannon Municipal District



Pat McMahon
(FF)



Chair
Michael Begley
(NP)



P.J. Ryan
(NP)



John Crowe
(FG)



Donna McGettigan
(SF)



Pat O'Gorman
(FF)



Gerard Flynn
(NP)

West Clare Municipal District



Joe Garrihy (FG)



Joe Killeen (FF)



Chair
Shane Talty (FF)



Liam Grant (GP)



P.J. Kelly (FF)



Gabriel Keating
(FG)



Bill Chambers
(FF)



Cillian Murphy
(FF)

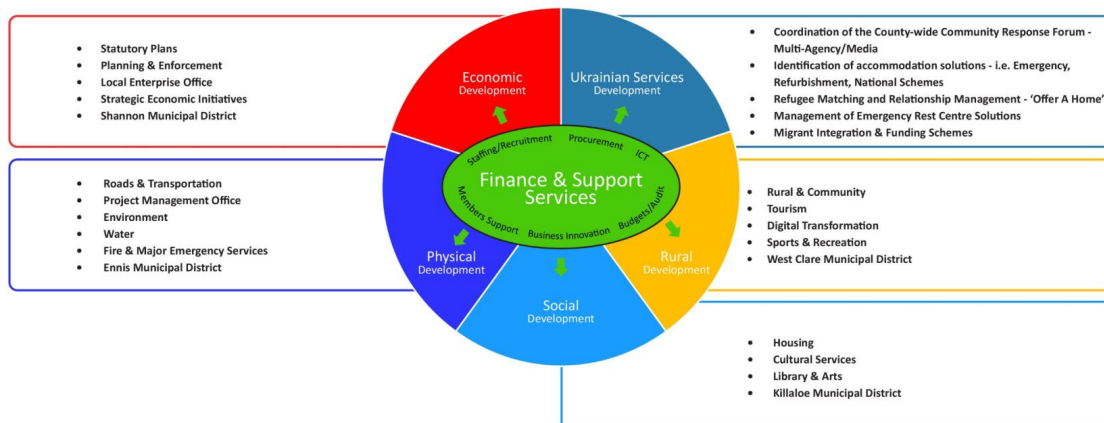
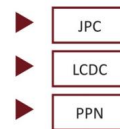
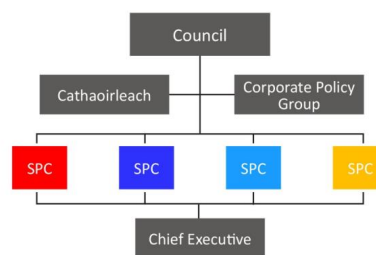


Ian Lynch
(NP)

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE 2022



OPERATING STRUCTURE



Municipal District Areas

Members meet at area level throughout the year to discuss matters relevant to their particular electoral area. Each Municipal District committee has a senior official assigned to it to co-ordinate functions and assist the members in their deliberations. The meetings are attended by the Senior Executive Engineer and a member of the administrative staff in the area. These meetings are generally attended by the press and the minutes of each area meeting are listed on the agenda at a subsequent Council meeting for noting.

Elected Representatives

Clare County Council consists of 28 elected members representing five Electoral Areas and four Municipal Districts. Local elections were held on 24th May, 2019, to fill 28 seats on Clare County Council.

Municipal Districts

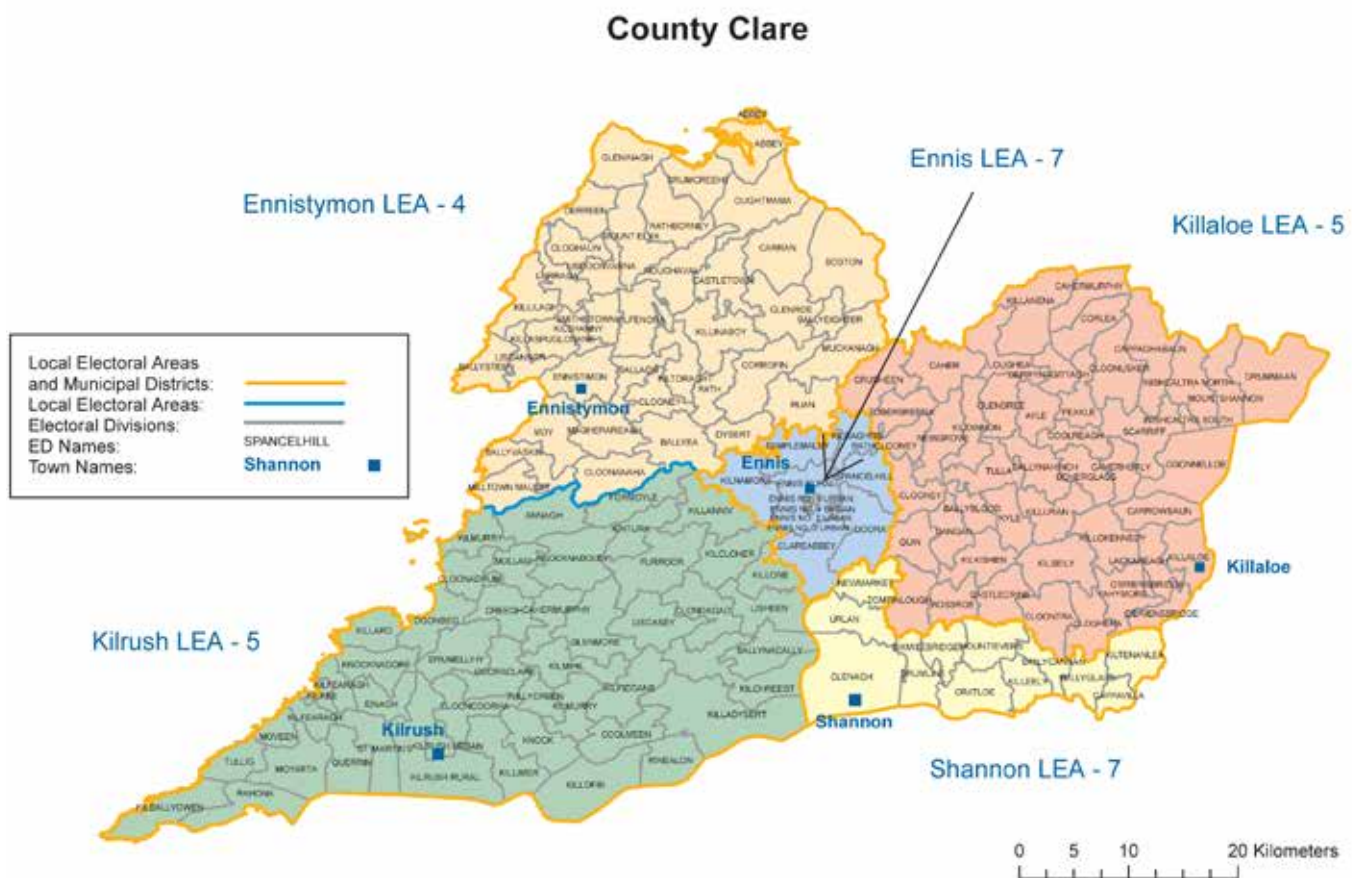
There are 4 MDs in Clare as follows:

Ennis MD - Ennis Local Electoral Area

Killaloe MD - Killaloe Local Electoral Area

Shannon MD - Shannon Local Electoral Area

West Clare MD - Kiltrush and Ennistymon Local Electoral Areas



Corporate Policy Group

The Corporate Policy Group consists of the Cathaoirleach of the day together with the chairs of the Strategic Policy Committee. Each Municipal District is represented on the CPG. It has a statutory basis set out in Section 133 of the Local Government Act, 2001 and has specific functions in relation to the preparation of the Annual Budget and the Corporate Plan. The Corporate Policy Group meets on a monthly basis with the Council Executive.

Strategic Policy Committees

Strategic Policy Committees (SPC) are structured around the main functions of Council. They are made up of Elected Councillors and other representatives of the social partners and other sectoral interests. Each SPC is chaired by an Elected Councillor and is supported by a Director of Services. The task of the SPC is to assist and advise the Council in the formulation, development and review of policy. The SPCs will not be concerned with individual representational or operational issues. Final policy decisions,

however, will ultimately rest with the full Council acting as a body.

Clare County Council adopted a new SPC Scheme 2019-2024 in October 2019. The new scheme provides for four SPCs as follows:

- **Economic Development SPC**
- **Physical Development SPC**
- **Rural Development SPC**
- **Social Development SPC.**

The climate change agenda and the biodiversity agenda are key policy areas across all SPCs.

Each councillor is a member of an SPC and each SPC has at least a third of the membership drawn from sectoral interests. The sectoral representatives for the SPCs are drawn from the agriculture/farming, environmental/conservation, development/construction, business/commercial, trade union, community/voluntary and social inclusion sectors.

The membership of each SPC is as follows:

SPC Membership

Economic Development SPC	Members	
Elected Members	ClIr Pat McMahon (Chairperson) ClIr P.J. Kelly ClIr Pat Daly	ClIr PJ Ryan ClIr Michael Begley ClIr Gabriel Keating ClIr Johnny Flynn
Agriculture & Farming	Rosaleen O'Reilly	
Environment/ Conservation	Emma Karan	
Development/ Construction	Pat Keogh	
Business/ Commercial	Pat Morris	
Trade Unions	Seamus Ryan	
Social Inclusion	Elaine d'Alton	

Physical Development SPC	Members	
Elected Members	Cllr John Crowe (Chairperson) Cllr Patrick O’Gorman Cllr Alan O’Callaghan	Cllr Clare Colleran Molloy Cllr Joe Cooney Cllr Ian Lynch Cllr Liam Grant
Agriculture & Farming	Kieran Woods	
Environment/ Conservation	Aisling Wheeler, Therese O’Donohue	
Development/ Construction	Lorchan Hoyne	
Community/ Voluntary	Damon Matthew Wise	
Social Inclusion	Padraic Hayes	

Rural Development SPC	Members	
Elected Members	Cllr Pat Hayes (Chairperson) Cllr Bill Chambers Cllr Cillian Murphy	Cllr Shane Talty Cllr Joe Killeen Cllr Mary Howard Cllr Pat Burke
Agriculture & Farming	Denis Tuohy	
Environment/ Conservation	Anny Wise	
Business/ Commercial	Niamh O’Callaghan	
Community/ Voluntary	Eugene Crimmins	
Social Inclusion	Jean Tierney	

Social Development SPC	Members	
Elected Members	Cllr Gerard Flynn (Chairperson) Cllr Tony O’Brien Cllr Mark Nestor / Cllr Tom O’Callaghan	Cllr Paul Murphy Cllr Joe Garrihy Cllr Ann Norton Cllr D McGettigan
Development/ Construction	Larry Brennan	
Business/ Commercial	William Cahir	
Trade Unions	Tommy Guilfoyle	
Community/ Voluntary	Mary Leahy	
Social Inclusion	Noel Kearney	

Representation of Elected Members on Committees

Appointment of Chair Designate for each of the four Strategic Policy Committees

Cllrs P. McMahon, P. Hayes, J. Crowe, G. Flynn

Regional Assembly

Cllrs A. O'Callaghan, P. J. Kelly

Education & Training Board

Cllrs A. Norton, P. Murphy, G. Keating, C. C Molloy, J. Killeen

Local Authority Members Association

Cllr B. Chambers

Association of Irish Local Government

Cllrs J. Crowe, M. Begley, P. Daly

Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd.

Cllr C. Collieran Molloy

Board of Management of Kilkee Waterworld

Cllr C. Murphy

Board of Management of Lahinch Seaworld

Cllr S. Talty

Hunt Museum Trust

Cllr P. Murphy

Lisdoonvarna Fáilte

Cllr J. Killeen

Board of Glór Irish Music Centre

Cllrs L. Grant, M. Howard

Clare Sports Partnership

Cllrs J. Killeen, J. Garrihy

Local Traveller Accommodation Advisory Committee

Cllrs T. O'Brien, C. Collieran Molloy, D. McGettigan, A. Norton, P. Murphy, J. Garrihy

Twinning Committee

Cllrs M. Begley, P.J. Ryan, P. McMahon, P. Hayes, T. O'Brien, J. Crowe, P. Murphy, M. Howard, Cathaoirleach of the day

County Clare Road Safety Working Group.

Cllrs C. Murphy, J. Cooney, P.J. Ryan

County Rural Water Monitoring Committee

Cllrs L. Grant, S. Talty, P. Burke

Active Ennis Sports and Leisure Committee

Cllrs T. O'Callaghan, A. Norton, J. Flynn

Audit Committee

Cllrs P. Hayes, G. Keating

Regional Health Forum West

Cllrs L. Grant, C. Murphy, B. Chambers, M. Howard

Joint Policing Committee

Cllrs I. Lynch, A. Norton, M. Begley, P.J. Ryan, B. Chambers, P. Daly, P. McMahon, A. O'Callaghan, J. Killeen (for 2 years), S. Talty (for 3 years), M. Howard, P. Murphy, P. Burke, J. Crowe, G. Keating

Kilrush Amenity Trust

Cllrs I. Lynch, G. Keating

Board of Clare Local Development Company

Cllrs P.J. Ryan, G. Keating, J. Killeen

Local Community Development Committee

Cllrs B. Chambers, C. Murphy, J. Flynn, G. Flynn

Western Inter County Railway Committee

Cllrs A. O'Callaghan, P. Hayes, L. Grant, J. Crowe, G. Keating

Standing Orders Sub-Committee

Cllrs B. Chambers, C. Colleran Molloy, P. Murphy, J. Cooney, P.J. Ryan, G. Flynn,
Cathaoirleach of the day

Memorial Committee

Cllrs P. O’Gorman, C. Colleran Molloy, A. Norton, G. Flynn, P. Murphy, J. Cooney

Rural Development Forum

Two Councillors to be nominated from each
Municipal District

Board of Cliffs of Moher

Cllr S. Talty, G. Keating

**Governing Body of the National University
of Ireland**

Cllr C. Colleran Molloy

Ennis 2040 Strategic Development**Designated Activity Company (DAC)**

Cllrs C. Colleran Molloy, A. Norton, M. Howard



FINANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICES DIRECTORATE



NOELEEN FITZGERALD
Director of Finance
and Support Services

Finance Department

The Finance Department has primary responsibility for a range of functions including financial accounting and reporting, budgeting, commercial rates billing and collection, supplier payments, payroll administration, procurement compliance, the budget process, treasury management and other accounting and compliance activities. The Finance Department oversees effective expenditure controls and debt collection, with the overall

objective of providing support services to the Social, Economic, Physical and Rural directorates of the Council where total annual expenditure exceeds €225 million.

Financial accounting and reporting

Covid-19 has had a profound impact on our society and the economy, the effects of which will continue well into the future. In 2022, there were visible indications of a return to pre-pandemic levels of business activity, however the latest challenge now facing us is the war in Europe and its knock-on effects on Ireland and the economy. The Council showed remarkable resilience during the pandemic in continuing to provide uninterrupted services and now takes the lead in co-ordinating services to our Ukrainian community. The war has plunged our businesses and communities back into uncertainty with rising inflation, rising interest rates and a volatile energy market.

The Annual Financial Statement 2022 gives an overview of the financial position of Clare County Council at 31st December, 2022. The table on page 120 outlines the results for the year in abridged format. The Council incurred total expenditure of €225.6m (excluding

transfer for expenditure) during 2022. This comprises revenue expenditure of €137.4m and capital expenditure of €88.2m. In total, broadly in line with overall expenditure in 2021 of €217.3m. Notwithstanding the continuing challenges referenced, I am pleased to report that the 2022 Statement of Comprehensive Income (Income and Expenditure Account) shows a near balanced position after the funding of revenue and own resource funding of capital projects. This represents a positive outcome given the fiscal climate and builds on the results of recent years.

Commercial rates

Commercial rates income is this Council's main income source for the delivery of services. 2022 saw the Covid-19 rates waiver come to an end in Q1 2022 with €2.3m paid to targeted business. This was over €9m less received in 2022 than 2021. The government supports in this area since 2020 have had a positive impact on our irrecoverable commercial rates. However, all customers returning to full commercial rates payable was not without challenges in 2022.

Clare County Council billed a total of €43.8m in commercial rates in 2022. This Council reports a collection percentage of 87%, the same percentage collection as 2021 and 2020 (adjusted for the rates waiver). Arrears on commercial rates reduced by €0.5m in the year, a consistent reduction year on year.

The Council continues to engage with all customers in agreeing payment arrangements and has reinstated legal proceedings having stepped down during the pandemic. It is important to note that there are a large number of customers whose business were impacted by the current economic environment and this Council will continue to engage with these customers on their payment of commercial rates.

The revaluation of commercial rates for

County Clare, which was deferred to 2024 due to Covid-19, is part of a national programme to ensure that the rateable valuation of all commercial and industrial properties reflect contemporary property valuations and bring increased transparency and equity to the rating system. The process will continue into 2023 with new market valuations being agreed and in place for 2024.

Revenue and capital budget planning

In November 2022, the Council adopted its multi-year capital budget 2023-2025 and its 2023 revenue budget. This followed extensive deliberations by members taking cognisance of the difficult economic environment prevailing post the pandemic and in an inflationary environment. This budget was adopted with no increase in additional business charges in 2023.

Procurement

The Council operated to the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) procurement framework. In 2022 this area was enhanced to provide additional support to sections as expenditure across all directorates reached a level in excess of €220m. Further system and process enhancements are planned in 2023.

Motor taxation

The Motor Tax section has responsibility for dealing with motor tax applications from the Motor Tax office in Ennis. In addition, the Municipal District in Kilrush, Ennistymon and Scariff facilitate the renewal of motor tax online. All motor tax receipts are remitted on a daily basis to the central exchequer. €4.8m was received by Clare Motor Tax office for the period January to December 2022. This was up €1.1m on 2021 receipts and reflects the return to in-customer attendance at the motor tax

office in Ennis. The online motor tax system is managed by the Department of Transport and, in 2022, 83% of transactions were online (corresponding down on 2021 level of 86%). In 2022, the motor tax public counter operated with reduced opening hours, with agreement to return to pre-Covid opening hours in 2023.

Internal Audit

The Internal Audit unit is part of the Council's Corporate Governance structure. It is an independent appraisal function within the Council charged with reviewing activities across all areas within Clare Local Authority. The role of Internal Audit is to provide independent assurance that an organisation's risk management, governance and internal control processes are operating effectively. An Internal Audit Charter sets out the role and responsibilities of the Internal Auditor and Management.

The Internal Audit unit:

- Operates to a Multi-Annual Internal Audit Plan which sets out a schedule of audit reviews and spot checks to be carried out. Recommendations made are followed up with management
- Interacts with the Council's Audit Committee and the external Local Government Auditor in promoting risk management, good accounting practices

and improving the focus on value for money throughout the organisation.

Internal Audit has developed a hybrid model of working resulting in future internal audits being conducted in a number of different ways by the Internal Audit Unit, Clare County Council supported by an External Audit Firm. A number of final reports, recommendation tables and the Quality Assurance Report were completed throughout the year.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Department

Clare County Council Information and Communication Technology (ICT) operations department is part of the Finance and Support Services Directorate. ICT operations provides directorates, Municipal Districts, departments, and over 600 users with ICT services and support. Services include ICT infrastructure, ICT applications, enterprise software solutions, graphical information systems (GIS), and web services.

Over the past few years, ICT has embraced innovative technologies digitising services, stretching the functionality of existing solutions to improve service delivery, support blended working, and enable working on the move.



ICT operations achievements in 2022 included the following:

- Supported the Planning department in implementing e-Planning. Enabling members of the public to submit planning applications online
- Upgrade of the Financial Management Systems supported by the Finance department
- Installing a video conferencing system in the Council Chamber along with the Corporate Services department to support hybrid meetings
- Provided support services for 5,000+ calls for ICT support from Clare County Council staff
- Improved Clare County Council's Core ICT infrastructure. The project replaced older technology with a hyper-converged solution and provided the ICT capacity and reliability to meet Clare County Council ICT services demands
- Overhauled the back-up solution to provide added protection against information loss
- The setup and testing of an offsite disaster recovery (DR) site to provide additional protection for critical services was finalised
- Thirty online consultation projects were supported to directorates, Municipal Districts, and departments
- In response to the growing cyber security threats, ICT operations introduced 24/7 monitoring, detection, and response services
- The ICT service desk was updated providing users with simplified access to support servers and the ICT operations team with enhanced functionality to support remote workers
- The migration from on-premises email to cloud email, supplying increased security, storage, and functionality was completed

- Partnered with Human Resources to introduce a GDPR and cyber security training solution. HR successfully used the software to provide over 300 users with GDPR and cyber training in 2022
- Completed upgrades to iHouse, iPlan, iReg, and the Financial Management System. This process is ongoing
- The rollout of blended working solutions for users in Clare County Council was completed.

Human Resources

During 2022, the Human Resources (HR) Department oversaw the delivery of a significant work programme in line with its Team Plan for the year. The key areas of focus were: workforce planning; recruitment; the Local Authorities People Strategy; learning and development programmes; equality and diversity and employee wellbeing supports. The main highlights are summarised below.

Workforce planning

A strategic workforce planning process commenced in March 2022. The process was agreed by the Senior Management Team and included an examination of the following:

- The Organisation and its Environment
- Workforce Profile and Analysis
- Workforce Needs
- Workforce Gaps and Financial Resources
- Action Plan
- Monitoring and Evaluation.

A series of workshops and meetings took place throughout the process and a draft plan was presented in August 2022 with a final draft prepared and completed in early 2023.

Recruitment

In order to meet the needs of Council



departments, recruitment campaigns were organised and candidates selected and placed where vacancies arose. The process includes eligibility assessment, shortlisting of candidates, final selection, onboarding and induction. The recruitment section ran 52 recruitment campaigns during 2022 and 34 panels were formed as a result. These panels related to administrative, technical, outdoor and managerial positions.

The Co-operative Education Programme facilitated a number of third-level students to gain invaluable work experience in various departments of the Council.

Learning and Development

In-person and online training programmes, webinars and information sessions are rolled out to staff on a continuous basis throughout the year. There is an extensive range of programmes on offer and some are mandatory training particularly having regard to health and safety obligations. A specific emphasis was placed on Climate Action training.

A new training platform was made available on the intranet whereby staff can express an interest in a wide variety of training programmes. The areas of interest include business skills, climate action, continuing education, continuing professional development, diversity and inclusion, health and safety, remote working, leading myself,

leading my team, PMDS and wellbeing.

The Excellence Through People Gold standard was retained again in 2022. The process included a series of interviews with staff and management.

The Engineers Ireland CPD Accredited Employer Standard was audited in February 2022. It was a rigorous process where presentations and interviews/meetings were arranged with a number of staff across the organisation. The accreditation was secured for a further three years and there are a number of recommendations to be examined and implemented.

Performance Management and Development System

The requirement to implement the Performance Management and Development System was notified to staff at the start of the year. The process includes formal conversations between the staff member and the line manager at the start of the year, mid year and year end. The system promotes the development and implementation of Team Plans and Personal Development Plans and Training Plans.

Policy implementation

Blended working as a policy was formally introduced to the local government sector in 2022. The Blended Working Policy and

Procedure, the Blended Working Framework document, supplementary FAQ document and step-by-step process map were made available to staff and applications invited. Remote workstation ergonomics assessments were completed as part of the process including cyber security and data protection training. There was a good level of interest in the policy.

Equality and diversity

Clare County Council has established an Equality and Human Rights Working Group which is led by the Human Resources Department. The group will progress the development of an Equality and Human Rights Action Plan, in line with the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty. Public bodies have a statutory duty to eliminate discrimination, promote equality and protect the human rights of staff and end users. In this regard, Clare County Council is required to assess, address and report on progress in relation to equality and human rights, in a manner accessible to the public.

HR management systems

CoreHR is the human resources system in use in Clare County Council. A number of upgrades to the system were made during 2022 which allows greater functionality. The Recruitment Team is currently examining the possibility of using a recruitment module on Core.

A new host site for online learning called MetaCompliance was launched during 2022. The site enables the completion of short compliance courses such as Cyber Security, GDPR, phishing, etc. and related Council policies. Many staff will already have completed Cyber Security and GDPR courses on this host site. New modules will become available over time and new content such as policies, new e-learning programmes, and information sharing will become available.

Employee wellbeing

A number of national initiatives were promoted to staff during the year including the Hello, How Are You? Day, National Workplace Wellbeing Day, free lunch-time yoga classes, Suicide Awareness Training (Safe Talk), World Mental Health Day and Bank at Work.

An Employee Health Screening Programme was launched on 20th June, 2022. The screening service was offered in Ennis, Ennistymon, Shannon, Kilrush, and Killaloe. The programme was well received by staff and will be offered every two to three years.

The Flu Vaccination Programme was made available to staff and members in October 2022.

Dr Maire Finn gave a presentation to staff on 'All Things Menopause' on 6th October, 2022. This two-hour session was well attended and very informative.

Under the Employee Assistance Programme, Professional Counselling Services continue to be made available to all staff.

Gender Pay Gap Report

Clare County Council published its Gender Pay Gap Report for 2022 on 20th December, 2022. The gender pay gap is the difference in the average hourly wage of men and women across the workforce. Employers with more than 250 employees in Ireland are now required to publish their gender pay gap data. The 2022 report shows a Mean Gender Pay Gap of -7.04%. This means that on average, females occupy higher paid roles than males. The Median Gender Pay Gap of -15.73% means that there is a strong representation of females in upper management roles in Clare County Council.

Corporate Services

The Corporate Services Department provides a support service to the elected members and to Council management and administers a number of functions directly to the public.

Meetings of Clare County Council

Clare County Council conducts much of its business at meetings of the full Council. Such meetings are regulated by law.

During 2022 Clare County Council held the following types of meetings:

- Annual General Meeting - 1
- Ordinary Meetings - 11
- Adjourned Monthly Meetings - 2
- Budget Meetings - 1
- Special Meetings - 1

Meetings of the full Council are presided over by the Cathaoirleach of the Council. In the event that the Cathaoirleach is absent, the Leas Cathaoirleach chairs the meeting. The public and the media have a statutory right to attend meetings of the Council. Council meetings are held on the second Monday of each month with the exception being August. The statutory meetings are hosted in the Council Chamber, Áras Contae an Chláir, and via MS Teams.

The Annual General Meeting is held in June each year. Cllr Tony O'Brien, who represents Killaloe Municipal District, was elected Cathaoirleach in June 2022 for the ensuing year. Councillor Ann Norton, who represents Ennis Municipal District, was elected Leas Cathaoirleach at that same meeting.

Corporate Plan 2019 -2024

The Corporate Plan 2019-2024 was adopted on 14th December, 2019. Clare County Council will be a professional, responsive and agile local government that will lead the social,

economic, physical and rural development of our county, and to have sustainable communities at its heart.

Strategic Objectives 2019 -2024

Clare County Council operates under five directorates, namely Social Development, Physical Development, Rural and Tourism Development, Economic Development, and Finance and Support Services. These directorates have agreed strategic objectives and supporting strategies as set out below. In 2022, a new directorate, Ukrainian Services Development, was established in the Council.

► Economic Directorate

To facilitate a pro-active economic environment where businesses locate and grow and create sustainable employment to support our communities, thus enhancing the economic value of County Clare.

► Social Directorate

To enhance the quality of life for the people of County Clare through the provision of appropriate housing supports to those in need and by enabling and fostering access to information, learning, arts, cultural and recreational opportunities.



► Rural and Tourism Directorate

To put in place a process of engagement in a rural development strategy to deliver key projects that will improve the quality of life, social and economic wellbeing of people in County Clare.

► Physical Directorate

To deliver, maintain and protect key infrastructure to facilitate the economic, social, physical and rural development of County Clare in a manner which promotes sustainability, accessibility, connectivity and respect for the environment.

► Finance and Support Services Directorate

To provide human resources, financial and corporate infrastructure to support and develop the Council's ability to deliver evolving services to its customers by empowering our staff and enabling them to deliver to their best capacity.

► Ukrainian Services Development Directorate

In response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine a new directorate was established in 2022 to focus on the coordination of services and assist in the protection of displaced people from Ukraine.

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee has an independent role in advising the Council on financial reporting, processes, internal control, risk management and audit matters, as part of the systematic review of the control environment and governance procedures of the Council. It supports the work of the Internal Audit Department and advises the Chief Executive in relation to the operation and development of the department.

The committee is non-executive and is independent in the determination of its work programme and in formulating any recommendations, taking account of the

functions referred to above.

Consequent to the 2019 local elections, a new committee was formed. The new committee will run for the full duration of the Council 2019-2024. The committee has five members, three external members and two elected members as follows:

- Austin Slattery, qualified Chartered Accountant (Chairperson)
- Ms Rose Hally
- Mr Jimmy Browne
- Cllr Gabriel Keating
- Cllr Pat Hayes.

The committee met six times in total in 2022. The committee completes an annual report to Council each year.

Civic/Mayoral Receptions 2022

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr PJ Ryan, hosted a Mayoral Awards ceremony in June 2022, conferring awards on the following worthy recipients:

- Patrick Mungovan - water rescue at Quilty
- Róisín Cahill - winner of gold medal at the European Ocean Kayak Racing Championships
- Seán Óg Healy - leukaemia survivor promoting compliance with Covid-19 guidelines
- Patsy Neville - 12 O'Clock Hills Walk
- Scarriff Ogonnelloe Camogie Club - winner of the Munster Senior Camogie title
- The Samaritans - celebrating 40 years in County Clare
- Ennis Tidy Towns - winner of the 2021 Supervalu National Tidy Towns awards.



Register of Electors

Clare County Council is responsible for the compilation of the Register of Electors for County Clare. The boundary of the Dáil constituency of Clare is the same as the county boundary of Clare in accordance with the Electoral amendment (Dáil Constituencies) Act 2017.

Electoral Reform Act 2022: modernisation of the electoral registration process

Following the commencement of the Electoral Reform Act October 2022, legislation is now in place for significant electoral reforms in line with commitments in the Programme for Government - Our Shared Future. These include:

- The establishment of an independent Electoral Commission
- The modernisation of the electoral registration process
- The regulation of online political advertisements and
- Amendments to facilitate voting when Covid-19 type restrictions are in place.

Of particular relevance to local authorities are the provisions relating to the modernisation of the electoral registration process, which are designed to take better account of modern realities such as improved access to technology, a more mobile population and a better understanding of issues that different people face in exercising their rights.

The electorate can now access www.checktheregister.ie to register to vote, and update their details, including PPS number and Eircode. The register is now a rolling register, with no requirement for a supplementary register to be published.

Every person aged 18 years of age or over and who permanently resides at a particular

address within the state is eligible for inclusion on the Register of Electors.

While every resident is entitled to be registered, the registration authority needs to know a person's citizenship to determine the elections at which they may vote.

Persons can apply to be on the pending register from the age of 16. Their application will be activated once they turn 18 years of age.

The total number of Local Government electors on the 2022/2023 Register of Electors in Clare is 91,683.

Protected Disclosures Act 2014

Clare County Council confirms that one protected disclosure was received in 2022 and review is ongoing.

Business Innovation 2022

Clare County Council's Business Innovation team, consisting of representatives from various directorates, worked on delivering the actions in the Business Innovation Strategy.

A number of business improvement projects were completed which include the introduction of:

- QR codes at our beaches to facilitate easy access to maps, tidal times and beach byelaws
- Home energy saving kits for people to borrow from Clare Libraries. These kits inform the user of how much energy their homes use
- Online ethics declarations
- Engagement HQ Platform - Online consultation tool.



Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government award: Local Authority of the Year 2022.

Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government award

Clare County Council was awarded the overall Local Authority of the Year 2022 award for its commitment to serving the community and for raising the area's profile nationally as a stand-out destination.

In total, 15 projects were submitted as entries to this awards competition. Eight of these projects were shortlisted for consideration. Of these awards Clare County Council achieved:

- Festival of the Year Award - Ennis Mela Festival, which saw over 50 performers from countries worldwide perform alongside local diverse communities from Clare in March.
- Sustaining the Arts Award - House! Open Air Aerial Dance Spectacle with Fidget Feet, a dance spectacle that was commissioned by Clare County Council and premiered in Ennis in April.

Customer Care Co-Ordinator

The Council is committed to providing a quality service to all its customers and has a complaints/comments policy in place. The Council's Customer Care Co-ordinator investigates all complaints/comments received. A person not satisfied with the response provided by the Customer Care Co-ordinator can request to have their case reviewed again by the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services. In 2022, the Customer Care Co-ordinator responded to 11 complaints received, five of which were dealt with under appeal, to the Senior Executive Officer.

Our Customer Services Team continued to provide excellent customer service, working with members of the public who presented at Áras Contae an Chláir, assisting them with their queries and directing them to appropriate services.

Communications and Public Relations



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

In 2022, the Communications Office issued more than 140 media releases, resulting in extensive local and national coverage, and responded to press queries from local and national media.

The Communications Office updates social media channels with creative content to enhance engagement with the public and maintain awareness of the work of the Council. The Council's corporate social media accounts now have a combined following of approximately 30,500.

During 2022's severe weather events, the Communications Office provided regular updates and advice to the public via local and national media, social media channels, and the news section of the Clare County Council website.

Clare County Council supported several worthy causes throughout 2022, with the

Communications Office helping to raise awareness of local and national initiatives.

'The Banner Bulletin' staff newsletter and Monthly Management Reports, reporting the progress made by Clare County Council directorates during the preceding month, were produced. The Communications Office also continued to provide news items for the main Council website, as well as the staff Intranet and Extranet.

The Graphic Design and Print Service staff further enhanced the quality of internal and external communications carried out by Clare County Council, by producing high-quality design and print material.

Office of the Ombudsman

This office was established under the Ombudsman Act, 1980. Its role is to investigate complaints about administrative actions, delays or inactions, adversely affecting persons or bodies in their dealings with state bodies including Local Authorities. The Office of the Ombudsman dealt with 16 customer complaints in 2022 which were referred to Clare County Council for a response and report.

Ombudsman for Children

In 2022, no complaint was made to the Ombudsman for Children.

Freedom of Information & Data Protection

Freedom of Information

In 2022 there were 101 Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, 9 internal reviews and 4 appeals to the Information Commissioner.

The outcome of requests received in 2022 was as follows: granted - 14; part-granted - 40; refused - 33; transferred - 4. A further 7 were withdrawn and handled outside the FOI process and three were decided upon in 2023.

The categories of requester in 2022 were as follows: journalists - 30; business interest groups - 4; public representatives - 0; staff - 0; clients/others - 67.

The policy of Clare County Council is:

“To give members of the public access to information held by this authority, to the greatest extent possible, in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014 and consistent with the public interest and the right to privacy of the individual.”

Further information, application form and details of the fee structure is available on the Council’s website at: <https://www.clarecoco.ie/your-council/how-we-manage-information/freedom-of-information/how-to-apply-for-information/>.

The Freedom of Information Act sets out appeal mechanisms in the event of a refusal of a request, or in relation to deferral of access, charges, form of access etc. Fees are also payable in certain cases on appeal. The fee for an internal review under Section 21 is €30 (€10 for medical card holders and their dependants). The fee for appeals to the Information Commissioner under Section 22 is €50 (€15 for medical card holders and their dependants).

Data Protection

Clare County Council processes all personal information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Acts, 1988 to 2018. GDPR has set out extensive obligations on data controllers and processors and provided strengthened protections and rights for data subjects. During 2022, the Data Protection Officer (DPO) provided advice, guidance and support to departments in relation to GDPR and provided training to increase understanding of the GDPR and how best to meet specific obligations. Data access requests and data breaches are also

handled through the DPO. In 2022, there were 37 data access requests made under the Data Protection Acts/GDPR for personal data held by the Council, 27 third party access requests and 10 data subject access requests.

Privacy Statement

Clare County Council is committed to protecting and respecting privacy. The Privacy Statement lets you know how we look after your personal data. It also informs you as to our obligations and your rights under data protection law. Clare County Councils privacy statement can be found at: <https://www.clarecoco.ie/%5binfo%5d/privacy-statement/>

Records Management

Our Records Management Unit ensured that vital records are permanently and securely preserved. Substantial volumes of records were archived which are required to be retained under the National Retention Policy for Local Authority Records. In addition, records were disposed of in accordance with the National Retention Policy for Local Authority Records.

Works were completed at the Quin Road Records storage facility. The ADLIB Records Management database system is now being used to record all files stored in Archives.

Records management has collected all Chief Executive Orders, County Council minute books and registers of electors that will be bound and subsequently archived, thus ensuring vital records are permanently and securely preserved.



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE



CARMEL KIRBY
Director of Physical Development

Roads and Transportation Department

Roads and Transportation co-ordinate the design, maintenance and improvement of the national, regional and local road network throughout the county and also has responsibility for road safety, public lighting, hedgecutting, parking management, active travel, insurances, health & safety and arterial drainage.

Schedule of Municipal District works 2022

The 2022 Schedule of Municipal Districts Works provided for a roadworks programme which had a total fund of €48.4m. This programme was completed and all approved allocations drawn from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), the Department of Transport (DoT) and the National Transport Authority (NTA) respectively.

Listed hereunder are a number of the highlights/works that took place:

- Strengthening/surface dressing of more than 269km of the road network
- Continuation of enhanced bridge remediation programme. Works were carried out on 24 bridges in 2022
- Completion of six safety improvement schemes.

Public lighting

Clare County Council has responsibility for the management and maintenance of approximately 14,900 public lights in the

county. Public lighting is by far the largest energy consumption component of local authority infrastructure and the costs associated with same continue to increase. Currently all lights that have reached end of life use due to the lack of replacement parts or age are being replaced with new LED luminaries which are more energy efficient. 63.7% of the public lights in Clare have been changed to LED through maintenance. The key priorities in relation to public lighting include changeover to LED technology, achievement of the 2020 carbon footprint reduction target and replacement of supporting infrastructure where required.

Clare County Council has confirmed its participation and has signed up to be included in Region 1 of the Local Authority Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP). The contract for the region was tendered in Autumn of 2020 and the Design Build Works Contract was signed with Le Cheile Consortium in late December 2021. The contract is programmed to commence in Clare in July 2023. The retrofit of these lights will significantly reduce the level of carbon emissions attributed to the public lighting assets in Clare County Council.

Active Travel 2022

In 2022, Clare County Council received an allocation of €5.298m for projects under the National Transport Authority's (NTA) Active Travel programme. Funding of €4.5m has been allocated for 28 projects in 2023 to complete the 2022 programme and initiate further projects. The National Active Travel Programme is a rolling five-year programme.

Other Roads activities

Community Hedgecutting Grant

Clare County Council provided an allocation of €15,000 to continue the Community Hedgecutting Grant Scheme in 2022. Thirty-eight grants were approved in 2022. This

initiative is facilitating greater awareness among landowners of their responsibilities in relation to management of roadside hedges on their properties.

Community Involvement Scheme

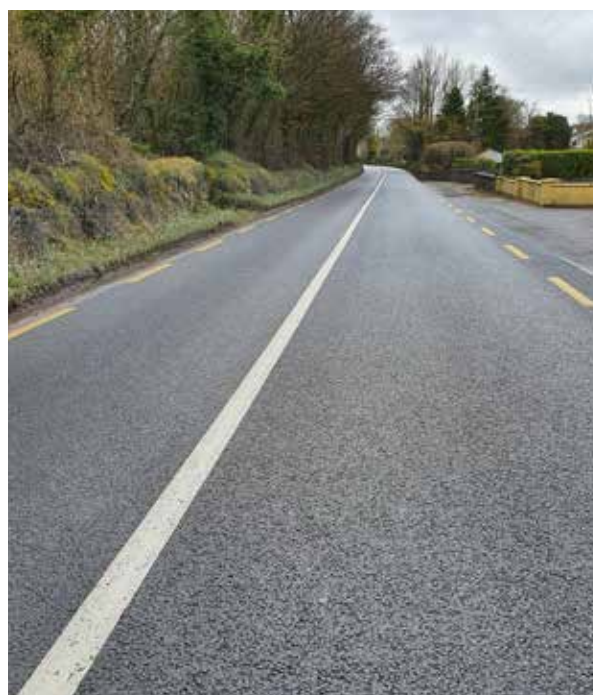
An allocation of €726,000 under the Community Involvement Scheme in 2022 facilitated work being carried out to 15 public roads throughout the county.

Local Improvement Scheme

Clare County Council was allocated total grant funding of €1,238,015 for Local Improvement Schemes (LIS) from the Department of Rural and Community Development in 2022. The grant funding facilitated the approval and completion of LIS works to 25 non-public roads in 2022.

Traffic Management

The Council has responsibility for the management and enforcement of traffic throughout the county. Parking bye-laws and pay and display facilities are in operation in Ennis, Kilrush, Kilkee, Lahinch and Doolin. A countywide parking review commenced in 2022 and will continue into 2023.



Roads Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators for 2022 are set out below.

R1 % of roads that received a PSCI condition rating

Description	%
% of Regional roads that received a PSCI rating in 24 months prior to 31/12/2022	74%
% of Local Primary roads that received a PSCI rating in 24 months prior to 31/12/2022	73%
% of Local Secondary road that received a PSCI rating in 24 months prior to 31/12/2022	69%
% of Local Tertiary road that received a PSCI rating in 24 months prior to 31/12/2022	76%

R1 B % of roads represented by PSCI condition rating

Road Type	1-4 Rating	5-6 Rating	7-8 Rating	9-10 Rating
Regional	2.72%	20.68%	42.57%	33.66%
Local Primary	2.56%	21.47%	44.43%	25.71%
Local Secondary	5.02%	29.11%	37.52%	22.03%
Local Tertiary	27.40%	24.50%	22.00%	15.50%

R2 Regional Road Works

Km of Regional road strengthened during 2022	12.88km
Amount expended on Regional road strengthening during 2022	€4,384,511
Km of Regional road resealed during 2022	15.63km
Amount expended on Regional road resealing during 2022	€ 563,751

R2 Local Road Works

Km of Local road strengthened during 2022	105.26km
Amount expended on Local road strengthening during 2022	€ 9,226,403
Km of Local road resealed during 2022	146.56km
Amount expended on Local road resealing during 2022	€ 2,793,205



New pedestrian crossing under Doolin Active Travel scheme.



Pedestrian crossing at Eire Og for Ennis National School 'Walking Bus'.

Health & Safety

In 2022, a key health & safety objective for Clare County Council was to enhance communication and awareness around health & safety post-Covid-19. This was achieved with a return to face-to-face health & safety briefings with outdoor staff, development of a suite of safety posters supported by toolbox talks to enhance awareness on root causes of incidents from 2021 and rolling out e-learning modules on manual handling and slips, trips and falls to indoor staff.

In addition, Serious Incident Simulated Exercises were delivered in each Municipal District to senior staff in order to refresh staff on the Clare County Council Serious Incident Procedure.

Bespoke training on contact with underground services was delivered to outdoor staff.

The Clare County Council Covid-19 Response Plan was revised in February 2022 in accordance with sector and Government guidance. The LGMA High Level Local Authority Transitional Good Practice Guidance published in February 2022 for Continuing to Prevent the Spread of Covid-19 superseded the Covid-19 Standard Operational Guidance documents (SOGs) and placed a continued onus on individuals to self-isolate if symptomatic/positive and not to attend the workplace, with the employer required to maintain Covid-19 signage, hand-sanitising stations and infection prevention and control measures.

The above initiatives in conjunction with the annual programme of work of Safety Statement/Risk Assessment and documentation reviews, the completion of 287 safety inspections and an internal H&S audit across all five directorates resulted in a significant reduction in reportable accidents in total and a reduction in contact with underground services in comparison to 2021.

Physical Development SPC

The Physical Development Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) held three meetings in 2022. This Committee has a membership of 13, comprising 7 elected members and representatives from the following sectors:

- Agriculture/Farming
- Environment/Conservation
- Development/Construction
- Community/Voluntary
- Social Inclusion.

The Chairperson of the SPC is Cllr John Crowe.

Issues discussed by the SPC in 2022 included the following:

- Biodiversity
- Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATs)
- Fire & Emergency Operations Plan
- Electric Vehicles (EVs) and EV charging points
- Rights of Nature and opportunities for councils in Ireland
- National Cycle Network
- Active Travel
- Climate Action Plan.





Examples of works undertaken by the Roads and Transportation Department.

Project Management Office

Progress continued throughout 2022 across the range of major capital projects being managed and delivered by the Project Management Office (PMO).

Some of the main highlights of 2022 include the following.

National and Non-National Roads Projects

- After over two years since submitting the application, An Bord Pleanála confirmed the CPO for the N67/ N85 Ennistymon Inner Relief (Blake's Corner) project in late 2022 allowing for the project to progress. However, its decision was subsequently challenged in the High Court, the outcome of which is awaited and will determine the next steps in the delivery of this critical infrastructure.
- Following many years in the making,

the contract for the Killaloe Bridge and Bypass project was awarded to Sisk contractors in March 2022 and construction work commenced on site in August 2022. Completion is expected in mid-2025.

- Work continued throughout the year in the design and evolution of the plans for the N19 Shannon Airport Access Road Improvement Scheme.
- Disappointingly, the Limerick Northern Distributor Road (LNDR) was omitted at the Minister's request from the final copy of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS). It still very much remains an objective of Clare County Council and is provided for in the current County Development Plan.

Flood Relief Schemes

The long-awaited and crucially important Springfield Flood Relief Scheme was substantially completed in late 2022 with



Pictured at the official opening of the Ennis South Flood Relief Scheme on Tuesday, 21st June, were Minister of State with responsibility for the Office of Public Works, Patrick O'Donovan TD (right), with Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr PJ Ryan (centre), and Council Chief Executive, Pat Dowling (left).



In April 2022, Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD officially opened the River Fergus Walk and Cycleway, which runs from the R469 Quin Road in Ennis to the N85 Roundabout at Clareabbey along an area of significant recreational and visual amenity value.

just the permanent pump installation and some minor snagging remaining to be completed when works had to pause on site due to poor weather conditions. The works as constructed were tested late in the year and functioned as expected, giving the required level of protection and comfort to the affected community.

The two other large Catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) flood relief schemes in Clare, namely Shannon and Kilkee, were taken through the preliminary

design and option stages in 2022 as well as significant works being carried out throughout the year on a number of coastal locations and piers and harbours.

The snagging and final elements of the Ennis South Flood Relief Scheme were completed in early 2022 and these facilitated the construction of an extremely popular riverside walkway as an added value item to the scheme's primary function. During the year, Minister Patrick O'Donovan TD formally launched the Flood Relief Scheme and Minister Heather

Humphreys TD formally opened the Riverside Walk, which had received considerable Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) funding.

Greenways

In 2022, Consulting Engineers were appointed as technical advisors for Section 2 of the West Clare Railway Greenway project from Ennis to Ennistymon, while work continued apace on the priority section between Kilrush and Kilkee. Other Greenway proposals being worked on in 2022 include the Limerick to Scarriff Green/Blueway project in conjunction with Waterways Ireland as well as a number of smaller proposals in the Shannon, Bunratty and Sixmilebridge areas.

Other projects

Other projects being worked on by the PMO throughout 2022 include the Ennis Public Realm Regeneration Project, the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF) Road and Housing proposal in Clareen, the Doolin Pier Visitor Services Building, Kilkee Sea Wall, N19 upgrade at Kilnamona, as well as various coastal erosion and minor works schemes.

Overall, 2022 was a successful and productive year for the PMO Team with further works needing to be done in the coming year to ensure timely delivery of the key infrastructural projects for the benefit of Clare and the Mid-West region generally.

Fire & Building Control

Fire Service Operations

The Fire Service attended 1,117 call-outs in 2022, resulting in an increase of 24.1% on the number for 2021. There was no fire fatality in 2022 in County Clare. Chimney fire call-outs decreased by almost 25% from 88 in 2021 to 66 in 2022. There was also a 4% decrease in

domestic fires in 2022 from 48 to 46.

Capital/Procurement

The Brigade fleet took delivery of two previously owned Class B Fire Engines which were delivered to and went operational in Ennis and Kilkee Fire Stations in September 2022 at a cost of €120,047. Two further previously owned Class B Fire Engines were also procured in late 2022 and a tender was prepared for refurbishing these appliances. A new Class B Fire Appliance was ordered in 2022, with delivery expected in May 2023. Hand-portable radios were replaced in Ennistymon, Scarriff and Kilkee Fire Stations.

Recruitment and Retention

Recruitment and retention of Retained Personnel continues to be a challenge throughout the country. In Clare in 2022, five personnel were taken on but unfortunately five personnel left the service in the same period.

Health & Safety

In November 2022, Clare County Fire and Rescue Service attained reaccreditation to the ISO 45001 Health & Safety Management System Standard for the implementation of their Safety Management System throughout the service following an audit by the National Standards Authority Ireland (NSAI).

Fire Prevention

A total of 90 Fire Safety Certificate applications were received in 2022, an increase of 8.2% on the 2021 figure of 78. Fire Prevention Officers carried out 176 inspections and 69 licence applications were assessed. These apply to pubs, hotels, community centres and theatres throughout the county.

National Fire Safety Week took place from 17th–23rd October. A fire safety campaign involved firefighters visiting the homes of

older people and carrying out 'Home Fire Safety Checks'. Part of this visit included the installation of smoke detectors. The campaign is ongoing and has been very well received.

Building Control

A total of 12.38% of buildings notified to us through BCMS were inspected by Building Control staff in 2022, meeting our annual target of 12% to 15% inspections. A total of 68 Disability Access Certificate applications were assessed by the Building Control Section in 2022, an increase of 47% from 2021.

Major Emergency Management

Regional Major Emergency Management training resumed in 2022 with training provided in the following roles for Council personnel:

- Information Management
- Emergency Helpline
- On-Site Co-ordination.

Clare County Council participated in the following emergency exercises in 2022:

- Shannon Airport Fuel Farm Exercise
- M18/N18 Contraflow Exercise
- Shannon Estuary Inter Agency Emergency Exercise.

Dangerous Structures

Building control staff dealt with 19 Dangerous Structure complaints in 2022, an increase of 46% from 2021.



Fire & Building Control Performance Indicators		2022
F1	Cost per Capita	€49.75
F2-B	Average time taken, in minutes to mobilise Fire Brigades in Part-Time Stations in respect of fires	4.85 min
F2-D	Average time taken, in minutes to mobilise Fire Brigades in Part-Time Stations in respect of all other (non-fire) emergency incidents	4.90 min
F3-A	% of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	42.13%
F3-B	% of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	38.58%
F3-C	% of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	19.29%
F3-D	% of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	33.40%
F3-E	% of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	41.44%
F3-F	% of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	25.16%
P5-A	% of applications for fire safety certs that were decided (granted or refused) within two months of their receipt	75.93%
P5-B	% of applications for fire safety certs that were decided (granted or refused) within an extended period agreed with the applicant	22.22%
P1	Buildings Inspected as a percentage of new buildings notified to the local authority	12.10%

Expectations for 2023

Delivery of the new Class B Appliance is expected in May 2023. It is intended to seek capital grant funding to provide a two-bay appliance storage shed at Kilrush to allow for better storage of existing vehicles. It is intended to retain accreditation to OHSAS 45001 as part of Clare County Council's Health & Safety Management System.

It is planned that there will continue to be a substantial fire safety awareness campaign which will include a media campaign. The 'Home Fire Safety Checks' by the Fire Service will continue to target specific vulnerable groups in 2023 with the installation of smoke detectors and provision of fire safety advice.

Water Services

Water and wastewater operations

In 2022, works were completed in a number of areas, including significant mains replacements in Athlunkard, Shannon Town, Hermitage and O'Connell St in Ennis, and works commenced in 2022 in Doonbeg Village. Significant upgrade works were also completed to Castlake Water Treatment Plant inclusive of new chemical dosing units and filter replacements, upgrade and facilitation works in Clonmoney and Bunratty in addition to a reservoir cleaning programme on the Shannon-Sixmilebridge supply. Minor mains replacement projects

were also completed in Bellharbour, Kilkeedy and Ennistymon and Kilkee.

The level of activity carried out by the water and wastewater teams during 2022 is detailed below. The figures do not, however, reflect the time invested by the teams which is required to resolve each complaint.

- 4,706 Reactive Maintenance Work Orders completed
- 2,674 Service Requests (SRs) were raised
- 330 Outage Notices were placed on the IW portal during the year
- 332 Customer Complaints were received
- 15 Emergency Work Orders completed
- 11 Customer Asset Flooding Work Orders.

Water Conservation Team

Under the National Leakage Reduction Programme Irish Water (IW) set Clare County Council a leakage reduction target of 1,000m³/day for 2022, however there was in fact an increase 50m³/day over the period assessed. This can be attributed primarily to resource issues but also to an increase in the network length in the county as a result of the transfer of Group Water Schemes to the public network.

Asset Transfer project

16 assets transferred to IW in 2022.

Reports sent to IW on 25 third-party assets (12 approved for transfer once title is rectified, 9 not agreed for transfer, awaiting response on 4). Reports on remaining 7 third-party assets to be submitted to IW in 2023. 6 third-party assets identified for Deed of Transfer in 2022 (5 agreed and progressing with County Solicitor, 1 not agreed: owner deceased). The remaining 64 third-party assets have all been reviewed by IW and those approved for transfer will

be put forward for Deed of Transfer/Adverse possession.

Reports on 4 unregistered assets sent to County Solicitor for first registration. 10 remaining unregistered assets will be put forward for first registration in 2023.

4 assets are awaiting advice from other departments.

5 assets are awaiting legal advice.

Irish Water Capital Projects

Wastewater Treatment Projects

Wastewater treatment projects for five coastal locations, where untreated sewage is currently discharging to the sea/estuary, continued to progress during 2022.

Construction of Liscannor wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) scheme continued on site and wastewater treatment commenced in November 2022 thus ending the discharge of raw sewage to the sea at Liscannor.

Construction of Clarecastle Sewerage Scheme and Kilrush WWTP both commenced on site and made significant progress. Design work continued on Ballyvaughan WWTP and Kilkee WWTP schemes, and preparation of planning application documents also commenced.

Construction of the Kilfenora WWTP scheme continued on site. The scheme when complete will provide tertiary treatment and UV treatment of wastewater and will end direct discharge to groundwater.

A planning application was lodged for a wastewater upgrade scheme at Newmarket on Fergus WWTP where discharge of treated wastewater to Lough Gash Turlough has to cease.

Design and feasibility studies continued for Ennistimon and Lahinch WWTP schemes.

Design work commenced on an upgrade of Doonbeg WWTP and an upgrade/replacement of Milltown Malbay WWTP.

In September 2022 an application was made by Clare County Council to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

for funding to provide wastewater treatment in Broadford and Cooraclare. Part 8 planning permission had been granted in 2008 for both wastewater treatment plants and networks but the schemes were not progressed. The new funding scheme is an advance phase of the multi-annual programme for the 2022-2025 cycle.

A project to provide a new inlet works and stormwater holding tank at the Clareabbey wastewater treatment plant, Ennis, was substantially completed.

In December, a project which will upgrade the pumping capacity at Elton Court Meelick, and remove a small treatment plant at Ballycannon, commenced. These works will ultimately provide a more satisfactory wastewater solution for Meelick village.

Design work for a new wastewater treatment plant for Kilmihiil commenced in 2022. This will progress through design, planning and construction phases in 2023 and 2024.

Water

A capital project to modernise the water treatment facility at New Doolough was completed. This regionally significant plant provides water to south west Clare including the towns of Kilrush, Kilkee, Milltown Malbay and the surrounding area. The works will provide security of supply and quality as well as improving efficiency at this plant.

A similar project at Corofin water treatment plant progressed in 2022. This modernisation improves security of supply and the quality of water for citizens in the Corofin supply area. The design and construction of an upgrade to the Ballymacrean water treatment plant, which supplies the North Clare region including the towns of Ennistymon, Lahinch, Lisdoonvarna began in 2022.

Water services works outside the scope of Irish Water

The Council continues to have a role in the

operation and management of a number of water services, waste water treatment plants and networks which currently sit outside of the SLA with Irish Water. These plants provide a valuable service to the public and communities of County Clare and include networks servicing the former Rural Housing Organisation (RHO) estates, some obsolete assets and a growing number of Developer Provided Infrastructure (DPI) serving estates which have now been taken in charge by the Council.

Rural Water Programme (RWP)

During 2022, €790,000 was spent in progressing upgrade works on 15 schemes under the Multi Annual Rural Water Programme 2019-2021. The Council assisted 7 group water schemes and 1 group sewerage scheme to be taken in charge by Irish Water. In addition, under the Rural Water Programme 78 grant applications were received in 2022 for bored well upgrade works representing an investment of €343,000. The Annual Subsidy Grant was also administered to 43 schemes with an overall payment totalling €2.29m. The Council currently awaits the release of the Department's Multi Annual Rural Water Programme 2022-2025.

Environment

The Environment Section has responsibility for a diverse range of activities including waste enforcement, waste management, environmental awareness, energy, climate action, gardening, scientific services (laboratory, water, air), veterinary services and Blue Flag beaches. The 2022 work programme was largely driven by an extensive regulatory framework including new legislation such as the Circular Economy and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2022, and the Solid Fuel Regulations 2022.



Fanore Beach.

Beaches and amenities

The Environment Section monitors 14 bathing areas and has maintained our 9 Blue Flags and 4 Green Coast Awards, all checked for compliance with 179 water samples taken during the season. All bathing areas monitored achieved “excellent” quality status. Beaches and related activity are covered by our Beach Bye-laws which were revised and adopted in June 2021. In total, 45 lifeguards provided services on Clare’s beaches for the extremely busy summer season.

Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental inspections (RMCEI)

Across all Environment service areas, Clare County Council undertook 5,364 routine and 1,727 non-routine inspections. The Waste Enforcement team received and investigated 1,221 complaints relating to litter and waste. A total of 169 litter fines and fixed payment notices were issued. In addition, Clare County Council served 82 legal notices for breaches of litter and waste legislation. Over 310 letters were issued under the Waste Management

bye-laws. The Council continues to avail of Anti-Dumping Initiative funding to combat illegal dumping. We have investigated 231 complaints relating to water, air and noise pollution. In order to check environmental compliance and to protect water quality, 124 inspections were carried out at licensed facilities. In addition, 53 domestic wastewater treatment systems were inspected. The Environment section also received and reported on 893 planning applications. All the above aims to ensure protection of our local environment.

Waste management and landfills

The waste management section provides five recycling centres, three of these are also waste transfer stations and we provide 54 bring bank sites countywide (including seasonal). The Central Waste Management Facility (CWMF) landfill, Doora Landfill and Lisdeen Waste Transfer Station continued to be monitored in accordance with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) waste licence requirements. The Council also completed a capital project in 2022 for the completion of the Closure Restoration and Aftercare Management Plan

(CRAMP) at the closed landfill at BallyduffBeg (Inagh).

Historic landfills

The Council has received one Certificate of Authorisation (COA) for a site in West Clare and submitted another COA application for a site in East Clare for historic landfills. Progress on funding applications has been made and works and monitoring are ongoing.

Water Framework Direction and the River Basin Management Plan

A total of 44 river and 19 lake sites were monitored in compliance with the EPA Monitoring programme. The EPA published their Water Quality Report 2018-2021.

Water/wastewater services

During the year, 19 public water supplies, 79 private supplies (public GWS, private GWS and private commercial supplies) were monitored and achieved a compliance rate over 98 per cent across the various parameters measured. 30 EPA licensed or certified municipal Uisce Éireann plants were monitored.

Education and awareness

Through the Environment section's Greener

Clare programme, the following initiatives continued to be supported during 2022 – National Spring Clean, An Taisce Green Schools, Clean Coasts, Blue Flag Beach Programme, National Spring Clean, Gum Litter Taskforce, MyWaste.ie. Leave No Trace, Circular Economy Academy, National Food Waste Recycling Week 2022. Awareness raising campaigns developed during 2022 included the promotion of Sustainable Development Goals, Greener Christmas, Invasive Alien Species. Funding received through the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) Anti-Dumping Initiative and Anti-Litter and Anti-Graffiti Grant Scheme supported the promotion of various anti-littering messages, including the use of unauthorised waste collector, dog owner responsibility, burning of waste, household waste byelaws, illegal dumping, waste prevention, littering including cigarette butt littering. Events/initiatives by the Water Community Office were also promoted as well as the DECC Clean Air Campaigns.

Clare County Council received a Silver Award in the All Ireland Community & Council Award presented by IPB insurance and LAMA in the Best Waste Management Programme category for Clare Waste Awareness Week.



Inagh CRAMP.

Food Safety Authority of Ireland, dog and horse control

Clare County Council is an official agent of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI). In 2022, a total of 2,739 beef animals and 15,397 sheep were slaughtered in County Clare plants overseen by our veterinary inspector. In total, 219 stray dogs were picked up and 226 dogs were surrendered, while 27 dogs were seized by the Dog Warden. In addition, 66 dogs were reclaimed by their owners, 153 rehomed and 229 rehomed in consultation with the Dogs Trust and other rescue groups. 10 greyhounds were surrendered to the Dog Shelter; these greyhounds were transferred to dog welfare groups. 3,434 Dog Licences were issued during 2022. Four straying horses were seized in 2022, two were reclaimed by their owners and two were rehomed.

Gardening section

The Gardening section continued to maintain high standards in ensuring the attractiveness

of our towns and villages and work closely with advising community groups on landscaping matters. The All-Ireland Pollinator policy was adopted and actions in the policy document are in place with increased pollinator friendly species and perennial flowers being planted. The Áras adopted the “No Mow May” initiative and was a hub for biodiversity and wildlife. An Urban Woodland Garden was developed by the Gardening section at Áras Contae an Chláir in Q4 2022 and shows an example of what low maintenance pollinator friendly perennial species that can be grown in urban areas. The Gardening team also developed a pollinator friendly low maintenance garden to the front of the Shannon Municipal District (MD) office. This provides for a welcoming space for the public when calling to the MD office.

A Native Irish Oak Covid remembrance tree was planted at the Áras “in memory of those we have lost”.



Pollinator friendly low maintenance garden to the front of the Shannon Municipal District office.



Covid-19 Remembrance Tree.



'No Mow May' initiative.

Climate

October 2022 saw the introduction of a new Climate section within the Physical Development directorate. The Climate section's role is to mainstream climate action and climate awareness within all services and directorates of Clare County Council.

A Climate Action Co-Ordinator started in the role at the beginning of October. A core Climate Action team is to be recruited during 2023 which will also comprise a Climate Action Officer and Community Climate Action Officer. The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act, 2021 enshrines the National Climate Objective to pursue and achieve, by no later than the end of 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy.

As part of this, local authorities must achieve 51% GHG emissions reductions and 50% Energy Efficient reductions by 2030.

Objectives of the team will be to:

- Develop a Climate Action Plan for the

local authority over the 2023 period. This will include both mitigation and adaptation actions. This plan is a statutory plan and adoption will be a reserved function of the Council.

- Consider energy efficiency of the Council's own processes seeking ongoing improvement.
- Identify and assist directorates in carrying out energy efficiency upgrades.

Energy

Energy management across the local authority is monitored on a continuous basis. It remains a priority of the Council to improve on energy efficiency on a continuous basis. 2022 showed a 3% energy consumption decrease on 2021. Energy management meetings took place during 2022.

Clare County Council has achieved the ISO50001 Energy Management Standard and was recertified for the next three years following an audit in November 2022.



Loop Head Lighthouse, Co. Clare.



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE



ANNE HAUGH
Director of Social Development

The overarching vision for the Social Directorate is:

To enhance the quality of life for the people of County Clare through the provision of appropriate housing supports to those in need and by enabling and fostering access for all our citizens to information, learning, arts, cultural and recreational opportunities.

The Social Directorate of Clare County Council comprises the areas of responsibility as per the schematic hereunder:



Housing

Provider of housing solutions for people who are in need and who are deemed eligible for social housing support.



Killaloe Municipal District

Area administration of functions with particular focus on the physical environment.



Cultural services

Provision of Library, Arts and Cultural services in County Clare.

2022 began with Covid-19 and pandemic restrictions still very much to the fore. However, thankfully, restrictions eased in the first quarter of 2022 and all sectors of society continued to reopen incrementally as we returned to normal.

The Social Directorate continues to deliver on our objectives and work programme and to that end we work closely with the Elected Members and sectoral interests on our Strategic Policy Committee (SPC), which met on four occasions in 2022 to discuss and agree a range of policies and initiatives to address housing delivery in Clare.

For 2022 delivery targets were set and exceeded with a continued focus on recovering lost time on capital projects. Staff continued to ensure services were delivered with blended working arrangements and online meetings now becoming the norm to ensure delivery of work programmes.

Delivery of social housing was extremely strong in 2022. A combination of new properties constructed by the Council and by Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs), turnkey solutions and void refurbishment programme enabled us to allocate homes to 439 households during 2022.

Housing for All, launched in September 2021, set out a multiannual funding programme for 2022-2030 to deliver over 300,000 new homes including 90,000 social and 54,000 affordable homes with an anticipated spend of in excess of €4bn per annum. There is also a firm commitment to ending homelessness by 2030.

This document sets the framework for the delivery of housing in the county with an overall build target of 833 new social housing units in the county over the period 2022-2026 as per below:

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
Target	200	149	153	164	167	833
Achieved	262					

2022 housing delivery performance

In 2022 we delivered 262 new properties through a combination of 118 new builds provided by the Council, 66 new builds through AHBs, 64 turnkey solutions and a number of one-off acquisitions.

A total of 118 units were constructed on Clare County Council existing landbanks in 2022 at:

- Cnoc na Scoile in Ashline, Ennis - 40 units
- Baile na mBan in Miltown Malbay - 27 units
- Cúinne an Bhroic in Tulla - 25 units
- Radharc an Óir in Newmarket on Fergus - 18 units
- Clos an Eidhneain in Roslevan, Ennis - 8 units.

On 24th October, 2022, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage Darragh O'Brien TD formally launched the Cnoc na Scoile, Baile na mBan and Cúinne an Bhroic developments.

The AHBs played a key role in delivering 66 new voluntary housing units to meet our delivery targets under 'Housing for All' in 2022. Co-Operative Housing Ireland provided 55 homes, consisting of a mix of one and two-bed apartments and two and three-bed houses, at Roslevan, Ennis. A further nine new two and three-bed properties were completed at Limerick Road, Ennis, by Cluid at the close of the year, together with two three-bed units at Ballymacaula, Ennis.

An ambitious programme of delivery by the AHB sector is planned for the coming year



(L-R) Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr Tony O'Brien, showing the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien TD, around one of the new units at Baile na mBan social housing development, Ballard Road, Milltown Malbay, alongside Anne Haugh, Director of Social Development, and Pat Dowling, Chief Executive, Clare County Council.



Completed development of Cnoc na Scoile, Ashline, Ennis, County Clare.



Completed development of Cúinne an Bhroic, Tulla, County Clare.

which will greatly assist in providing housing for approved applicants on our social housing waiting list.

A new Code of Practice for allocation of AHB properties became effective from 1st June, 2022, which introduced a collaborative approach for allocations between local authorities and the AHB sector. The aim is to achieve a consistent and more streamlined approach to the nomination and allocation process which will lead to greater efficiency and improve re-let times. Clare County Council is implementing this new Code of Practice in conjunction with the AHBs operating in the county.

Housing stock management

During 2022, 72 vacant and nine acquired (unoccupied) properties were refurbished and made available for reallocation throughout the county.

Under the Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme, the Council upgraded 32 properties to a BER level of B2 or higher. This brought the total number of upgrades to 64 since the introduction of the scheme during 2021.

Under our Planned Maintenance Programme, various works, as identified through our Stock Condition Surveys, were carried out to 282 properties. Rollout of this programme will intensify during 2023 now that all restrictions have been lifted.

Responsive Maintenance has returned to normal following the lifting of all restrictions. A total of 4,545, or an average of 349 per month, maintenance calls were logged during 2022.

Affordable housing scheme

While affordable housing is a keystone of 'Housing for All', the criteria to qualify for funding of local authority-led affordable housing is based on a determination of affordability constraint and in the case of a

significant number of counties, including Clare, the assessment has not evidenced a sufficient constraint to satisfy the eligibility requirements. However, our team continued to work with Department officials in relation to affordability constraints in larger urban areas and are confident that in 2023 Clare will be in a position to submit proposals for affordable housing schemes in both Ennis and Shannon.

Defective concrete blocks

The issue of defective concrete blocks in Clare came to the fore in late 2021 with much engagement with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) seeking extension of the Defective Concrete Blocks Scheme to Clare. Housing staff were involved in the preparation of various technical reports on this matter with Clare getting accepted onto the proposed Enhanced Defective Concrete Blocks scheme for private dwellings, due to commence in Q1, 2023.

Clare County Council has continued to engage with the Department of Housing in relation to the Enhanced Defective Blocks Grants Scheme. Staff from the Department visited County Clare in late November 2022, to meet with our technical team and also took the opportunity to visit a number of sites where we have identified affected properties. Clare County Council also met with the Clare Pyrite Action Group (CPAG) in early December 2022 to keep them updated on progress with the scheme.

Newly qualified applicants

New requirements around calculating income eligibility for housing applicants were introduced in 2021 in accordance with the Social Housing Assessment Regulations, which has made the process of assessment more strenuous, and added increased pressure on applicants in providing 12-month complete

income data. Notwithstanding that, Clare County Council continue to process a large volume of applications each month, with an average processing time on valid applications for 2022 of eight weeks.

Housing assessments and allocations

Allocations of social housing tenancies are made in accordance with the Clare County Council Social Housing Allocation Scheme. This allocation scheme sets out the priorities and procedures for allocating properties. The scheme is used in the allocation of standard Council housing units, casual vacancies and

long and short-term lease properties. A total 309 Council tenancies were allocated in 2022, with a further 130 nominations to AHBs. Clare County Council completed new housing developments in Newmarket-on-Fergus, Tulla, Miltown Malbay and Ennis during 2022.

Income limits for housing clients had been set at €25,000 for a single person since 2011, with small allowable increases for additional adults and children in the household. On 1st October, 2022, this base line was increased to €30,000. On 1st January, 2023, it was further increased to €35,000 and we expect an increase in our housing lists as a result.

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

During 2022, properties available for letting continued to be advertised on the Choice Based Letting (CBL) website: cbl.clarecoco.ie. CBL gives applicants the opportunity to express an interest in a range of residential properties within their area(s) of preference that are suitable for the size of their household. The list of available properties is displayed from Wednesday to Tuesday every week on the CBL website. The process is designed to be as fair as possible as it gives all housing applicants an equal opportunity to view available properties that meet their needs.

Housing and Disability Steering Group

Clare's Housing and Disability Steering Group (HDSG) met on a quarterly basis in 2022 to

review its local Strategic Plan with a primary objective of increasing the level of housing supports provided to those with disabled needs together with the necessary support services. A quarterly update on the progress of the HDSG was provided to both the Housing Agency as well as the Housing SPC. In 2022, Clare County Council allocated 439 properties, of which 94 properties (21%) were allocated to people with disabled needs. The national target is 10% and we are operating well above this target.

Housing rents

The collection of housing rent remained strong with an 86% collection rate and a total income of €9,758,579 from 3,335 rent accounts during 2022.

Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) scheme

The Council set up 207 new Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) applications during 2022, including 17 households qualifying for Homeless HAP and 19 households being supported outside of the county. The total number of households supported under the HAP scheme at the end of 2022 was 1,196.

Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS)

There were 166 households availing of this scheme at the end of 2022. During the year, 21 households left this scheme, the majority availing of alternative housing supports. In addition, the Council works with 15 Approved Housing Bodies in supporting 182 tenancies through the RAS scheme. This figure includes 12 new tenancies that joined the scheme during 2022.

Social leasing

In 2022, the Council provided two types of leasing, short-term leasing up to nine years and 11 months and long-term leasing from 10 years to 25 years. Under the Government's Housing for All programme, long-term leasing is being phased out and so the Council can no longer enter new long-term leases. The Council's target for short-term leasing for 2022 was three new short-term leases and during the year, lease agreements were negotiated, and this target was met. During the year, 14 households left the scheme. This brought the overall total number of households availing of this scheme to 102 by the end of the year. The average lease term is five years.

As no new long-term lease agreements were negotiated during 2022, and eight properties left the scheme, the overall total number of households availing of this scheme was 125 by the end of the year. The average term of lease is 16 years.

Private rented inspections

Privately rented properties are inspected by the Council in accordance with the Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2019. A total of 1,058 private rented properties were inspected in 2022, which includes HAP, RAS, Approved Housing Bodies and leased properties.

Local Authority Home Loan

The Local Authority Home Loan (LAHL) replaced the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan (RIHL) in January 2022. The loan offers a fixed interest rate mortgage over a 25 or 30-year period for credit-worthy, first-time buyers with a view to making home ownership more affordable.

A total of 61 LAHL applications were received in 2022 and 25 loan applications were granted provisional approval during this period. A total of five loans were drawn down during 2022.

Interest rates were increased from 10th December, 2022, and the current fixed rates are 3.35% on loans up to a 25-year term and 3.45% on loans up to a 30-year term.

Estate management

The Council has an Estate Management Unit, available to meet with tenants and tenant associations on a regular basis to deal with issues that may occur. The appointment of three Tenancy Enforcement Officers in 2021 has had a positive impact in the management of anti-social behaviour and its impact on the community.

The team continue with the programme of engagement with tenants and the residents' committees to support estate management. Residents are encouraged to participate in the management of their estate, to take ownership, and to be proud of where they live. This unit is committed to the encouragement and formation of residents' groups within their housing estates.

The Council's Estate Management team manage anti-social behaviour and its impact

on the community. In total, 342 complaints of anti-social behaviour were investigated and dealt with in accordance with the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy. The Tenancy Enforcement team facilitated a total of 7,183 call outs in 2022 to deal with instances of anti-social behaviour as well as regular patrolling and engagement with local authority tenants.

Homeless Action Team

The year 2022 brought many challenges and complexities to the Clare Homeless Action Team. This year saw an increased number of presentations to the team, along with an increased level of complex needs and challenges being presented by service users. The demand on our service continues to increase each month with significant support around all aspects of homelessness being required from all staff.

The Homeless Action Team has continued to work towards building a service that can appropriately meet the needs of homeless clients in Clare. This team provides a wide range of support services including Assessment and Placement, Tenancy Support Services, HAP Place Finder, Housing First, and Accommodation Resettlement.

Health services and local authorities are the lead statutory bodies for addressing homelessness and the needs of people who are homeless in Ireland. Clare Homeless Action Team works in collaboration with the HSE in providing a service within Clare, where a full-time Community Mental Health Nurse and a Public Health Nurse, which is shared with Limerick, are on the team. A multi-disciplinary, inter-agency team approach has been adopted and has proved to be most effective in providing outreach and additional specialist supports and linking with mainstream services.

2022

At the end of 2022, there were 62 adults and 43 dependants in homeless accommodation. This

figure does not include the significant number of singles and family units that contacted the HAT team seeking placements in emergency accommodation.

There were 2,422 presentations (432 new and 1,990 repeat), and 48 new households were placed in accommodation in homeless services during 2022.

New presentations	432
Repeat presentations	1,990
TOTAL Presentations	2,422

During 2022, 64 households exited homelessness – 40 exiting to new tenancies (LA-18, AHB-8, HAP-2, PR-2, Youth Housing-5, Housing First-5, 18 Discharged from Services, 4 Self-Discharged and 2 Discharged to Residential Accommodation). A further 23 households moved within emergency services to best support their identified needs. These figures represent a significant amount of prevention work and this will continue to be the focus of the service going forward.

An additional 20 households who were not in emergency accommodation also moved into tenancies. This figure captures the preventative work carried out by the HAT team during the year, where individuals and families were prevented from coming into homeless services.

Exits		64
Housed	Local Authority = 18 AHB = 8 HAP = 2 Private rented = 2 Youth Housing = 5 Housing First = 5	40
Discharged from Services		18
Self-Discharged		4
Discharged to Residential Accommodation		2

Within these figures a significant amount of work continues to support clients to address presenting issues. Consequently, the team is continuing to foster strong working relationships with all of our working partners in the HSE (Primary Care, Disability, Social Inclusion, Mental Health, Safeguarding and Addiction), An Garda Síochána, Tusla (Child Protection, Domestic Violence and Aftercare), Probation and Community Partners to address the ever-increasing complex needs.

Traveller accommodation

The Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP) 2019-2024 was subject of a mid-term review in 2022. Notifications inviting input into the review process were issued and advertised in August 2022 and six submissions were received. The Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) members held a workshop to review the key issues raised, such as overcrowding due to expanding families and families returning from the UK. It was agreed that greater engagement is required with the Traveller community and that a more detailed needs assessment is required and this should also include issues around disability needs. The SPC agreed not to amend current TAP and to strive to achieve targets within same which remain challenging. Clare Local Community Development Committee oversee a Traveller Community Development Project (CDP) with Clare Local Development Company (CLDC). A project worker has been employed and will be working in collaboration with CLDC and Clare County Council to conduct detailed analysis of current and future needs in advance of the next TAP, which it is expected will be required to be prepared in 2024.

A new caravan/mobile home loan scheme was launched in 2022 and Clare has appointed two new tenants under this scheme. The scheme is now closed, subject to a review, and it is expected to reopen later in 2023.

Housing grants

A large volume of applications was again approved and paid during 2022. Funds are targeted at essential works only and priority is given based on the medical needs of the applicant and the length of time on the waiting list. The challenges arising from Covid-19 eased during the year which facilitated us in meeting the many and varied demands for assistance. The adaptations carried out enable people with a disability and elderly persons to live in comfort in their own homes. A total of €3,076,738 was expended on 513 grants as set out in the table hereunder:

Grant type	Number of grants paid in 2022	Value of works €
Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability	175	1,744,063
Housing Aid for Older People	186	759,311
Mobility Aids Grant	152	573,364
Total in 2022	513	3,076,738

There were also a number of adaptations carried out to our own housing stock during the year. Works completed involved the installation of ramps, level access bathrooms, handrails, stairlifts and other minor works to facilitate the mobility needs of the household. A total of 102 properties were adapted, with over €700,000 spent on these works. These works assist tenants in meeting their particular needs and add to their enjoyment and comfort of their homes.

Ukrainian response

In March 2022, the Ukrainian crisis escalated and by mid-April over 2,000 displaced Ukrainians had arrived in County Clare. Clare County Council's housing team initially coordinated the emergency response. A number of emergency rest centres were identified and set up for accommodation of Ukrainian people. A number of properties suitable for quick turnaround as multi-occupancy were identified as part of the initial

response early in 2022. Our housing team also played a critical role in the inspection of vacant and shared properties which had been offered up by the people of Clare. In July 2022, a new directorate was established to manage the Ukrainian project and currently there are in excess of 4,000 Ukrainians accommodated within our county. The housing team continue to assist and work with the Ukrainian Directorate.

Cultural Services (Library, Arts, Museum, Archives and glór)

Capital Project - Clare Library Service

The contractors for the new Ennis library and art gallery, Coolsivna, commenced work on site on 28th April, 2022. The contract duration is 60 calendar weeks with a substantial completion date of June 2023. Towards the latter part of the year, work was slowed due to several issues, delays in foundation works, and delays related to concrete slab pouring sequencing and general weather conditions. The revised estimated completion date is October 2023.

Library service

Post-Covid-19 the library service is returning to an increase in usage as the public return to using public spaces. The figures below demonstrate the decline over the Covid-19 years and the start of recovery, which also coincides with a drop in usage of e-resources. A total of 353 home deliveries were made by Clare Library service in 2022.

	Library membership	No of items issued	No of e-resources issued	No of internet sessions	No of Wi-Fi sessions
2022	17,989	338,964	57,862	11,005	8,363
2021	10,060	235,122	63,088	1,886	4,889
2020	14,152	269,491	57,678	8,973	7,739

A total of 16,256 items were added to stock consisting of latest publications and back stocking in areas in need of special attention. This also included the purchase of stock in both the Ukrainian and Russian language for branches in areas with a large Ukrainian population, eg. Lisdoonvarna and Kilkee. Coinciding with the return of the public to branches, programmed activities increased to 1,167 in-branch events with an attendance of 11,752. Online events (zoom and videos posted) amounted to 54 while there were 29 outreach events with an audience of 599.

The library service availed of several grants including €23,333 in dormant account funding and €7,660 in Healthy Ireland funding. A donation of €10,000 from an anonymous donor was spent on literacy resources and a programme of events in a number of libraries.

Creative Ireland

A total of 31 Project Awards were granted to community groups and individuals to run projects which encouraged 'Creativity in the Community'. Projects included Eclipse Youth Animation Film Festival, a podcast series with Ruairi McKiernan on creative people from Clare, live music sessions in the gardens of people who were housebound with musician Róisín Ní Ghallólaigh and a film about the Lisdoonvarna Matchmaking Festival. In addition, Creative Ireland Clare also supported a number of festivals in Clare, including the Ennis Book Club Festival, PIMA! Fest, Ennis Health and Wellbeing Festival and the new Ennis International Fantastic Film Festival. A further 28 projects were initiated by the Council's Creativity and Culture Team including PRISM Street Art, Cultural Companions and the excavation of a famine era house. CI Clare also supported Cruinniú na nÓg in June, a diverse programme of 28 live events (aimed at children and teens) and three virtual events were held around the county. A total of 1,106 children participated in workshops facilitated by 50 artists.

Decade of Centenaries

This national programme continued in 2022 with 11 historical and commemorative projects receiving funding. Three Arts Decade of Centenaries Project Awards were given to artists Marie Connole and David O'Rourke and singer Deirdre Scanlan who performed a Tim Collins composition, *Guardians of the Peace*. History Week took place in October 2022 with 22 events, these included five exhibitions in library branches, one podcast, eight online lectures, three branch lectures which were also recorded. Details of all events can be found at: www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/library/doc_info.htm

Arts

Arts Council supported programmes in 2022 resumed in person post-Covid-19. The Arts and Education programme delivered arts projects with 19 artists in 28 primary schools. Arts School was commissioned to create a project with two secondary schools. Clare Youth Theatre resumed with a membership of 30 young people. The Arts Office worked with Limerick Clare Creative Youth Partnership to establish another youth theatre in Kilkee. The Embrace Arts and Disability Programme delivered 15 arts projects in disability settings with 11 artists.

Outdoor performances came from Fidget Feet Aerial Dance Company who created Flutterby and the Ennis Mela through the Arts Council's Faoin Speir. Ennis Mela along with our HOUSE Open Air spectacle both won awards at the Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government awards. Culture Night in September returned in person with 37 Clare events attended by 3,000 people. Exhibitions and the Riches of Clare concerts resumed post-Covid-19 as did arts in health projects in hospitals, nursing homes and day care centres countywide. Artist studios operated at 100% capacity with significant demand for more spaces. A total of 68 grants for artists, communities and festivals were approved through the Community Supports Scheme and 2,460 days of employment were given to musicians, producers and tech crew through the Department of Tourism and Culture's Live Local Performance Scheme with 237 events taking place.

Assistance was provided to 27 film projects in 2022 as well as the Engine Shorts film programme and the Ennis International Film Festival. The WRAP fund continued to attract substantial inward film investment to the county, particularly to Lahinch.



The De Valera Dodge car in Clare Museum.

Clare Museum

Clare Museum resumed previous opening times in 2022 with a total visitor number for the year of 10,555. Clare Museum had 109 social media posts in 2022, mostly featuring photographs and videos relating to items in the museum collection. This enabled the museum to reach a wider audience. There were 10 new collections added during the year and about 130 items were catalogued to the Axiel Database. A small number of new items were acquired by the museum, along with one large collection associated with the life of Georgina Frost, thought to number about 800 items. The creation of a new museum website, as outlined in the museum's Strategic Plan, was made possible through a €14,000 heritage grant from the Heritage Council. About 2,000 photographs for the website were taken during the year and 450 have been placed online so far. The move of the De Valera Dodge car from the library site to the museum was celebrated

on 6th November at an event attended by five members of the De Valera family and an audience of interested spectators.

Archives

The Archives Service in 2022 continued to provide access to its collections through the Local Studies Library. The Archives' Digitisation Project continued in 2022. A total of 154 volumes from the Board of Health and Public Assistance Collection of Manager's Orders and Minute Books dating from 1915-1966 have been digitised. Material from the digitisation project has commenced being added to the Digital Repository of Ireland (a national digital repository for Ireland's humanities, social sciences, and cultural heritage data). This has allowed digitised archival material to be accessible online while safely preserving and supporting ongoing preservation of deposited data.

In the area of acquisitions in 2022, 'The Barrett

Collection', containing approximately 150 archival boxes of material relating to Joseph Barrett (1888-1971), has been acquired. The collection is now being processed. Additional material has been donated to the National Schools collection from Derrynaveagh National School, Sixmilebridge. An article by the archivist was published in History Ireland's January-February issue describing the Dwyer Collection.

glór

Covid-19 restrictions remained in place in January with reduced capacities permitted, and the programme normalised somewhat from February onwards with exhibitions and performances and events, though audience attendance was still lower than normal into the late Spring. glór continued to offer a range of supports to artists with a focus particularly on the local creative community – such as

Artist to Artist mentoring, Creative Circles, artists' residencies and the ongoing Associate Artist scheme. glór also provided its services to a wide range of local arts and community groups including many local regular partners. The arts centre presented 237 performances over the year across a wide range of music, theatre, dance, opera, as well as a series of film screenings. glór celebrated its 21st birthday at the end of November, and marked it with a special performance entitled glór at 21, which showcased some of the recent projects and commissions that glór has been instrumental in, and featured over 50 artists. Director, Orla Flanagan, served her notice having worked as Director for six years and Ennis native Marie O'Byrne will replace her as the Director in 2023.





RURAL DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE



LEONARD CLEARY
Director of Rural Development

Clare Comhairle Na nÓg

Clare Comhairle Na nÓg is an initiative by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs that provides a platform for young people between the ages of 12 and 18 to voice their concerns, discuss potential changes, and propose innovative solutions to bring about positive change. The Council has partnered with Clare Youth Service, which manages various programmes and activities in collaboration with student members. In 2022, Clare Comhairle Na nÓg organised two Annual General Meetings (AGMs), in Spanish Point and Ennis, to accommodate all participating

students. These AGMs offered a valuable opportunity for young people to come together, share their experiences, and discuss issues that affect them and their communities.

Pride of Place

The Pride of Place Awards is an All-Island annual competition. The competition was established to promote and celebrate the best in community development. The awards recognise the selfless efforts of people in making their local neighbourhoods better places to live, work and socialise. In 2022 Clare was represented by four groups, namely: Scariff Community Council, Mountshannon Community Council, the Shannon in Bloom project, and the Loop Head Together Project. All groups did their localities proud with innovative and engaging virtual presentations that greatly impressed the judges. Scariff was named as Runner-Up under the “Population – 1000 to 2000” category in recognition of the vibrant local community activities in the town. Loop Head Together Project was named as overall winner of the “Coastal Community” category and also winner of the Climate Action Special Award.

Government Funding - National Schemes

The Department of Rural and Community Development channels a number of funding programmes through the Council. In 2022, the schemes attracted projects and funds as listed below:

- **Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2022:** €627,073 for three projects in Ennistymon, Cappa and Quin.
- **Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2022 - Project Development Measure:** €50,000 for a feasibility study of the Courthouse in Killaloe.
- **Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2022 - Marketing Measure (new in 2022):** €49,500 for a marketing campaign to promote remote working.
- **Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2022 - Building Acquisition Measure (new in 2022):** €185,000 granted for the purchase of the Mars Cinema Building in Kilrush.
- **Town & Village Renewal Scheme - Streetscape Enhancement Scheme 2022:** Funding of €100,000 was provided to Lisdoonvarna for streetscape improvement works.
- **CLÁR Initiative 2022:** €679,222 for 14 projects located in Lahinch, Inagh, Crusheen, Doonbeg, Tulla, Scarriff, Kilmaley, Miltown Malbay, Kilfenora, Cloonanaha, Lissycasey, Kilkee, Tubber and Kilmihil.
- **Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme 2022:** €939,366 for 10 projects in Kilrush, Ennistymon, Kilkishen, Kilnamona, O'Briensbridge, Ballycuggeran, Burren Geopark, Doon Lake Broadford, River Fergus Extension Walk (Ennis) and at the Cliffs of Moher.

Community Support Scheme

Funding of €597,500 was approved under

the Council's Community Support Scheme in May 2022. The allocations to community and voluntary groups supported a broad range of projects including public realm, social inclusion, participation in sport, community Wi-Fi, the arts, Irish language and sustainable tourism.

Burial Grounds

The Burial Grounds Unit is responsible for the ongoing maintenance of over 160 cemeteries throughout County Clare.

Plinth works, tree surgery, gate repairs and other minor improvement works were carried out at burial grounds around the county during the year in addition to grass cutting over the spring and summer months. In addition, 61 groups were granted small scale funding through the Community Support Scheme to assist in maintenance costs associated with burial grounds across the county. The ongoing commitment of these community groups is invaluable.

Healthy Clare

Healthy Ireland, a framework for improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025 is the national framework for action to improve the health and wellbeing of Ireland over the coming generation. The strategic direction and priorities outlined in the plan were aligned to regional policies and strategies and identified a number of community-based activities that would impact positively on people's lives in terms of their physical, mental and sexual health which also challenged and addressed the negative effects of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.

In 2022, as part of the Healthy Ireland agenda, each local authority in Ireland adopted a 'Healthy County Coordinator' role; Dena McGrath is County Clare's. The role of the Healthy County Coordinator is to administer the Department of Health's Healthy Ireland

Pictures of Interim HIF Projects



Pictures of interim HIF projects.

funding, develop and implement the Healthy Clare Strategic Action Plan, and support Healthy Ireland national and local initiatives. Examples of some of the committees Healthy Clare is also participating in includes the HSE's Mid-West Connecting for Life, Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC) Active and Healthy, Ukrainian Response Forum and Clare - Creative Ireland.

In August 2022, the Local Community Development Committee's (LCDC) Healthy Clare initiative was allocated €40,000 from the Department of Health through Pobal as part of the Interim Healthy Ireland Fund. This fund was divided into three categories.

- **Part A** - 37.5% to 'Capacity building and planning for the application process for 2023-2025'. The stakeholder consultation costs, Healthy Clare merchandise (jackets and stress balls), 2023 Healthy Clare Calendars, Clare Echo ads, dementia workshop for community and voluntary organisations in West Clare and support of the Clare SDG Education Programme (co-funded with Greener Clare).
- **Part B** - 50% to 'Delivering Activities in the H&WB space that have been identified as a priority in 2022'. Eleven community and voluntary organisations supported to deliver health and wellbeing initiatives around the county, including: social farming, teen girls, older people, women in menopause, Traveller and migrant physical activity programmes, inclusive athletics programmes, wellbeing workshops (ie. mindfulness, yoga, etc.), and cooking classes.
- **Part C** - 12.5% as 'a contribution to community health and wellbeing initiatives in response to the arrival of Ukrainian refugees in the city/county'. Each of the four family resource centres in Clare and ClareCare supported with this fund. Projects delivered included gym classes, transportation costs, mother and toddler programmes, parenting booklet for Ukrainian families, cooking classes and wellbeing workshops for Clare's local and migrant communities.



Healthy Clare stakeholder engagement event, November 2022.

In November 2022, Healthy Clare hosted a stakeholder engagement event based on the Determinants of Health of the two selected outcomes for County Clare for 2023-2025:

1. Healthy Weight
2. Mental Health Promotion.

42 stakeholders attended which included representatives from the following: 12 charities, three community organisations, three education sector, three elected officials, five private sector, 15 public sector and two volunteers. The information collected both in-person and online was used in Healthy Clare's Healthy Ireland Round 4 funding application.



Healthy Clare Calendar.

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

teams. The Healthy Clare team working with our partners distributed 1,000 copies in one month. Requests from the public for calendars came in following promotion on social, print and local radio media platforms (including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, the *Clare Echo*, the *Clare Champion* and Clare FM). Copies were also distributed to communities across Clare via Clare Libraries, the local MD offices, reception at the Áras, Age Friendly Clare's cultural companions' network, Connecting for Life and Healthy Clare network committees. View the Calendar: www.clarecoco.ie/services/community/healthy-clare/healthy-clare-2023-calendar-50299.pdf



Health and Wellbeing Page in the Clare Echo.

Healthy Clare are hosting a Health and Wellbeing page in the *Clare Echo*, raising awareness of health and wellbeing initiatives across the county. Each week a local organisation is in the spotlight discussing their health-promoting work and how people in Clare can contact them or get involved in their health and wellbeing activities. Healthy Clare is also featuring local and national initiatives of interest.

Clare Age-Friendly Strategy



Clare County Council co-ordinates the delivery of the Clare Age-Friendly Strategy 2018-2022 with eight agencies leading or supporting the delivery of the various actions.

In 2022, actions in the strategy were progressed including:

- The launch of Shannon as the world's first Age Friendly Airport in conjunction with Ireland West Airport, as acknowledged by the World Health Organization
- Hosting of Age Friendly Business workshops for Ennis businesses
- Hosting of an 'Older Person of the Year Award' ceremony in the Woodstock Hotel.

Clare County Council continues to host meetings for the Clare Older People's Council,

which were held as blended meetings for most of 2022.

In October, Clare County Council hosted the National Age Friendly Recognition & Achievement Awards in Dromoland Castle on behalf of Age Friendly Ireland.

Joint Policing Committee

The Clare Joint Policing Committee (JPC) was established in 2009 under the Garda Síochána Act 2005. The overall aim of the JPC is to serve as a forum for consultations, discussions and recommendations on matters affecting the policing of Clare County Council's administrative area. The JPC also review levels and patterns of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour and the factors contributing to such crime. There are 31 JPC members comprising Elected Members, Oireachtas Members, community and voluntary representatives, An Garda Síochána, and local authority officials.

All four meetings were held in the Council Chamber in February, April, September and November of 2022. Presentations were given to members on Task Community Care supports, the Property Marking Scheme and the Ukrainian Community Response. The JPC also revived the 'Ask For Angela' safety campaign.



'Ask For Angela' safety campaign.

An Garda Síochána provided updated policing statistics at each JPC meeting. A number of issues were addressed in response to the statistics provided as well as a discussion on matters relating to the following issues:

- Illegal encampments
- Domestic violence in Clare and interagency work
- Drug-related offences
- Alcohol and drug-related road offences
- Increase in anti-social behaviour in Ennis and Kilrush
- Tourism; staycations, camping and traffic pinch points/congestion
- Garda patrols in housing estates
- Mental health supports
- Policing plan in relation to staycations/tourists
- JPC Six-Year Plan 2022-2027
- Community Safety Partnership pilots
- Scam calls/texts/emails
- Rogue traders in Clare
- Theft in shops
- Trespassing on lands

- Burglaries
- Non-insured vehicles
- Vandalism at graveyards
- Speed camera vans
- Traveller feuds
- Garda retirements/resignations
- Violence against Gardaí.

Community Activities Fund

A second round of funding under the Community Enhancement Programme for the Community Activities Fund (CAF) was launched nationally by the Department of Rural and Community Development in November 2021. Aimed at supporting groups, particularly in disadvantaged areas, with their running costs such as utility or insurance bills, as well as with improvements to their facilities, groups could also use the funding to carry out necessary repairs and to purchase equipment such as tables and chairs, tools and signage, laptops and printers, lawnmowers, canopies and training equipment.

The fund is allocated under the Department's Community Enhancement Programme and administered by the Local Community

JPC Steering Group 2022.





Award of Certificates for the Geopark Code of Practice for Sustainable Tourism, April 2022.

Development Committee, with support from the local authority.



Clare was allocated €278,514. One-hundred-and-ninety-seven (197) applications were received. Thirty per cent of the fund was ringfenced for day-to-day running costs of €1,000 or less. Thirty per cent was allocated to large day-to-day running costs. The balance was allocated to capital projects with a maximum grant of €10,000 available.

One-hundred-and-one (101) groups were assisted with day-to-day running costs of up to €1,000. A further 38 groups were assisted with day-to-day running costs in excess of €1,000. Fourteen (14) groups or organisations were awarded grants ranging from €1,000 to €10,000 to assist with large-scale capital projects and playgrounds. In total, 153 groups benefitted from the scheme.

Tourism Department

Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark

The Geopark team helped the Tourism Department in researching and developing the groundwork for an application to the Global Sustainable Tourism Council's sustainable tourism destination certification for County Clare to support the Clare Tourism Strategy 2030.

The UNESCO Global Geopark was granted an Outdoor Recreation Grant of €88,000 to develop a Welcome to the Geopark signage scheme at entry roads, towns and villages and key attractions.

The Geopark joined over 30 other Global Geoparks in promoting GEOfood: seasonal, sustainably produced, local food produced from the rocks, soils, water and climate particular to individual Geoparks. GEOfood was launched at the Slow Food Festival in May with nine local producers showcased.

Sixty-seven tourism businesses in North Clare subscribed to the Geopark Code of Practice in Sustainable Tourism showing evidence for their ongoing waste, water and energy conservation, engagement with Leave no



Vandeleur Walled Garden.

Trace, community support, local purchases of produce and services and contributions to local conservation programmes.

The Geopark partnered with the Burren Centre Kilfenora and the Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience to create exhibits on the Geopark and the important geological, biodiversity, cultural heritage, sustainable tourism and community activities it offers.

Vandeleur Walled Garden Experience



Works have been ongoing since 2021 to extensively restore and renovate the old stable block at the site, which also will feature a new gardeners' building. Significant advances were

made on the re-construction of the new stable block during 2022.

The project is funded by the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, Project Ireland 2040, under the Department of Rural and Community Development with match funding by Clare County Council.

Inis Cealtra (Holy Island) Visitor Experience



The most significant tourism project ever to be undertaken in East Clare has taken a major step forward with the announcement of funding for the development of the Inis Cealtra (Holy Island) visitor centre in the heart of Mountshannon village.

On 10th November, 2022, the Department of Rural and Community Development allocated €3,906,252 to Clare County Council for the Inis Cealtra (Old Rectory) Visitor Experience. The Local Authority will match fund a further 20 per cent, with 80 per cent of project costs to be funded by the Department. It will repurpose and extend the Old Rectory building into a visitor centre and community hub.

Having taken 41 acres on the island into public ownership in 2015, Clare County Council this year acquired the Old Rectory building overlooking Mountshannon Harbour, Scarriff Bay and Lough Derg. A detailed design of the proposed transformation into a mainland visitor centre is currently underway following extensive public consultation and will interpret the monastic site and its surrounds.

Once completed, the visitor centre building will comprise a reception area, three exhibition areas interpreting stories from Mountshannon and the island of Inis Cealtra as well as a revitalised Rectory Garden.

Loop Head Lighthouse

Loop Head Lighthouse Visitor Experience swung open its doors to visitors on 1st July, 2022, for the first time since 2019 and following a significant upgrade of the historic and popular West Clare visitor attraction. Located at the mouth of the Shannon Estuary with its origins dating back to the 1670s, the lighthouse was first opened to visitors in 2011 and has since become one of West Clare's most popular attractions. The lighthouse is also one of the Great Lighthouses of Ireland and is one of two Signature Discovery Points in County Clare along the route of the Wild Atlantic Way. A series of upgrade and renovation were completed at the Loop Head Lighthouse Visitor Experience as a result of funding received from the Department of Rural and Community Development through the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) with match funding from Clare County Council. A separate environmental and sustainable masterplan for Loop Head Lighthouse Visitor Experience was submitted to An Bord Pleanála in April 2022.



Loop Head Lighthouse Visitor Experience swung open its doors to visitors on 1st July, 2022, for the first time since 2019.



International and national promotion of County Clare

A tourism delegation led by the Cathaoirleach Cllr Tony O'Brien, with officials and members from Clare County Council along with members of the Clare Tourism Advisory Forum, promoted County Clare as a desirable visitor destination to over 120,000 festival goers at Milwaukee Irish Fest in Wisconsin in August. It was the biggest international tourism promotion of County Clare since before the pandemic, 11 representatives of the local sector showcased Shannon Airport and all that Clare has to offer in the centre of the festival village.

During this time in Wisconsin, members of the Clare County Council Twinning Committee also signed a Twinning Charter between the nearby Wisconsin city of New London and Killaloe. The link between the two locations

was first established by Cllr O'Brien in 2007 when he accepted an invitation from the city's local Shamrock Club to meet with officials from the north Wisconsin city. The twinning link developed during the following 15 years with representatives of New London making numerous visits to the shores of Lough Derg.

County Clare made the national spotlight in May when RTÉ's popular *Today* show aired live from Killaloe and Bunratty Castle and Folk Park. The Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr PJ Ryan, opened the show with RTÉ *Today* host Dáithí Ó Sé, who then took the TV audience on a live walking tour of Bunratty Castle and Folk Park, while also sampling butter churning, archery and meeting the wolfhounds as well as meeting with Clare's renowned musicians, tourism industry leaders and food producers. RTÉ *Today* has confirmed that it reached



The RTÉ Today show aired live from Killaloe and Bunratty Castle and Folk Park in May.

phenomenal numbers with a 22.65 per cent share and a reach of 250,000, meaning one in five people watching Irish television at the time had eyes on Clare, which was a key promotion, pre-season 2022.

County Clare also took centre stage to national and international television and social media audiences through live streaming of the KPMG Women's Irish Open, hosted in Dromoland Castle in September.

Shannon Heritage DAC Due Diligence Process

Clare County Council was requested by Cabinet to commence discussions with Shannon Group in relation to the proposed transfer of Shannon Heritage DAC County Clare-based tourism sites to Clare County Council, including as part of the proposed transfer at national level from the Department of Transport to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

The following Clare tourism sites are being considered and subject to due diligence and

subsequent negotiation:

- Bunratty Castle and Folk Park
- Knappogue Castle
- Craggaunowen - Bronze Age Park
- Retail Outlet at Cliffs of Moher.

In July 2022, Clare County Council submitted a Due Diligence report to government. A final report, in the fields of Finance, IT, HR and Legal, was submitted to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Department of Transport in which a funding package to support the upgrading and maintenance of the sites for three years was identified. Legal negotiations have been ongoing with Shannon Airport Group while regular consultation with Shannon Heritage staff and elected members also has been a key part of the two-year process.

The local authority also outlined its vision for overseeing the management, development and promotion of the Shannon Heritage sites and their incorporation into a portfolio



KPMG Women's Irish Open.

of signature visitor attractions and sites throughout Clare, including the Cliffs of Moher Experience, Loop Head Lighthouse, Vandeleur Walled Gardens, and Inis Cealtra Visitor Experience (currently under development).

Clare County Council wishes to acknowledge the staff of Shannon Heritage for their cooperation throughout the process and for their ongoing commitment to achieving and delivering a tourism product that delivers significant social and economic benefits for County Clare and the wider Mid-West Region. Bunratty, Craggaunowen, Knappogue and Cliffs of Moher gift shop are integral to the overall tourism product offering in Clare.

The transfer of Shannon Heritage Clare properties to Clare County Council is subject to approval by the elected members of Clare County Council, as well as consent between the various Government Ministers and Government Departments. If the transfer is to proceed Shannon Heritage DAC would then become a subsidiary company of Clare County Council.

Cliffs of Moher Experience

Visitor numbers

In 2022, the Cliffs of Moher experience welcomed 1,094,259 visitors with an estimated additional 42,609 visitors accessing through the Cliffs of Moher coastal walk. Of the 1,094,259 visitors, 612,563 were Fully Independent Travelers (FIT) with 481,696 resulted from trade bookings of which 191,100 hold a route licence with additional stops ranging from Doolin Ferries, the Burren, Kilfenora, Hotel Doolin, Burren Smokehouse Lisdoonvarna, Ailwee Caves, Caherconnell Fort and Bunratty Woollen Mills.

Cliffs of Moher Strategy 2040

Clare County Council supported by Fáilte Ireland is working, with a multi-disciplinary consultancy team led by Haley Sharpe Design,

to prepare a new Cliffs of Moher Strategy 2040 including an overall site masterplan. The strategy will inform future developments at the Cliffs of Moher Experience focusing on the following four pillars: Creating a world class experience, sustainable tourism development, regeneration of the natural landscape and enhanced economic benefits across the region. Capacity issues, and a requirement for upgrade and investment, sparked the necessity to set out a sustainable future for the site and to maximise the economic benefit to County Clare for the next 20 years and beyond.

The first stage of the consultation process closed in September 2021. The second stage of the consultation process took place in May/June 2022 and focused on the Draft Masterplan proposals. The concepts, which are linked to the County Clare Tourism Strategy 2030 and the Clare County Development Plan, include rewilding large sections of the Cliffs of Moher destination site, providing cliff-edge panoramic viewing platforms, repurposing the existing visitor centre, developing a new access gateway building at the site, and embracing a strategic approach to traffic management through greater coordination and links with existing and new transport services.

Members of the public were invited to complete an online survey while a series of stakeholder consultations in relation to the proposed concepts were held with the following groups:

- Clare County Council Departments and Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark
- National Parks & Wildlife Service
- Fáilte Ireland
- Clare Local Development Company (CLDC)
- Burren Ecotourism Network
- Landowners

- Onsite Tenants
- Accommodation and Tourism Groups
- Local Community Groups
- Cliffs of Moher Employees
- Elected councillors for West Clare Municipal District
- Irish Tour Operators Association (ITOA)
- Coach Tourism and Transport Council (CTTC)
- Clare Tourism Advisory Forum
- Cliffs of Moher Centre Ltd Board.

The COM 2040 Strategy document will be prepared based on the consultation feedback, extensive preliminary research, on-site investigations and desk-top studies to understand the challenges facing the Cliffs of Moher and to identify potential opportunities for helping to realise future aspirations.

Cliffs of Moher Design Package

The Cliffs of Moher Design Package coexists along with the COM 2040 Strategy. The appointed consultants Henchion & Reuter

Architects led by a steering committee have begun to develop further the designs emerging from the Cliffs of Moher Strategy so that, ultimately, they will form a package to support a planning application to An Bord Pleanála. A multidisciplinary team of architects, engineers, ecologists, landscape architects, archaeologists, and environmental experts are focused on developing designs to include remediating the cliff side landscape west of the R478, pathways, viewing areas, habitat management plans, new arrivals and parking scheme. Site and infrastructure appraisals, ecological surveys and site investigations are ongoing to inform designs. Environmental screening and stakeholder engagement forms part of this project and will be followed by a planning application which is subject to approval.

ORIS Funding: Coastal walk upgrade at Surfers Path

Clare County Council was successful with an application for €500k to the Department of Rural and Community Development through the (ORIS) Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure



Draft Masterplan drawings COM Strategy 2040.

Scheme to fund the upgrade and repair of a section of the Cliffs of Moher Coastal Walk.

The repair and upgrade of this section to the North of the Cliffs of Moher Experience and South of Doolin village is essential to improve visitor safety and the reinstatement of biodiversity along the cliff edge. Habitats have been worn away and damaged along the section, parts are extremely dangerous, and visitors go to edges with over 200m drop to the sea. Some of the walls to keep people at a distance have broken and there is very little to deter people from going to the edges. Many of the pathways are in disrepair and prone to water logging making them impassable. This project will connect with extensive repair and upgrade works have already taken place on the 1km north and 1km south of the Visitor Centre over the past two years. The repair works will help provide employment during the construction phase and when complete will help the local economy by strengthening the Coastal Walk between Doolin and Liscannor.

The objective of the proposed project is repair of existing road and pathways to include partial replacement of the Liscannor stone wall, stiles, livestock fencing, gravel for paths and replacement of signage at the Surfers Path walk. The project is due to commence 2023 by agreement with landowners.

ORIS Funding: Pathway Resurfacing

Clare County Council and the Cliffs of Moher Experience were successful with an application for €19,576.77 to the Department of Rural and Community Development through the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) to widen and resurface visitor pathways at the Cliffs of Moher. The project involved the levelling, drainage and surfacing of up to 150lm of pathways for the accessibility of both pedestrians and emergency vehicles to all areas of the Cliffs of Moher site.

Accessibility

In 2020, the Cliffs of Moher Experience introduced an accessibility buggy service known as 'The Lifts of Moher' to assist those with mobility issues to access all areas of the Cliffs. In 2022, due to the increased demands on the service, a second buggy was introduced. An internal competition was run among staff to name the two buggies and the winning entry was 'The Burren Buggy' and 'The Wild Atlantic Shuttle'.



Lifts of Moher Buggies.

Local community engagement

- Meet the Makers programme: Cliffs of Moher Experience have introduced an initiative to support and market local suppliers and many of the products purchased by visitors to the site contribute to the local economy. Through the Meet the Makers programme, local craft suppliers are given the opportunity to promote and showcase these products in person, to visitors on site.
- JJ Corry Whiskey Brand Collaboration - O'Brien's Barrels in O'Brien's Tower
- Free to Clare Residents in 2023 welcomed 1,600 visitors in December
- North Clare and local care home residents' collaboration
- Pupils of Liscannor National School and Mol an Óige Steiner National School in Ennistymon visited the residents

of St Dominic Savio Nursing Home in Liscannor and Ennistymon Community Hospital to perform Christmas carols and spread some Christmas cheer. Liscannor NS children (15th December, 2022) visited Liscannor Nursing Home, while on Tuesday (20th December) it was the turn of Mol an Óige Community NS to visit Ennistymon Community Hospital.

Reduce Your Use guidelines

In line with the 'Public Sector: Reduce Your Use Guidelines' the following adjustments have been made at the Cliffs of Moher Experience:

- Internal temperature of all buildings reduced to 19 degrees
- Mechanical ventilation times have been reduced to be closer to opening/closing times
- Hot water temperature setting has been reduced from 60 degrees to 58 degrees. It works on a +/- 2 degrees so is still hitting the required 60 degrees and once per day the pre-programmed 65 degrees for Legionnaires' prevention still happens
- All non-security/safety external lighting times reduced to be closer to opening/closing times
- Introduction of water harvesting.

Education

Transition Year Students

Cliffs of Moher Experience facilitated three transition year students for work experience. Students gained experience in working in all areas of the site in the customer service agent role, café assistant and spent time with the bookings and marketing team gaining valuable insight into what it is like working at one of Ireland's most visited attractions. At the end of their work experience, each student was presented with a certificate, verifying their experience.

Junior Achievers

Twelve Cliffs Of Moher Experience team participated in the Junior Achievers Programme, sending team members out to local schools to talk about the world of work.

Research programme - University of Limerick

PHD Scholarship in association with University of Limerick (UL): Working with UL's National Centre For Tourism Policy Studies (NCTPS) and the Kemmy Business School, the Cliffs of Moher Experience and Clare County Council welcomed the sponsored PhD student Ernesto Sanchez in June as part of the tourism research project he will undertake over the next four years. The structured PhD programme will focus on challenges and opportunities of responding to a paradigm shift in the tourism marketplace, including visitor experience, sustainable tourism, destination and visitor management and the role of technology in shaping tourism.

Research programme - Shannon College of Hotel Management

During the summer of 2022, the Cliffs of Moher Experience linked with Shannon College of Hotel Management on a pilot programme to conduct visitor satisfaction surveys. Final year students on the Bachelor of Business Studies in International Hotel Management, attended the site on four separate dates and conducted surveys of visitors onsite. This collaboration was of benefit for both the Cliffs of Moher Experience gathering valuable information about the visitors to the site and it was of benefit to the students and the college forming part of their final year module in research methods and data collection. The collaboration resulted in a pool of data that was collated and presented by the college to management at the Cliffs of Moher. Following the successful completion of the pilot study, this partnership will continue over the next five years and gather the same information



Geraldine Enright (Director of the Cliffs of Moher Experience), Bobby Kerr (Chairperson, Cliffs of Moher Centre DAC), Ernesto Sanchez (PhD Student), Jim Deegan (Professor of Tourism Policy and Director of the National Centre for Tourism Policy Studies), Leonard Cleary (Director of Service, Rural Development, Clare County Council) and Eoin Flanagan (Human Resource Manager, Cliffs of Moher Experience).

over the longer period to allow for more data to be gathered and give a more accurate set of results. The information gathered will be invaluable for the Management team of the Cliffs of Moher Centre DAC as they make decisions and plans for the future with the attitudes and opinions of their visitors in mind.

Great Place to Work certification

First introduced in the United States in 1992, the international accreditation system 'Great Place to Work' was launched in Ireland in 2003 and has since become the country's definitive standard for measuring employee satisfaction in the workplace. The awarding of certification is based on the results of a survey completed recently by the staff at the Cliffs of Moher Experience, 98% of whom said the Cliffs is committed to diversity and inclusion. Eighty-three per cent (83%) of employees said they believe the North Clare visitor attraction is working towards reducing its impact on the environment.

'Epic Trip' digital tourism campaign reaches 3.4 million in North America

An 'Epic Trip' competition offering a five-day getaway break to County Clare attracted more than 34,000 entries from across the United States and Canada. Hosted by the Cliffs of Moher Experience and supported by Tourism Ireland, Aer Lingus and Clare tourism operators, the digital tourism marketing campaign targeted the North American market and reached an audience of 3.4 million people via Cliffs of Moher Experience social media channels.

The winning couple, Peggy and Daniel Haukup from Wichita in Kansas, arrived in Ireland in September. Their prize includes Aer Lingus direct scheduled return flights from the USA with AVIS car hire and a five-night stay in County Clare with attractions and activities included.

Visitor Safety Group Conference

On 7th September, 2022, The Cliffs of Moher Experience hosted the VSG (Visitor Safety Group) conference in the Falls Hotel and onsite for a guided walk and talk. VSG is a network in the UK and Ireland set up to identify and

promote ways to manage visitor safety and sustain the environment. There were 65 delegates representing a range of diverse organisations including NPSW, OPW, Coillte, Sport Ireland, Natural Resources Wales, National Trust Scotland, Department of Rural & Community Waterways Ireland, Clare Local Development Company, State Claims Agency and many more. The Cliffs of Moher was a case study site for the group conference and a presentation was delivered on the morning of the Conference by Geraldine Enright, Director, Cliffs of Moher Experience, on on-site safety challenges on a day-to-day basis and the planning involved in ensuring a safe environment for visitors. Later in the afternoon the group were divided into sub groups where they attended a walk and talk session on site with Mark O'Shaughnessy, Head of Operations, Noel Lyons, Operations Manager and Greg Davidson, Facilities Supervisor. The day finished off with a final Q&A round up and discussion on site.

Global tour operators get flavour of Clare in London and the World Travel Market

A number of Clare tourism attractions and companies were in London promoting the Banner at the 'Flavours of Ireland' 2022 expo and the World Travel Market. Representatives from Caherconnell Fort and Sheepdog Demonstrations, the Cliffs of Moher Experience, Doolin Ferry Company, Secret Ireland Escapes (based in Killaloe), Shannon Ferries and Trump International Golf Links & Hotel Doonbeg were among 60 Irish tourism companies present. 'Flavours' is Tourism Ireland's annual B2B tourism workshop, where tourism companies from Ireland meet and do business with top global inbound tour operators.

The Clare Quilt Displayed at the Cliffs of Moher Experience

The Clare Quilt was a community project which was envisaged and executed by Valery Larkin and members of the public. Each square within the quilt was designed through each individual's personal creative expression and depicts a different location around the county. The quilt is a celebration of the beauty of unique landscapes within the county and it is hoped the finished product will celebrate the continued strength of tourism within the county. The quilt was displayed at various locations around the county and from March 21st, 2022, until April 3rd, 2022, was on display at the Cliffs of Moher Visitor Centre.

'Doggy Pit Stop' installed at Cliffs of Moher Experience

As part of their commitment to welcoming dogs to the site, the team at the Cliffs of Moher Experience designed and built a 'Doggy Pit Stop' where dogs and other animals can stop for fresh water during their visit.



Doggy Pit Stop.

Our Roll-Out Strategy 2018 to 2023

Locations

YEAR	DIGICLARE HUB
2018	Kilrush
2018	Miltown Malbay
2018	Feakle
2019	Ennistymon
2020	Kilkee
2020	Corofin
2021	Cross
2021	Ennis
2021	Sixmilecross
2022	Flagmount
2022	Inagh

*Meeting rooms: Please note that due to the limited meeting rooms that we have to facilitate meetings at various times, by request.

All DigiClare Hubs feature enhanced health and safety standards, including improved ventilation and regular shared spaces to facilitate distancing.



DigiClare Hub Photos



Digital & Broadband

County Clare has now established itself as a remote working friendly county with the establishment of 11 remote working hubs throughout the county. The upgrading of facilities in the Kilrush Hub and its relocation to the Merchant's Quay building now provides the added facilities of flexible pods and incubation units and are now available to our patrons. This upgrade will help increase the footfall of remote workers in the hub and also encourage small businesses and start-ups to avail of the facilities.

The 11 hubs that are now located throughout the county have become extremely popular with individuals, teams, groups and companies in providing a network of affordable and flexible remote working facilities enabling both Clare residents and visitors to work locally in a fresh dynamic and safe environment that provides global connectivity through high-speed broadband.

A number of projects and initiatives were also completed by the Broadband and Digital Department in 2022. These included the establishment of a number of open Wi-Fi zones and broadband connection points throughout the county. These services, which have been established in a number of community facilities, open spaces and town squares, are proving an essential and popular service for both locals and visitors in accessing information on the internet.

Sports and Recreation



2022 saw a return to near normal activity levels at Active Ennis/Kilrush facilities. The demand for the facilities in particular the outdoor pitches was sustained during the year. Both John O'Sullivan Park and Tim Smythe Park retained their Green Flag status for 2022. The Green Flag is awarded by An Taisce in recognition of the facility meeting the benchmark standards for parks and green spaces.

Sports Capital Grant funding was announced in March 2022 with Clare County Council securing funding for the refurbishment of the athletics track at John O'Sullivan Park, Lees Road and for the development of a multi-use games area (MUGA) at the facility in Kilrush. The team were focused during 2022 on actioning items identified by the Local Government audit and the internal audit team. To that end many process improvements were put in place to address process deficiencies identified during internal and external audits.

Active Ennis John O'Sullivan Park, Lee's Road

During 2022 the Council hosted a 'Staff Family Fun Day' which was well supported with over 550 in attendance. There were Bouncy Castles, Obstacle Courses, Penalty Shoot Outs, Team Building Competitions, Egg and Spoon and Sack Races and with DJ Gerry on the music there was something for everyone.

Active Ennis Tim Smythe Park

Relay For Life Ennis returned to Tim Smythe

Park on 18th and 19th June after a two-year absence due to Covid-19. There was great support and participation throughout both days, with 16 teams registered. There was also a significant increase in the number of 'Survivors' taking part with 85 Survivors taking to the track for the first lap in an emotional and joyful start to the 24-hour event. The Candle of Hope Ceremony took place at 10pm and was very well attended, with approximately 700 people present for the moving ceremony. The track was lined by approximately 900 Candle Bags, all representing loved ones who have battled cancer. These candles remained lighting throughout the night.

Active Ennis Leisure Complex Fund Raiser

A raffle and three 'Coffee Mornings' were held at Active Ennis Leisure Complex on 21st/22nd/23rd October in aid of the 'Creelough Community Fund'. The team at Active Ennis Leisure Complex put in a tremendous effort and this was evident with the amazing amount raised. We would like to thank most sincerely our fantastic members, customers, friends, and families, who donated so generously, who baked and contributed the most delicious treats and prizes for the event. We were also greatly appreciative of the support we received from local businesses. We donated almost €2,500 to the community and families of Creelough.

Clare Community Games

Clare Community Games finals took place in the Leisure Complex. Approximately 240 children took part in the event in 31 different categories. The successful swimmers went on to National Finals in University of Limerick in September.

Camps and Intensive Swim Lessons

Camps and Intensive Swim Lessons were very popular during the summer with all camps and swimming lesson programmes at capacity.

Teen Gym

The continued demand for the Teen Gym sessions resulted in additional slots added during school breaks weekdays from 11am-1pm. These are in addition to the term time sessions Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

'Rock and Roll'

The 'Rock and Roll' inclusive class for the Brothers of Charity, Enable Ireland and the Irish Wheelchair Association is creating quite the buzz around the complex. An excellent addition to our class schedule consisting of half Zumba, half meditation.





ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE



LIAM CONNEALLY
Director of Economic Development

2022 was another busy year for the Council's Economic Development directorate, which comprises the Planning Department, Property Management Unit, Local Enterprise Office, Town Regeneration Team and the Shannon Municipal District.

Despite many headwinds and challenges, businesses in Clare continued to demonstrate strong resilience and are a key driver of a successful local economy. Micro enterprises supported by Clare County Council achieved a 4% growth in jobs and the Council continues to play a leading role in working with the

Shannon Group to support the development of Shannon as a strategic location for inward investment. The Council engages proactively in the emergence of new technologies and new economic opportunities such as future mobility campus, offshore wind, and the potential of the Shannon Estuary. The Clare Economic Task Force is a key advisor in assisting Clare County Council in identifying key economic opportunities in the context of an ever evolving and unstable global economic backdrop.

The continued uplift in planning and development activity indicates strong signs of a growing economy in the county, this was underpinned by work on the preparation of the new Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029, which will be finalised in early 2023.

During the year, work commenced on the statutory process in relation to the roll out of the Residential Zoned Land Tax, which saw the Draft 'In Scope Maps' published by the Council in November. This together with other initiatives across the Council are aimed at activating zoned and serviced lands for residential development.

Significant action was taken during the year on



Clare County Council, in conjunction with Limerick City and County Council, partnered with 'Motion by Electronomous' to bring leading global players within the mobility, automotive and aviation ecosystem to the Future Mobility Campus Ireland in Shannon in 2022.

derelict sites in the county, with the Council commencing compulsory acquisition of properties that were derelict for many years. This is part of a wider programme in identifying derelict properties and taking actions on them, a focus which will continue to 2023.

From a town regeneration perspective, the preparation of town enhancement plans in 2022 for Ennistymon, Corofin and Sixmilebridge demonstrates Clare County Council's commitment to regenerating our local towns and villages, focused on both community and economic development, to become better places to live, work and visit.

Clare Economic Task Force (CET)

During 2022, the CET, a group of public and private sector leaders, chaired by Mr Noel Kilkenny, held a number of meetings to guide the Council in economic development measures that will stimulate job creation and economic growth in County Clare.

It is critically important that Clare has an awareness and understanding of wider global issues and their potential impact on our local economy. Aligned with the guidance of the CET,

Clare County Council works closely with many stakeholders and state agencies to ensure we remain focused on sustaining a vibrant and resilient economic environment benefitting all our communities.

Future Mobility Campus Ireland (FMCI)

The Council is in partnership with Future Mobility Campus Ireland (FMCI), with the Director of Economic Development on the Board, and is funded by Enterprise Ireland, Clare County Council and Limerick City and County Council, as well as private companies. The campus, within the Shannon Free Zone, is being developed to create and deliver future mobility testbed facilities – in real world, 'live' settings – giving technology companies, software developers and researchers the opportunity to test and enhance their innovations. In 2022, the two local authorities partnered with 'Motion by Electronomous' in the Future Mobility Campus to bring leading global players within the mobility, automotive and aviation ecosystem to the Shannon region, which provided a great opportunity

to get further insight into the talent and skills possessed in the industries in County Clare and the MidWest region, and position Clare internationally as a key location for future mobility innovation.

Economic Development Strategic Policy Committee (SPC)

Four meetings of the Committee were held in 2022 with a range of policy areas such as climate adaptation, biodiversity, planning and offshore renewable energy examined. The Committee comprises seven elected members of Clare County Council and six sectoral representatives and key focus areas in the coming five years will include a review of Clare actions in the Mid-West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024, a review and guidance of the Local Economic and Community Plan, enablement of the offshore renewable energy industry and associated supply chain supports, the implementation of the Shannon Town Masterplan and the Ennis 2040 Spatial and Economic Strategy, climate adaptation and biodiversity will be standing agenda items for the SPC during the length of its tenure.

South Clare/UL Economic Strategic Development Zone (SDZ)

Since 2018, the Council has worked closely with University of Limerick on the preparation of the South Clare/UL Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) application with the objective of transforming 325 acres of greenfield lands beside UL's existing 125-acre campus in County Clare into an education/employment/residential university zone. The University of Limerick is leading out on the unique opportunities for economic development of international scale on the Clare Campus of UL. The objective is to provide the environment and capacity to create at least 3,500 jobs and support University of Limerick to seek the EU designation of Europe's first university SDZ. The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy

(RSES) for the Southern Region provides significant regional policy priority to the SDZ and identifies the site as a national enabler. It is an objective of the RSES to support the designation and subsequent development of the lands zoned as University in the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 as an economic SDZ. Engagement with the governing Department at national level continued during 2022.

Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary (SIFP)

The enactment of the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021, the setting up of the Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce and the consequent future requirement for the preparation of Designated Maritime Area Plans (DMAPS) at a sub-national level (i.e. for the Shannon Estuary and Clare and Kerry coasts), Clare County Council, acting as lead local authority, was requested by the Shannon Estuary Taskforce in its interim report to Government to reconvene the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan Steering Group. The 2013 SIFP was incorporated by way of variation into the relevant City and County Development Plans. In preparation for the development of the Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) sector off our west coast and the role of the Estuary in servicing this ORE industry it was deemed an opportune time to reconvene the SIFP Steering Group. Nominations to the newly re-convened Steering Group were requested and a meeting held in November 2022. The key actions were discussed amongst those present including the requirement for an identified funding mechanism, the requirement to re-establish the Environmental Sub-Group in order to prioritise the most pressing data gaps and finally the requirement to undertake a review of the SIFP at a policy level in order to bring it in line with changes to both regional and national policy and plans.

Roche Masterplan

As a strategic project for County Clare, Clare County Council continued to work with Roche (Ireland) Ltd in 2022 on the development of a Masterplan for the Roche site in Clarecastle to identify potential future development and proposed employment opportunities for the site.

Planning Department

Forward Planning

Marine Planning Legislation

The Director of Economic Development sat on the “Supporting Reform of Marine Management in Ireland” Steering Group in 2022. The Group addressed the key changes required within decision making bodies and specifically Local Government involved in granting authorisations in the maritime area due to the enactment of the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021 (MAP Act). One of the key deliverables of this group was to compare the AS-IS pre-MAP Act situation with the new regime under the MAP act (the TO-BE situation). This involved a review of the suitability of existing processes and capabilities of decision-making bodies involved in granting authorisations in the maritime area for which Clare County Council will now become a Coastal Planning Authority (CPA), which is a defined remit and jurisdiction for the nearshore in line with Section 5 of the Act. A significant ‘Change Strategy’ will be required to support the successful implementation and sustainment of the Digital Tools and Services required to meet this new role within the local authorities identified as CPA for which Clare County Council is one. It is anticipated that significant changes will be implemented in 2023 including but not limited to the provision of Maritime Area Consents (MAC), acceptance of ABP led planning permissions and CPA led planning permissions for ‘Nearshore’ areas.

This ‘Change Strategy’ will see challenges in implementation which will require careful management by the local authorities.

Ennistymon Enhancement Plan

Clare County Council, together with its partners Clare Local Development Company and Ennistymon Town Team, and the design team led by Helena McElmeel Architects, prepared the Ennistymon Enhancement Plan, which seeks to build upon the Council’s proposals in exploring the potential of the existing townscape and its built environment. The strategy looked at key sites in the town centre to guide their development in a positive way in addition to enhancing the quality of the public space to create a vibrant and inclusive townscape. Public consultation was a key part of the project. The outcomes and observations obtained from the public consultation richly informed the design process.



Corofin Enhancement Strategy

In the past two years, the Council and the National Parks & Wildlife Services (NPWS) worked in partnership to prepare an Enhancement Strategy for the village of Corofin, which was partly funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme. This funding supports the development of projects aiming to breathe life into rural communities, tackle vacancy and address dereliction in our towns and villages. The aspirations of the Corofin Enhancement Strategy align well with these principles, as we look to define new

uses for derelict properties and provide public realm improvements through thoughtful and sensitive interventions. A design team led by the award-winning Hall McKnight Architects are currently in the first stage of the design process, and this is heavily informed by the findings of the first stage of public consultation and baseline research. The Enhancement Strategy will be finalised by early 2023.



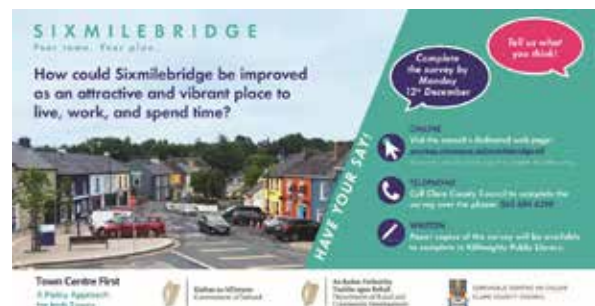
Sixmilebridge Town Centre Masterplan

In late 2021, the Minister for Rural and Community Development announced funding to deliver the first ever Town Centre First Plans to tackle dereliction and revitalise town centres, with Sixmilebridge being awarded €100,000 funding to prepare a Town Centre Masterplan.

Work during the year has included briefings with community and local business representatives, the preparation of a project brief and appointment of an urban design and planning consultant, Allies and Morrison Ltd. The multi-disciplinary design team, local Councillors, and representatives of Clare County Council's various teams worked during the year and held public consultation events and a walkability audit of the town. These were supported by the Council's Age Friendly Team.

Clare County Council's Town Regeneration Officer was appointed in early October 2022 and continued to engage with all stakeholders and set about the establishment of a Sixmilebridge Town Team. An online survey was launched in November to inform the key proposals and projects in the Masterplan. The

Masterplan will be key to leveraging funding from multiple funding streams, including RRDF and Town & Village Renewal Scheme, as it will provide a co-ordinated programme of investment for the town into the future.



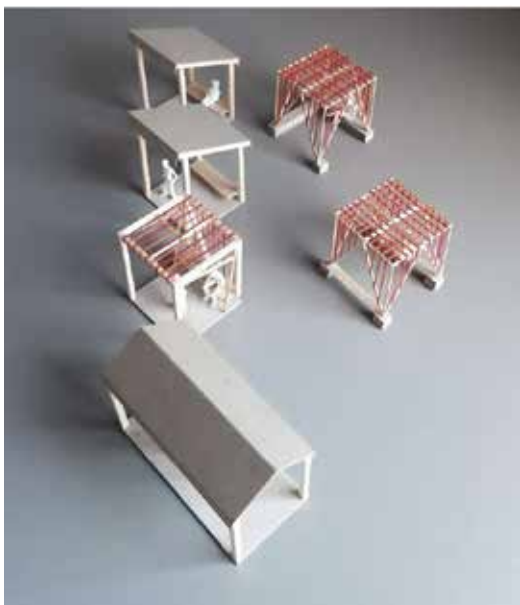
The Manchester Martyrs Monument

The Manchester Martyrs Monument in Kilrush was repaired and restored with grant aid from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage under the Historic Structures Fund 2021. This monument was erected in the heart of Kilrush Town in 1903 and is one in a series of monuments built around Ireland to commemorate the memory of the Manchester Martyrs. Mid-West Lime Ltd did the repair works on site and the railings were then repaired by the historic blacksmith, Brendan St John.



Flexible Outdoor Structures

With funding under the Outdoor Public Space Scheme promoted by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, a project was advanced to reimagine how we use our outdoor public spaces for cultural offerings as an intrinsic part of our traditional way of life, in particular the rich tradition of festivals and outdoor events we have in County Clare. GKMP Architects led a multi-disciplinary design team to develop design for a series of flexible outdoor structures for use during festivals and outdoor events.



Architectural Conservation

Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS)

The BHIS is designed to assist with the repair and conservation of structures that are protected under the Planning and Development Acts. In certain cases, the scheme also supports the conservation of structures within Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) where, in the opinion of the local authority, a need for works to enhance the character and appearance of an ACA has been demonstrated. The primary purpose of the scheme is to support privately owned properties in need of repair and conservation.

Works to the nine protected structures which were allocated funding of almost €100,000

under the 2022 Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) are complete. These were:

1. Stack's, Ennistymon - Works to repair the existing windows and install secondary glazing to increase thermal performance.
2. Glencairn House, Ennis - Works to repoint and repair external wall, final phase of three years of work.
3. Michael Cusack Centre, Carran - Works to roof of thatched cottage, birthplace of Michael Cusack.
4. Land Steward's House, Clooney - Works to repair roof of former land steward's house, part of former Clooney House Estate.
5. Loop Head, Lighthouse Keeper's House - Internal repairs to lighthouse keeper's house, Loop Head.
6. O'Grady's Bar, Tubber - Works to repair roof of former O'Grady's Bar, Tubber.
7. No. 1 Bindon Street, Ennis - Works to internal lime plaster work of Georgian House.
8. The Store, Tuamgraney - Works to replace and repair windows and openings of former store house of former Scariff Union Workhouse.
9. Manus House, Ennis - Works to repair roof of main house.

Historic Structures Fund

The Historic Structures Fund (HSF) is for the conservation and enhancement of historic structures and buildings for the broader benefit of communities and the public. In 2022, funding was allocated to two projects. The works to Frawley's Pub are completed, with the roof having been structurally stabilised and roof slates repaired. Works to Killaloe Cathedral are due to be complete in early 2023.

Community Monuments Fund 2022

The Conservation Management Plans of the three medieval churches of Killofin,

Labasheeda, Killchreest, Ballynacally and Templemaley, Ballyallia were completed in 2022. The Conservation Management Plans are to be used in seeking further funding for capital works to consolidate and protect the ruins of the medieval churches.

Section 57 Applications

Section 57 Declarations are issued to owners of buildings or structures that wish to conduct works to their structures. A Declaration determines whether works would be considered exempt from planning and can also be used to clarify the curtilage of a protected structure, or what elements are to be protected. 29 applications for declarations were received in the year.

Development Management

Planning Applications

The number of planning applications received in 2022 was 1,087. In addition, there were nine Part VIII Local Authority own development applications. Determinations were made in relation to 1,012 planning applications, of which 942 (90.2%) were granted and 102 (9.8%) were refused. Of the 25 applications determined by An Bord Pleanála during the year, 20 decisions (80%) of Clare County Council were upheld.

E-Planning Project

The National Online Planning Portal was launched in Clare County Council in mid-December 2022, with Clare County Council being part of Phase 1 of the LGMA national roll-out. The introduction of E-planning will streamline and improve efficiencies in the planning process by reducing the potential for invalid applications and deliver on the Government strategy to move more public services online.

This will also be of benefit to the planning agents who will be able to log on and prepare a draft application over a period of time, or upload and pay for an application on the portal within 15 minutes, reducing their need to physically visit the Planning Office. Members of the public can also engage with the E-planning system and make a planning submission online.

Pre-Planning Enquiries

A total of 235 pre-planning consultations took place during the year, which enables applicants to discuss the principle of their proposals free of charge with a Council planning officer.

Development Contributions

The sum of €2,811,024.58 was collected during 2022. These contributions provide funding towards capital work programmes on a range of infrastructure including roads, amenity, community, recreation and car parking. The Council continues to collect water and sewerage contributions on behalf of Irish Water on planning permissions granted prior to 1st January, 2014.

Enforcement of Planning Law

The Enforcement Section of the Planning Department saw a high level of activity during 2022 and the activity is summarised in the following table:

Number of complaints received	173
New cases investigated	105
Warning letters issued	178
Enforcement notices issued	28
Legal cases initiated	3
Files closed	53

Taking in Charge of Housing Estates

Six housing estates were taken in charge by the Council in 2022. The taking in charge team also proactively monitored 14 new developments under construction during 2022. The ongoing monitoring of estates, albeit resource intensive, should ensure that housing developments in the future are finished to a higher standard and that the subsequent taking in charge processes should be more straightforward.



Progress was made on the completion and/or remediation of many other previously unfinished developments, including three large estates, through engagement with bondholders, developers, contractors, and residents. The team continue to finalise site resolution plans and to arrange for remedial works contracts to be put in place on unfinished developments where the Council has claimed and received bond monies.



In developments where the bonds, for a variety of reasons, are insufficient to complete the required works, it is hoped that a national

incentive scheme, like that provided by the Department in 2016 would become available to the Council, which would assist in the completion of these historical developments.

Shannon Town Centre Masterplan

The preparation of the Shannon Town Centre Masterplan, which is part funded by the Government's Urban Regeneration Development Fund (URDF), was adopted by the Shannon Municipal District in 2022. The Masterplan, comprising two elements - a spatial masterplan and an economic viability assessment of the Plan - was prepared by Building Design Partnership and McCabe Durney Barnes economists.

Recognising the key objectives of the 'Housing for All' and 'Town Centre First' policies in particular, the Shannon Town Centre Masterplan seeks to regenerate and reimagine Shannon Town Centre as a viable, vibrant and attractive location for people to live, work and visit, while also functioning as the service, social, cultural and recreational hub for the local community.

Several integrated interventions identifying potential future land uses, proposed improvements to public realm and new connections to strengthen connectivity in the town centre and throughout Shannon, including the Airport and Free Zone are proposed. These include the following:

- A new Main Street (R471) and improved green boulevards linking to the estuary.
- An expanded and reinvigorated green Civic Square area that will be pedestrian focused.
- A more varied retail offer, showcasing local products and services.
- A new 'One Shannon Hub' community, civic and cultural hub where multiple uses coexist to create new synergies and to ensure activity throughout the day and night.

- A mixture of new high-quality residential homes with the potential for step-down housing proposed on the site of the existing Area Office.
- Improved public realm and parking strategy to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists, and creating an enhanced streetscape which will be active and dynamic.
- An Innovation Campus to showcase the best of Shannon and to accommodate potential future growth of the town environs.
- New amenities and better connections to the new Town Park and Shannon Estuary to support healthy lifestyles.

A refreshed identity for Shannon rooted in its history of innovation, enterprise and connectivity with nature.

The identification and delivery of the intervention areas and key projects listed above will transform the economic, social and cultural development of Shannon Town and the built environment and public realm.

Clare County Council continues to actively engage with stakeholders and landowners to deliver upon the objectives of the Masterplan. Tenders for a design team and project management team for the 'One Shannon Hub' and public realm works were issued in 2022 and the tender is due to be awarded in 2023. Additional funding streams, including the Urban Regeneration Development Fund, are being targeted to enable delivery of this development.

Ennis 2040 Economic and Spatial Strategy

The implementation of the Ennis 2040 Economic and Spatial Strategy has commenced. Transformational sites design have been progressed in 2022 along with a number of initiatives focused on the sustainable development of the town such as public realm improvements and active travel projects. All



of these projects are critical in the delivery on the vision of Ireland's first Climate Adaptive Town. Sustainability is, and will continue to be, central to Ennis 2040 activities and priorities. The projects that have been initiated are key to achieving the goal of a '10-minute town' and demonstrating how a county town the size of Ennis can deliver and respond to climate change and 'town centre first' living.

Ennis 2040 and Ennis Municipal District engaged with transition year students in local secondary schools to seek their vision for Ennis in 2040 and also to promote and raise awareness of the Ennis 2040 plan for the town. The 'TY Competition' resulted in very high-quality buy in from the Transition Year students with many great suggestions and ideas.

The first jobs announcement associated with the Ennis 2040 vision was made with the health technology firm Vitalograph acquiring the Ballymaley Enterprise and Innovation Centre building from Clare County Council to accommodate the development of its new Clinical Trials Services Centre of Excellence. This move will result in the creation of 72 jobs in Ennis in 2023 / 2024.

Forward Planning

Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029

The process of preparing the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 was progressed during 2022. Upon adoption, the Plan will set out the overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the county over a six-year period.

The Draft Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 was on display for a 15-week period of public consultation which ended in late March. To encourage maximum engagement

in the consultation process an extensive and varied media campaign was carried out, virtual and in-person mediums of communication and engagement were adopted to achieve maximum media exposure. Social media and a dedicated web page with an information video were essential mediums to reach out to all sectors and communities. Engagement with young people in particular, through secondary and primary school projects, was welcomed by schools, the Elected Members and commended by the Office of the Planning Regulator as an innovative and effective approach to reaching out to young people and facilitating their participation in the process. In addition, nine public consultation events were held around the county. On St Patrick's Day in Ennis, a stand dedicated to the Draft Plan was located on O'Connell Street which generated further positive public engagement in the process.

The effectiveness of the public consultation process was reflected in the 1,015 written



submissions received. Each one was reviewed and reported on in the Chief Executive's Report which was issued to the Elected Members in July 2022 for their consideration. Informal workshops were held during Q3 and Q4 with the Elected Members to consider the Chief Executive's report and recommendations. At a Special Council Meeting on 30th October, the Elected Members agreed, by resolution, to a number of proposed amendments to the Draft Development Plan. On 1st November the proposed amendments were placed on display for a period of consultation until early 2023 and represented the start of the third and final stage of the plan-making process.

The Draft Clare County Development Plan consisted of 10 volumes which, in addition to the main policy written statement and written statements and maps for all settlements within the county, included a Record of Protected Structures, a new Clare Renewable Energy Strategy, Retail Strategy and Housing Strategy as well as a Natura Impact Report, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Environmental Report and a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.



Ennis Town Centre Health Check

A survey of Ennis Town Centre ground floor land uses was undertaken for Ennis during the year. This presents a valuable comparison between the results for 2021 and those of previous years, allowing for patterns of land use to be identified.



Heritage

Funding was awarded from the National Biodiversity Action Plan, Heritage Council and Clare Creative Ireland for the following projects:

- Lisdoonvarna Heritage Audit and Heritage Plan
- Clare Community Archaeology Scheme
- Project development and works at Hastings' Farmhouse in Shannon under the Heritage Council Stewardship Scheme (€22,110).

Biodiversity

Clare County Council was successful in its application to the Heritage Council for funding under the Biodiversity Officer Pilot Programme in 2022, with a Heritage Officer to be appointed in 2023, signaling the Council's commitment to supporting our communities in addressing

biodiversity loss and introducing measures to support climate adaptation and biodiversity support measures.

Project funding was allocated by the National Biodiversity Action Plan fund from the National Parks and Wildlife Service with co-funding by Clare County Council for the following projects:

1. Four Alien Invasive Species projects including: (1) a survey of the American Skunk Cabbage on the Lower River Shannon catchment, including the Blackwater River and the Errina Canal; (2) a survey and research of the Quagga Mussel in Ireland; (3) a review of Alien Invasive Species management programme in Clare County Council and the establishment of an all-county Alien Invasive Species database; (4) the creation of a Clare County Council Alien Invasive Species Online Web Resource.
2. The County Clare Wetland Survey 2022
3. The Clare Barn Owl Survey and Nest Box Scheme, 2022
4. A communication programme for the Hare's Corner in association with Burrenbeo Trust
5. Orchards, native woodland, pond creation and ecological advice as part of the Hare's Corner in association with Burrenbeo Trust
6. Rare, threatened, and characteristic plants of the Burren and the Aran Islands, to determine the current distribution, abundance and conservation status of rare, threatened and characteristic plants of the Burren and the Aran Islands.

Projects funded under the National Biodiversity Action Plan

Seven projects were approved for funding under the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, the Local Biodiversity Action Fund (LBAF), including the Clare Wetland Survey, the Clare Barn Owl Survey and nest box scheme, the second round of Hare's Corner project run by Burrenbeo and the survey of the Rare and

Endangered Plants of the Burren. In addition, funding was allocated to the national Quagga Mussel IAS survey and the survey of American Skunk Cabbage *Lysichiton americanus* along the lower stretches of the River Blackwater in County Clare.

Invasive Alien Species (IAS) projects

The Invasive Alien Species Online Web Resource is an online portal, which provides accurate, up to date information on IAS in County Clare, including their identification, management and control. This comprehensive online resource will assist in giving the correct advice on how to identify, manage and treat IAS. See: <https://yoursay.clarecoco.ie/invasive-species-clare>

Review of IAS Treatment in Clare

Clare County Council commissioned the expertise of Prof. Joe Caffrey of INVAS Biosecurity Ltd to review IAS treatment carried out by the Clare Municipal District Offices, to assist and advise the Council in the treatment of IAS species. A workshop involved a round-table discussion with the Engineering and Roads staff to discuss practices and problems in the treatment of IAS in the Municipal Districts, the approaches taken to these operations, the level of contact with the contractors doing the treatments, and any problems encountered. This examined the effectiveness of ongoing efforts to manage and control invasive alien plant species (IAS) throughout the county. The workshop was followed by site visits to Invasive Alien Species (Knotweeds and Giant Hogweed) treated sites in County Clare. A report was prepared which addresses key issues and prepares the ground for more detailed work and some of the recommendations arising from the review included outlining the extent of the IAS problem for the Council including a defined policy. The need for dedicated multi-annual funding to tackle the problems relating to IAS was identified (i.e. treatment in the

first year will generally suppress but not kill invasive species, such as Japanese knotweed, and follow-up treatment in subsequent years will be essential to ensure their effective, long-term control). As part of this project a county-wide database for IAS has been developed which includes data relating to the distribution and status of IAS in Clare.

IAS Quagga Mussel IAS survey

Survey of American Skunk Cabbage *Lysichiton americanus* along the lower stretches of the River Blackwater in County Clare.

Clare Wetland Survey

This is the first year of a three-year project on the Clare Wetland Survey, which is being undertaken by Wetlands Survey Ireland. Information was updated in 2022 from previous surveys since 2008. The total wetland area in County Clare is estimated at 23,440 ha based on the Clare Wetlands Study in 2008, 7.4 % of the county. The 2008 study identified 34 wetland types (22 of which are listed in Annex 1 of the EU Habitats Directive, and nine of these are priority habitats) in County Clare. In terms of the main habitat types in County Clare, the following is the breakdown:

- Lakes 2.57%
- Bogs and wet heaths 2.52%
- Fens & flushes, marsh, reedbeds and wet grassland cover 1%
- The remaining 1% has been assigned to unknown wetland type awaiting more detailed habitat survey.

The Clare wetland database holds information on 810 sites in total (within and outside designated areas). 231 occur within areas designated for nature conservation (28%). The remaining 589 are outside of designated areas (72%). There is little or no information on 406 wetland areas in County Clare, with some survey information (habitats/species etc) for the other half.

Barn Owl Survey

The Barn Owl Survey found that there was a least 22 pairs of Barns Owls breeding in Clare, which is less than was anticipated. The current known breeding range of Barn Owls in County Clare in 2022 is more extensive (+285%) compared to the breeding range 10 years ago recorded by the Bird Atlas (2007-11) but less extensive (-15%) than 50 years ago as recorded by the Atlas of Breeding Birds in Britain and Ireland (1968-72). Barn Owl breeding success was high with an average of three chicks successfully reared. This is due to the presence of the invasive mammals, Bank Vole and White-toothed Shrew which provides a good source of food to Barn Owls throughout the county. Thirty-two Barn Owl nest boxes were distributed as part of this project and the boxes are being put in place all around the county.

The Hare's Corner project

The Hare's Corner project undertaken by Burrenbeo is an initiative to help landowners make more space for nature through the creation of a mini woodland, a mini orchard, a pond or a 'plan for nature'. It was launched as a pilot project in September 2021 with support from the Department of Agriculture, Clare County Council and NPWS and supported the creation of 30 ponds, 44 mini orchards (with 350 Irish heritage apple trees from Irish Seed Savers Association) and 34 mini woodlands (with 7,227 Irish native trees, including rare Irish pines) in its first year – a very worthwhile investment in the natural infrastructure of County Clare. There is a lot of demand for such an initiative and there is a waiting list of landowners who want to 'do their bit' for nature but find it hard to access the funding, advice and encouragement needed to make this happen.

A second round of applications for the Hare's Corner were approved in June 2022, which will support more participants in carrying out biodiversity actions, improve farmland biodiversity and increase resilience against the effects of climate change. This phase enabled the provision of 10 ponds, 33 mini orchards (supplied from the Irish Seedsavers Association) 200 trees and the provision of 10 plans in the option for 'Planning for Nature' site assessment and report with targeted advice.

Heritage Council funded projects

The Heritage Council funded two projects under Clare County Heritage Plans.

Lisdoonvarna Heritage Plan and Design Guide

Clare County Council in partnership with Lisdoonvarna Fáilte worked with a multi-disciplinary team led by Drake Hourigan Architects to undertake a Heritage Plan for Lisdoonvarna, which examined heritage opportunities and challenges for the town and its green infrastructure. The Plan identified key actions and opportunities for future development including the heritage assets, public realm, green infrastructure, improved access arrangements, connectivity and linkages. The Plan was developed with extensive public consultation with the community and relevant stakeholders. Heritage Week provided a great opportunity to engage with the local community on the project and several community workshops took place during Heritage Week.

The key outcomes found that many of the heritage sites are hidden, inaccessible, unconnected, and difficult to locate in reality. The focus in mapping the heritage trail here is to connect these sites using walking as a mode of movement, to make Lisdoonvarna's heritage both accessible in the way finding sense and identify the challenges of making a heritage trail accessible in the physical sense. A walking

heritage trail is proposed to experience and understand the heritage of Lisdoonvarna, including the wells, bridges, significant buildings, significant views. Recommendations are made for a Heritage Walking App with audio guide (stories, folklore and history) as an outcome and a future project. Other proposals are made for the main street, lower main street, that identify the type of upgrades that would be appropriate from a heritage perspective (render, windows, signage, colour). Gateways and town arrival concepts proposed are made for marking arrival points to the town. As well as conceptual images for the Twin wells, Rathlawn wells and significant views at the Spectacle Bridge and the Gowlaun Spa and Mayville House. Conservation planning is highly recommended for the Spa Wells Complex.

A draft of the Lisdoonvarna Heritage Plan was presented to the local community in October 2022, and the final Heritage Plan and design guide were completed and launched in January 2023.

The Clare Community Archaeology Scheme

This scheme supported communities to become actively involved in the conservation and interpretation of their local archaeological and cultural heritage sites. Edel Barry was commissioned to work with communities in Clare, visiting archaeological sites and advising on appropriate conservation work, best practice and providing advice on funding for conservation of archaeological sites. The work showcased several important aspects of archaeology in Clare during Clare Heritage Week, including the conservation of old buildings, Holy Wells, High Crosses, Derrainy, Whitegate and its history and a cycling tour of Kilfenora. Site reports were prepared and presented to the relevant communities, farmers and stakeholders. It is hoped to build upon these foundations, guiding and assisting the community groups to obtain the necessary

reports and permissions to apply for funding for archaeological conservation works.

Kilrush Collaborative Town Centre Health Check (CTCHC)

Masters' students from Queen's University Belfast undertook a Kilrush Collaborative Town Centre Health Check in Kilrush in September, in conjunction with the Kilrush Town Team, the Heritage Council and Clare County Council. The students undertook detailed land use studies using CTCHC methodology, undertook online questionnaires, foot fall counts and vehicle counts. Car parking (on-and off-street) utilisation rates were recorded, as well as a walkability audit including permeability, legibility and floor scape maintenance and quality was completed. A consultation with young people from the local secondary school took place as well as interviews with key stakeholders in Kilrush. A short report been drafted summarising the project, which will incorporate feedback from the summary presentation. A 'peer review' is being undertaken in relation to the land use survey (Step 2 CTCHC).

The survey highlights some important needs and issues in Kilrush in a very positive light and provided good ideas and guidance for future initiatives. Proposals to take advantage of the many opportunities exist to enhance connectivity and permeability and to return the heart back into the town, including the need for a public space for youth and for the residents in the town generally and opportunities to provide green spaces in the heart of the town and the riverside walk to allow for greater access opportunities.

Heritage Stewardship Fund, Hastings' Farmhouse, Shannon

The partnership between Clare County Council and Dúchas na Sionna is a key step in safeguarding the heritage of Hastings' Farmhouse in Shannon, improve accessibility

to the site and this was supported by the Heritage Stewardship Fund. An event was held at Hastings' Farmhouse as part of Heritage Week. This project also funded training in vernacular construction for adult learners with a view to increasing inclusivity in heritage initiatives. This training was delivered in partnership with the LCETB and Dúchas na Sionna and was attended by members of the local community, as well as members of the Ukrainian community.

Heritage projects funded by Clare Creative Ireland

Four heritage projects were awarded funding under the Clare Creative Ireland Strategy as follows:

1. County Survey and recording information on known locations of 136 Cillíns or burials on un-consecrated ground (and including unbaptised children's burial grounds). There are 75 Clare Cillíní sites surveyed to date (out of a total of an estimated 140 known in Clare and to be surveyed by 2023). All of this information has been uploaded to the Clare Heritage website. It is planned to finalise and launch the survey in 2023.
2. Reading your Local Landscape 2022 in Miltown Malbay including writing up of projects to be published on the Clare iCAN website. A showcase night was held where the participants presented their projects and received their certificates. This is the seventh time this course has been offered in collaboration with the Limerick & Clare Education and Training Board and funded by Clare Creative Ireland. The course consists of a series of modules delivered through lectures, case studies and field trips to sites of interest within the local area, group research and discussion.
3. Awareness raising and improved physical and intellectual access to County Clare Holy Wells and archaeological sites at

Kilmaleery Holy Well and Shallee Castle.

4. Production of a best practice information video on the management of historic burial grounds for communities in the Care and Conservation Historic Graveyards in collaboration with the Burial Grounds Unit.

Other initiatives in 2022

Heritage Week awards for County Clare Bogs, Boats, and Dolphins

During National Heritage Week, 90 events took place in County Clare, with many outstanding events showcasing the fantastic heritage of County Clare. Three Clare Heritage Week events starred at the 2022 National Heritage Awards as follows:

- Shanakyle Bog Restoration Project, in partnership with Connecting Communities with Peatland, was awarded the County Clare Heritage Event Award for their event – ‘Walk & Talk on Shanakyle Bog’. Shanakyle Bog is located near Parteen and is the first raised bog restoration and rewetting project to be carried out in County Clare.
- ‘Preserving the Fishing Heritage & Local History of Clarecastle in Film’ by Clarecastle & Ballyea Heritage & Wildlife Group was runner up in the national category of Sustainable Heritage Award. Five films were launched in Clarecastle during Heritage Week 2022 and are featured on the Clarecastle website as part of the Irish Community Archives Network. Three films showcased boat building projects, the skills of boat building, which are in danger of being lost, but are now preserved in film for future generations. Another short film presented a recently discovered rare autograph book of national importance which contains the signatures of many of the personalities that were present in Ennis for the 1917 by-election.
- A ‘Dolphin Scavenger Hunt’ was held in

Kilrush, by the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group Shannon Dolphin Project and was a runner up in the national Wild Child Award category, sponsored by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

You can visit <https://www.heritageweek.ie/event-listings?q=&where%5B%5D=clare#listings/> to learn more about all the wonderful events and digital projects from County Clare which featured for National Heritage Week 2022.

Clare Holy Wells Project

Clare County Council launched the webpage of the Clare Holy Wells Project to showcase the survey details and information on 237 holy wells in the county in January 2022. This survey of a part of our heritage that holds a special place in the hearts of many Clare people provides information on all Clare’s Holy Wells is gathered with Maps, photographs and detailed information which bring the stories of these wells alive. See: <https://heritage.clareheritage.org/category/places/holy-wells> of the Clare Heritage website.

The Clare Biodiversity Best Practice Manual

The Clare Biodiversity Best Practice Manual was launched internally in Clare County Council, following presentation to the Social Development and Economic Development Strategic Policy Committees meeting in March. The guidelines provide advice and practical guidance to staff on how to implement best practice measures and adapt our work practices for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity. This gives staff an overview of the importance of biodiversity, the legislative and policy context and how the Council’s work impacts on biodiversity. This manual will be adapted and updated over time.

Lesser Horseshoe Bat Species Action Plan (SAP)

The National Lesser Horseshoe Bat Species Action Plan has been published by National Parks and Wildlife Service and is available on the NPWS website here: <https://www.npws.ie/publications/species-action-plans>. Clare County Council is involved in the initial Steering Group involving all the stakeholders and the six relevant western local authorities. Lesser Horseshoe Bat roosts continue to be discovered along the Shannon Estuary at several different locations towards Kilrush, which indicates a spread of their known territory and a positive indicator for the Clare population of this bat species.

Wildlife in Buildings Video and Publication

Clare County Council along with Tipperary and Laois County Councils hosted a webinar on Wildlife in Buildings during Biodiversity Week to promote the Wildlife in Buildings video produced by Birdwatch Ireland. In addition to this a publication of the same name was supported by Kerry and Donegal Local Authorities. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5lQt3C8uI5E&t=1s>

Community Heritage Funding 2022

Community groups and individuals were assisted with heritage grants in 2022, such as the Community Foundation grants for biodiversity plans, the Community Monuments Fund, the Community Water Development Fund, among other funding.

- Heritage Council Community Heritage Grants 2022 - Twelve Clare communities received funding to the tune of €120,621 to conserve and restore built, cultural and natural heritage throughout the county, including access and inclusion to heritage sites, that apply good heritage practice to the management of places, collections, or

objects (including buildings)

- Community Foundation for Ireland Environment and Nature Fund - Twelve community groups in Clare got support to employ an ecologist and develop Biodiversity Plans under Community Foundation for Ireland Environment and Nature Fund in 2022
- Community Heritage Grant Scheme 2022 - At least 15 Clare communities received support in applying for this grant scheme in 2022.

Shanakyle Bog

The Heritage Officer gave a presentation on the Council's biodiversity programme and the Clare Wetlands project 2022 at the Shanakyle Bog Restoration and Habitat Enhancement Project European Innovative Partnership Official Launch, which was launched by Minister Pippa Hackett, Minister of State at Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM).

Shanakyle Bog near Kilrush is approximately 30 ha in extent and was historically managed for domestic peat extraction operations up until the 1980's. The bog was brought to light by the Clare County Council habitat mapping in 2008. Much of the original peat mass has been removed and a significant section to the south of the bog is now managed for commercial forestry operations. Shanakyle Bog Restoration and Habitat Enhancement Project is a locally led European Innovation Partnership (EIP) project administered by Shanakyle Bog Restoration Group and located near the village of Parteen, County Clare. The project is funded by the DAFM's locally led EIP scheme under the Rural Development Programme. Aspects of the project involve the restoration and rewetting of 30 acres of raised and cutover bog; creation of a wildlife pond; installation of bat roost boxes and bird nest boxes for protected and endangered species; managing 10 acres of grassland for

wildflower meadow to link in with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan; creation of a nature trail; and eradication of scheduled and high impact invasive species. The project focus is to promote biodiversity and climate action through collaboration with the farming and local community, nature conservation groups and third level educational institutions.

Ireland's new National Biodiversity Plan

An online submission was made on the initial draft of Ireland's fourth National Biodiversity Action Plan which is being prepared by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The plan will set out the priorities and actions for addressing the biodiversity crisis in Ireland from 2023-2027.

Local Biodiversity Action Plan

Two Local Biodiversity Action Plans were launched in Clare in September. Cratloe Local Biodiversity Action Plan was funded by Clare Local Development Company and the Lisdoonvarna Local Biodiversity Action Plan was funded by Community Foundation. Cratloe were awarded the best newcomer to the Local Authority All Ireland Pollinator Tidy Town Awards 2022.

Quin Heritage Action Plan

The Heritage Officer worked with the community to create an action plan to identify some of the opportunities for awareness, interpretation and access to Quin Abbey and surroundings, to provide visitor information and services that will help locals and visitors understand, experience and enjoy the cultural and natural heritage of the area while acting as a boost to the local economy. This work is funded by LEADER and commissioned by Quin Heritage group.

Property Management

Property Management and Development

The Property Management Unit advanced a number of capital property refurbishment and acquisition projects during the year:

- Fit out of Quin Road Campus Records Management Centre in conjunction with Corporate Services
- Acquisition of Inagh Garda Station from OPW for leasing to the local Housing Association
- Work with Clare Cricket Board to find a location for a home ground for them in Shannon
- Agreement to the sale of a building in the Ballymaley Business Park, Ennis to Vitalograph (Ireland) Ltd for its expansion and increase in employee numbers
- Acquisition of derelict properties at Francis Street, Ennis, for future development in partnership with Ennis 2040 DAC
- Repairs to facilities in Tullyvarraga Hall in Shannon and the Junction building in Cloughleigh, both of which are leased to non-commercial bodies.



Inagh Garda Station.

Property Transactions

The table below shows the number of property transactions completed by Property Management Unit in 2022 and comparator information for 2021. Enquiries to the Property Management Unit on issues associated with title, boundaries, old leasehold folios, etc.

have continued to increase this year, which is indicative of high levels of activity in the property market in the county generally. The Council leases and licences property to many community groups and also has some commercial leases and these are managed as a key support to other directorates. Long-term leases and sales are subject to the approval of the elected Council.

Transaction	Full year 2022	Full year 2021
Lease / Sub Lease of Property / Building	4	4
Licence to use property / building	13	11
Grazing Agreement for Lands	22	22
Deed of Transfer signed	19	12
Contract for Sale / acquisition signed	2	3
Deed of Right of Way / Wayleave signed	6	3
Deed of Rectification / Variation signed	10	7
Allotment Agreements signed	39	39

Shannon Allotments

The renewal of the agreements for the 39 Shannon allotments was completed. It was possible, with improved management of the allotments and ensuring that all are maintaining their allotment, to allocate a few allotments to those on the waiting list.

Facilities Management

Improvement and monitoring of measures to ensure that the workplaces and arrangements for staff, elected members and our customers met the requirements of the Council's response plan, the national and HSE guidance on Covid-19 was a key priority for our Facilities Team in 2022.

Energy Management for Public Buildings

In line with the Government's campaign to reduce our energy usage, a range of measures were put in place in our Corporate and other buildings to reduce usage on lighting and heating and IT related equipment. Energy management is closely monitored by the Energy Management Committee and the engagement of staff in this exercise was very positive.

Casual Trading

Under the Casual Trading Act 1995, and the Bye-Laws made thereunder, the Economic Development Directorate is responsible for the administration of Casual Trading in Co. Clare. All casual traders, who trade on a public space, must hold a valid Casual Trading Licence. During 2022, the activity and trading levels improved following return to normal activities post Covid-19 when most of the normal festivals and events were cancelled.

Derelict Sites

In 2022, 69 new derelict site files were opened and represents a significant effort by the Derelict Sites Team to take action against derelict properties throughout the county. This is the highest level of activity in any one year since the Act was first introduced in 1990/1991 and we had 210 active files at the end of 2022. Compared to 2021, it is a doubling of the level of activity on new sites. Initial engagement with owners or their representatives is key to resolution of the issues of dereliction and to understand the various reasons why the properties are in a derelict stage. A number of properties have been brought to the market and some are at 'sale agreed' stage and we continue the engagement with the new owners of those properties to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities under the Derelict Sites Act, 1990.

We are also seeing the outcome of sales agreed

in 2021 and 2022, with planning applications for refurbishment increasing and some works commencing on individual properties. This is not to say that there are not many challenges in dealing with derelict sites as we come across many issues which need to be resolved. However, with time and effort, working with owners, financial institutions and other departments, there are definitely options for positive re-development and revitalisation of many such derelict sites.

The table below provides a snapshot of the activity for 2022 comparative figures for the year 2021. This is a very significant increase on activity throughout the whole county.

Derelict Sites	Full year 2022	Full year 2021
No. of new files opened	69	35
No. of Section 8(2) Notices issued - Intention to enter site on Derelict Sites Register	33	20
No. of Section 8(7) Notices issued - Entry of site onto Derelict Sites Register	22	4
No. of Section 11 Notices issued - Measures required to render the site non-derelict	0	2
No. of files closed / property removed from Derelict Sites Register	21	0
No. of Notices served to Compulsorily Purchase (CPO) (see note below)	6	0
No of Vesting Orders signed	4	0

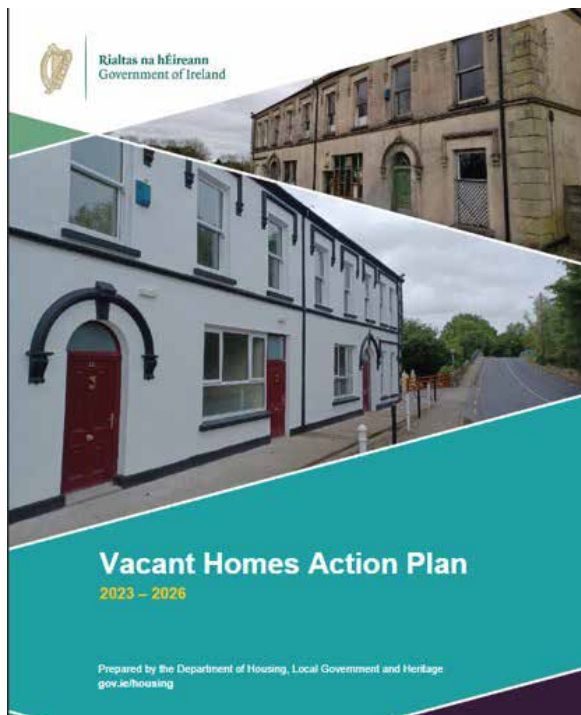
Compulsory acquisition of Derelict sites

In 2022, three of the four derelict sites acquired by CPO have been vested in Clare County Council and one is outstanding in the Property Registration Authority. The CPO process was initiated in two more properties and following engagement with owners, these are now paused. We are working with the Housing Department to return the first three properties to living accommodation, following refurbishment or re-development. These are the first CPOs of derelict sites initiated by the Council since 2014.

Grants Scheme for Vacant and Derelict Properties

The announcement in Summer 2022, by Government, of grant aid for the refurbishment of vacant and/or derelict properties in towns and villages, for occupation as a principal private residence, was very welcome. Details of the scheme for towns and villages can be found on the website with all the information on the scheme, frequently asked questions and the application form for the Grants scheme: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/c2183-croi-conaithe-towns-fund/>

We continually bring this grants scheme to the attention of property owners that we are engaging with. The grants scheme has been extended to properties in rural areas and this has the potential to make a difference in many parts of rural County Clare. In total during 2022, 33 applications were received.



Amalgamation of Vacant Homes and Derelict Sites Teams

In order to ensure engagement with owners is more efficient, the amalgamation of the Derelict Sites team with the Vacant Homes Officer took effect in January 2023. This is a further step in putting a key focus on this area and will allow us to strengthen the Unit, which did not exist until late 2019. Arrangements will be made for briefings to the elected Members in Quarter 1 2023 and a communications strategy for the public and property owners, with road shows being proposed around the county.

Local Enterprise Office

As we emerged from recurring lockdowns and restrictions encountered as of consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, 2022 was remarkably another successful year for Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Clare. Despite ongoing economic challenges such as Brexit, supply chain issues, rising energy costs and the pandemic, the number, and more importantly the quality of projects applying for support was very

encouraging. Training programmes remained a key activity with an increased focus on enhancing the skill set of small business owners and develop their capability to succeed in a very challenging economic environment. During 2022, LEO Clare ran 79 training programmes with over 1,504 participants. Programmes covered topics such as Start Your Own Business, Marketing, Management Development, Financial Management and Digital Marketing. In addition, LEO Clare ran 14 Start Your Own Business Programmes to encourage and help new start-ups. These courses had 137 participants. Mentoring remained a key priority with 183 “one to one” mentoring assignment’s taking place. Against the backdrop of economic turmoil, the number of TAME, priming and business expansion grants approved continued to improve with 31 enterprises receiving funding approval of just over €704,040.

Management Development Programmes

2022 saw the roll out of five new management development programmes for Clare clients. These programmes included Sales, a Women in Business Focus Group, Management, Leadership and Export Development. The programmes were developed to run over a period of months, increasing the time the business had to engage with an expert to develop a specific strategy to grow and develop their businesses.

35 businesses participated across the catalogue of courses with positive feedback from all. Participation in the programmes also led to increased engagement in other LEO offerings including grants, productivity programmes, attendance at workshops and general training courses.

Local Enterprise Week

The theme for Local Enterprise Week 2022 (7th–11th March) revolved around ‘making it happen’ with a focus on aiding businesses emerge from the negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Over 470 entrepreneurs and business owners in Clare took part in 22 local and online events throughout the week reflecting a high level of engagement and demand for the supports provided by the Local Enterprise Office.

Student Enterprise Awards

After two years of virtual events, the Local Enterprise Office were delighted to host the annual Student Enterprise Awards once again in person. 166 students from 10 schools across the county came together for our county awards. Winners of County Clare Junior category for 2022 were BEA Scrubs of Scoil Mhuire Ennistymon. Winners of the County Clare Intermediate category for 2022 were Gorgeous Gifts and winners of the County Clare Senior category 2022 were Teen Stem

Magazine, Scoil Mhuire Ennistymon.

The three winners went on to represent Clare at the national final held in the Helix where BEA Scrubs from Scoil Mhuire Ennistymon were awarded second place in the Junior category and were presented their award by An Tánaiste Leo Varadkar (now Taoiseach).

KPMG Women’s Irish Open

LEO Clare was delighted to be a part of the Clare County Council tent at this year’s KPMG Women’s Irish Open. As part of the event, five local businesses that are clients of LEO Clare participated in showcasing and selling local produce to visitors of the golf. In addition, it afforded a fantastic opportunity to showcase all Clare had to offer as a holiday destination. Sales for the participating enterprises exceeded expectations, as well as offering those businesses an opportunity to promote their products to a wide audience on a national and global scale.



Navigating a Recovery from Covid-19

With the ongoing challenges posed by Covid 19 and impact on supply chains, LEO Clare facilitated the delivery of a client stimulus fund to 75 enterprises that had been supported by LEO Clare historically. This programme involved the identification of specific challenges within each business and the appointment of a suitable qualified professional to assist the business overcome that challenge.

Following the significant investment from LEO Clare in assisting businesses move 'online' in 2020 and 2021, the focus turned to providing those businesses with the necessary skills to maximise new market opportunities from their newly acquired online presence. This involved upskilling in digital marketing training, promotion via #clickforclare and an audit of some businesses to measure effectiveness in using the new tools available to them.

Digital Start Launch

Local Enterprise Office Clare welcomed local businesses to the official launch of Digital Start for Clare at the Future Mobility Campus in Shannon.

Attendees heard from digital experts from Google, Docusign, National College of Ireland Dublin and Unify Success.

The event also featured a panel of two forward thinking LEO Clare digital start clients: Kasha Connolly of Hazel Mountain Chocolate and Tony Hoynes of Palm Free Soap and local female entrepreneur, Caroline Dunlea from Core Optimisation, also provided a presentation.

Digital Start is a consultancy funded by the Local Enterprise Office available to manufacturing and international focused service industries.

From Local to Global Export Event

In June the Mid-West Local Enterprise Offices ran an export focused workshop for 85 businesses at the Inn at Dromoland. Hosted

by well-known RTÉ journalist, technology and digital entrepreneur Áine Kerr, the event included a panel of successful LEO and Enterprise Ireland clients from Clare, Tipperary and Limerick who shared their experience of growth and exporting and an expert panel from Enterprise Ireland Overseas Office and LEO mentors. The event also offered businesses key networking opportunities with export support organisations like Irish Exporters Association, InterTrade Ireland and Enterprise Ireland's Agile/Innovation Department to learn how they can help your business with global expansion.

National Enterprise Awards

Torpey Wood Products Ltd, who are supported by Local Enterprise Office Clare, were Clare's representative at national final at this year's National Enterprise Awards. The awards, which took place at the Mansion House in Dublin, are in their 23rd year and run annually by the Local Enterprise Offices. Torpey were successful in taking home the South West Regional Award.

There was also an Outstanding Achievement Award presented on the night to an individual or company who has excelled in recent years. This award went to ABC Nutritionals from Clare. The Shannon based business, established in 2007, is a private label manufacturer of sports, weight management and lifestyle nutrition products. It has doubled its workforce and turnover since 2018 with 68 now employed and hope to reach 100 by 2025 with a new facility in development.

Job Numbers

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



2022, resulting in a net jobs increase of 105. The Local Enterprise Office currently directly supports 220 micro businesses in Clare which provide employment to 1,353 people.

In addition, the Local Enterprise Office transferred six businesses to Enterprise Ireland reflecting their growth potential to enter export markets.

Clare Business Awards

The final of Clare Business Excellence Awards, hosted by Ennis Chamber and sponsored by Clare County Council took place at Glór on 24th November 2022, where Ennis-based CSGL Electrical Wholesalers, founded in 2011, was the big winner on the night, with a trio of awards. CSGL won 'Best Micro Business' and 'Business Supporting Community, and from there went on to scoop the overall award for 'Clare Business of the Year'.

This was the 12th year Clare Business Excellence Awards took place and the independent judges said the standard was back to pre-Covid days, with excellent submissions and tight competition across all categories.

Clare County Council is the awards main sponsor and supporter. Leas Cathaoirleach, Cllr Ann Norton, congratulated the finalists and winners on the resilience they have shown to survive recent challenges including those brought about by Covid-19, and she wished them well as they face new challenges because of the war in Ukraine.

Winners on the night included, EI Electronics, Temple Gate Hotel, Caherconnell Stone Fort, Oar Restaurant, Eva's Café, Seoidin, Torpey, Clare Drains Environmental, Shannon Springs Hotel, O'Connor's Bakery, Cliffs of Moher Experience, Sweet N Green café and Cuimhneamh an Chláir.



The Burren, Co. Clare.



Event in the Templegate Hotel, Ennis, on 26th October, 2022, to promote and support family hosting. This initiative was promoted by Clare Volunteer Centre in cooperation with Clare Local Development Company, Clare Immigrant Support Centre, Helping Irish Hosts and Clare County Council.

UKRAINIAN SERVICES DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE



JASON MURPHY
A/Director of Ukrainian
Services Development

The EU Council activated the 'Temporary Protection Directive (2001/55 EC)' on 4th March, 2022, to provide immediate protection in EU countries for people displaced by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The Directive was subsequently adopted into Irish law through Section 60 of the International Protection Act 2015.

In March 2022, the county accommodated 860 Ukrainian people fleeing the war at a time when there were 6,828 in the country. Several hotels along the west coast and in north Clare, in particular, were contracted by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability,

Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to provide accommodation solutions.

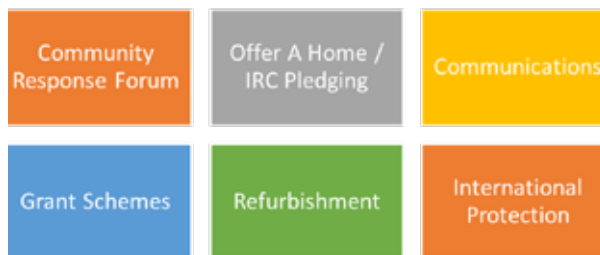
During the early months of the conflict Clare Civil Defence, working with our Fire, Housing and Community Departments, arranged to activate an emergency rest centre in Ennis as part of the response. The facility, accommodating 30 Ukrainians, was overseen and managed by the Civil Defence. They received assistance during the day from staff in Clare County Council. This effort by the volunteers in the Civil Defence highlights their dedication along with the range of skills and leadership in the service.

During that early response in Clare the Ukrainian Ambassador to Ireland, Ms Larysa Gerasko, visited the 'Ukrainian Shop' in Mna Ag Gaire in her recognition of the local efforts.



Pictured during a visit to the 'Ukrainian Shop' in Mna Ag Gaire was Ukrainian Ambassador to Ireland, Ms Larysa Gerasko, with Cllr Clare Collieran Molloy, Mayor of Ennis Municipal District.

In July 2022, the Chief Executive established a new directorate in Clare County Council to focus the response required to meet the deepening crisis. The functions of the directorate grew over the months to December in line with the demands and complexity of the international challenge being presented to the community in County Clare.



By December 2022 there were 68,200 temporary protection orders granted nationally and an average of 159 people arriving to Ireland every day. County Clare was home to 4,008 (approx.) displaced people from Ukraine by year's end with 3,806 being accommodated in 29 multi-occupancy properties across 14 settlements in the county.

In response to a call by the DCEDIY for emergency assistance in December during a severe weather situation, Clare County Council identified and met the accommodation needs of 28 international protection applicants with the assistance of a local property owner, Clare Civil Defence and Mid-West Simon. County Clare accommodates approximately 400 international protection applicants.

Community Response Forum

Community Response Fora (CRF) were established in counties across the country as sub-committees of the Local Community Development Committee in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The CRF were re-activated to meet the emerging needs presented by the war in Ukraine.

In County Clare the Community Response Forum has both a 'countywide' and 'local'

forum structure with the countywide members meeting bi-weekly online to keep informed. The local meetings in Ennis, Lisdoonvarna, Kilkee and Shannon take the time to consider local issues and local responses.

Many agencies are represented on both fora and the information provided is consistent across all groups. There is strong engagement between all representatives and during the year the understanding of individual roles in this crisis became clearer – the expression, 'stay in your lane', was regularly presented at meetings as agencies, groups and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) learned to align for this particular challenge to get best outcomes.

There is no doubting the strains the increased service demands placed on education, childcare, health and transport services, among others - community groups were responding rapidly to newly opened emergency accommodation on a weekly basis while front line services adjusted to meet the new demand.

In addition to a new directorate for Ukrainian affairs in Clare County Council, outreach structures for community and employment interventions/integration and community translation services were put in place through the local development agency (Clare Local Development Company), additional bus services were established in north Clare through Local Link with other services 'tweaked' to meet local needs.

Meanwhile, community centres such as Lisdoonvarna Faillte and Mná Ag Gáire (Ennis) adjusted their activities to meet the needs of the Ukrainian guests with the active support of the Council. The Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB) increased their English language class provision and all national and secondary schools across the county opened their doors to new students. Key public services such as Tusla, An Garda Síochána, and the Health Service Executive

continued to develop their understanding and responses to the changing landscape, diversifying their service responses in line with need.

Hosting

The Irish Red Cross (IRC) put out a call to the general public early in 2022 asking for people to share their homes (shared or vacant) with people fleeing the war. The scale of the response nationally was immense and Clare County Council, partnering with Mid-West Simon locally, assisted in this work.

Hosting was highlighted nationally as a rewarding experience and in County Clare, the Clare Volunteer Centre, recognising both the benefits and the need to support hosts, organised an event aimed at those already hosting as well as those interested in becoming part of the response.

The hosting event was held in October in the Old Ground Hotel, Ennis, and, with the support of Clare County Council, Clare Local Development Company and Helping Irish Hosts, the team from the Clare Volunteer Centre reached out to a broad community across the county.



Insights into the rewards and challenges of hosting were provided along with personal insights from a host family with a young lady from Ukraine. A panel, comprising the Clare Immigrant Support Centre, Clare County Council, Irish Red Cross, Helping Irish Hosts and Doras Luimni, took questions and offered further insights for the hundred or so in attendance.

Offer A Home

In November the Government's 'Offer a Home' initiative was launched and promoted through the local authorities. This initiative asks owners of unoccupied homes to offer their properties for a duration of no less than six months to be used by Ukrainian beneficiaries.

The property does not need to meet the housing standards set out under other government schemes such as leasing or Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS), nor does the owner have to be registered with the Residential Tenancies Board and there is a tax-free allowance of €800 per month available through the Department of Social Protection. This scheme is focused solely on unoccupied property and the strength of local government is being called to action in that the ICT systems have been developed nationally through



our coordinating agency, Local Government Management Agency (LGMA), which promotes consistency for application and monitoring.

A core element of this call is the local knowledge and understanding of the County Councils, which are in a position to understand local structures, communities and geography. By early December, Clare County Council had received 30 offers of accommodation across the county with all those people being contacted to confirm their offers.

A team was established in the Council to match those people from Ukraine who are seeking independent living with homes that are appropriate to their needs: a crucial element in ensuring enduring relationships between the homeowner and the Ukrainian family and ensuring that the efforts go some way to further developing integrated and sustainable communities.

Community Response Forum Workshop - Community Recognition Fund

It is acknowledged that the key objective for any community, town or village is to remain vibrant, resilient, and sustainable – this is recognised by all members of the County

Clare Community Response Forum and, on 29th November, members of the Forum from across the county were invited to a workshop in Ennis. The session was well supported with over 40 in attendance from all corners.

Those present were asked initially to identify what we are doing well as a county and what could be done better. The session then began to focus on our collective future with those present being asked to identify the gaps in our communities (physical, social, economic), collaborations that might be activated over the coming 12/24 months and actions that might be facilitated by the Forum members or the Council.

The response was significant with a range of opportunities being identified that can become the shared 'vision' for the members of the group. By November 2022 there has been the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and Healthy Ireland funding provided nationally to support initiatives at community level and the workshop was considering the opportunities that might come in the form of a 'Community Solidarity Recognition Fund' - this would come in February 2023.





MUNICIPAL DISTRICTS

Clare County Council has four Municipal Districts: Ennis, Killaloe, Shannon and West Clare.

Ennis Municipal District

Minister visits the upgraded public realm

While on an official visit to Ennis, Eamon Ryan TD, Minister for Transport and Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, walked Parnell Street from Woodquay junction to O'Connell Square, to review the completed public realm works which were part funded from the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF).



EMHA launch of 'Friendship Seating and Plaque'

The Ennis Mental Health Association (EMHA) friendship seating area and memorial plaque was launched in Abbey Street carpark on 7th April, marking the organisation's 30th anniversary as well as coinciding with the national mental health campaign "Hello, How Are You?". The launch was officiated by Deputy Mayor of Ennis Municipal District Cllr Paul Murphy and EMHA Chair Maria Molloy, with delegates invited from age and disability friendly groups. The seating area and plaque has been donated to the public realm by agreement with EMHA.



Celebrating TidyTowns success with President Michael D. Higgins

Ennis' success in the 2021 National SuperValu TidyTowns competition was celebrated at St Flannan's College on 28th May with guest of honour, President of Ireland Michael D. Higgins. Ennis Tidy Towns organised the successful event with support from Ennis MD and Council volunteers, Civil Defence, St Flannan's College, with direction from the Department of Rural and Community Development. Director of Service, Carmel Kirby, performed MC duties acknowledging Ennis Tidy Towns and the various community and statutory groups who work collaboratively to make Ennis a great place to work, live and visit. The event was attended by over 320 guests.



Excellence in the evening and night-time economy

Ennis was awarded the 'Purple Flag', which is an international accreditation awarded to places that meet or surpass the standards of excellence in managing the evening and night-time. The external assessment took place in Ennis during August and the official presentation took place in Cork on 31st October. This accreditation is testament to the strong working relationships of various agencies working together, An Garda Síochána, Ennis Chamber, Active Ennis and Ennis MD.

Ennis' Age Friendly Town Strategy (2021) scoops 'Age Friendly Environment Award (Outdoor Spaces and Buildings)'

The award was presented at the National

Age Friendly Recognition and Achievement Awards ceremony. The category 'age friendly environment' recognises projects that bring about change in the built physical environment with older people in mind. The implementation of the 'Ennis Age Friendly Town Strategy' (2021) ensures the needs of the older person are incorporated into the design and delivery of services and infrastructure.



Ireland's Friendliest Place 2022

Ennis was officially crowned 'Ireland's Friendliest Place' at the AIBMS Retail Excellence Awards ceremony at the Galmont Hotel, on Saturday, 12th November. Ennis retail stores made a huge impression on the mystery shoppers in July to secure the town a shortlisting for this award. This audit was followed by a public vote in October, with Ennis emerging as a clear winner.



Accessibility works

In 2022, disabled car parking spaces were completed at Lower Market St, Friary Bow, New Road and Old Lifford Road. Two new pedestrian crossings were installed, one at St Flannan's College on the R458, the other at Clonroadmore outside the Eire Og GAA Grounds. An uncontrolled dished pedestrian crossing was installed on New Road by Ennis CBS.



CLÁR scheme

A project to facilitate a connection between the school and the community centre in Kilnamona benefited from CLÁR funding. These works included pedestrian crossings, footpaths, signage and lining.



Ballybeg Woodland - extending recreational opportunities

Part funded by the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) and Clare County Council, the completion of this project has extended the recreational opportunities at this amenity to older people and persons with disabilities through pathway remediation, three new picnic sets including a wheelchair

accessible one, new age-friendly seating and bicycle stands.



Killaloe Municipal District

Municipal District (MD) meetings were held bi-monthly during 2022. The members of Killaloe MD discussed the provision of services within the area and looked to progress the strategic development of facilities and amenities in the towns and villages in the district. The AGM of the Killaloe District took place on 24th June, 2022. Cllr Alan O'Callaghan was elected Cathaoirleach with Cllr Pat Burke elected Leas Cathaoirleach. The elected members adopted the General Municipal Allocation at the July meeting of the MD with an overall allocation for 2022 of €227,321. These projects enabled the Councillors to work with the Executive to ensure the projects were prioritised throughout the MD where funding streams were not present. Examples of works funded and communities funded in 2022 from the Elected Members' GMA were:

- Tulla footpaths
- Whitegate footpaths and other enhancements
- Killaloe road safety improvements
- Crusheen traffic calming
- Broadford Village signs and footpath improvements
- Community groups and initiatives such as Lough Graney Community Development, Tourism East Clare, Scarriff Bay Radio, Quin



Tidy Towns, Kilkishen, Kilmurry and Tulla Tidy Towns were some of a number of areas which also received funding.

Throughout the year, the members were briefed on a number of projects, including:

- CPO for property in Mountshannon
- Inis Cealtra Holy Island Branding
- Housing Development Scarriff
- Future development of former Finsa factory site.

Members exercised their powers throughout the year in:

- Consideration and adoption of the Schedule of Municipal District Works for 2022
- Taking in charge of roads in estates in accordance with S11 of the Roads Act 1993
- S183 disposal of Council-owned properties at various locations within the MD
- S38 traffic calming measures at a number of locations including multiple Active Travel projects and Low Cost Safety Schemes.

Killaloe-Ballina Town Enhancement and Mobility Strategy (January 2022)

The Killaloe-Ballina Town Enhancement and Mobility Plan aims to facilitate a co-ordinated approach to public realm enhancements within

Killaloe in County Clare and Ballina in County Tipperary, providing a clear vision for Killaloe and Ballina as linked settlements. The plan provides opportunities to capitalise on the towns' assets to collectively expand the tourism product, attract increased visitor numbers and maximise local economic benefits.

Following the publication of the Killaloe Ballina Town Enhancement Strategy early in the year, the Elected Members liaised with the Strategic Economic Initiatives section to advance the background work and discussions on a number of key sites and projects set out in the plan. The Courthouse was the focus of an application for feasibility Town and Village Renewable Application, while negotiations and discussions on a number of key sites were advanced. Liaison with colleagues from Nenagh MD, Tipperary County Council, continued in respect to advancing Killaloe and Ballina in a coherent and comprehensive manner.

The Killaloe Bypass, Shannon Bridge Crossing and R494 Improvement Scheme is central to future developments in the linked settlements.

Killaloe-Ballina Bypass and Shannon Bridge Crossing

In November the Elected Members represented the Killaloe MD and local authority at the official



Pictured to mark the launch of the Killaloe-Ballina Town Enhancement and Mobility Plan were (l-r): Cllr Michael O'Meara, Cathaoirleach, Nenagh Municipal District; Morgan Lahiffe, Senior Executive Officer, Killaloe MD; Marcus O'Connor, Director of Services and District Manager, Nenagh MD; Cllr Joe Cooney, Cathaoirleach, Killaloe MD; Anne Haugh, Director of Social Development and Killaloe Municipal District Co-ordinator; Cllr Phyll Bugler, Ballina; Brian McCarthy, Senior Planner, Clare County Council; and Cllr Tony O'Brien, Killaloe.

sod turning by Minister for Transport Eamon Ryan TD and commencement of the Killaloe Bypass. The project will provide a western bypass around Killaloe, a new bridge crossing of the River Shannon and an upgrade of the existing R494 regional road from Ballina to Birdhill. The entire scheme is over 6km in length and will cross the River Shannon approximately 1km downstream of the existing Killaloe Bridge.

Killaloe Elected Members Strategic Workplan

Following the publication in November of Best Practice Recommendations for Local Authorities on the operation of Municipal Districts, Elected Members along with the Senior Planner, Killaloe MD Coordinator and colleagues met in December 2022 to commence a number of workshops to formulate a strategic workplan for strategic projects to respond to emerging changes in national policy. Workshops were scheduled to continue into the new year with a view to establishing a number of specific priority projects/directions that the Councillors

of the MD wish to pursue over the next few years.

Scarriff RRDF

In January 2022, Clare County Council welcomed the announcement by Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, of funding of €524,000 for the Scarriff Regeneration Project.

The Scarriff Regeneration Project will develop plans for key interventions in the centre of Scarriff that will improve the public realm and provide community, tourism and enterprise facilities in the town centre. It includes the development of a Multi Service Innovation and Engagement Hub and improved public realm for the Market Square in the town centre as well as the development of a Town Car Park.

The development of this proposal is managed by the Killaloe MD office in partnership with the Rural Development directorate of Clare County Council.

Work on developing the project up to final designs was undertaken throughout the year.

In October a successful Part VIII of planning application was lodged for the refurbishment of the former Supermacs and Merriman Tavern buildings, construction of a public car park on the adjacent green field site and connection to existing on-site services.

The overall project also includes proposed public realm improvements to Market Square and, in that regard, surveying work, eg. undertaking levels, survey existing service layouts of the existing square to enable plans for any future design be further developed and considered, commenced in late 2022.

Town and Village Renewal

In December, following the preparation and assistance by Killaloe MD, two projects in the MD were awarded funding by the Department of Rural and Community Development, under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme. These were for:

- A feasibility study or Project Development Measure (PDM) for Killaloe Courthouse grant funded for €49,500
- Works to Quin Village Park grant funded for €151,495.

Ballycuggeran - Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)

In December, following the announcement of Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) funding of €180,900 for the upgrading of facilities at Ballycuggeran Lake/Two Mile Gate to allow them to be universally accessible, including works to facilitate universal access to the water and the connection of Moylussa walking trail and Ballycuggeran lake amenity via a pedestrian crossing, stakeholder engagement took place on matters of implementation of the fund in order to coordinate an overall approach to Ballycuggeran.

Schedule of Municipal District Works 2022

Restoration Improvement Programme 2022 - 30km of road upgraded totalling €2,993,477.

Restoration Maintenance Programme 2022 - 41km of road upgraded totalling €823,555.

Drainage Works Grant

Works totalling €204,300 carried out including the upgrading of pipework and drainage ditches across the MD.

Footpaths

Multiple upgrades to footpath infrastructure across the MD including footpaths at Feakle, Whitegate, Crossroads and Thomas Street in Killaloe. This was delivered using the IPB Grant in conjunction with partial contributions from Councillors' GMA.

Local Improvement Scheme

Upgrade works to four private roads in the MD were carried out in 2022.

Community Involvement Scheme

Upgrade works to five public roads in the MD were carried out in 2022.

Bridge Rehabilitation Works

Upgrade and repair work to 13 bridges in the MD were carried out in 2022, totalling €250,000.

Climate Adaptation and Resilience Works Grant

Road and drainage improvement works were completed in 2022 at several locations throughout the MD, totalling €303,000.

CLÁR Grant

Improvements to the area outside Crusheen National School were completed in 2022.

Specific and Safety Improvements Grants

Improvements were completed at both Henchy's Cross and in Kilkishen Village, totalling €145,000, in 2022.

Discretionary Improvement Grant

Improvements were completed throughout the MD in 2022, totalling €170,000, including bridge and pavement preventative maintenance, traffic safety works, hedge cutting, signage replacement, road markings upgrades, and unplanned macadam repairs.

Active Travel

The following Active Travel Projects were developed and delivered over 2022:

- Quin Village - Construction completed in April 2022
- Tulla Athletics Footpath - Design, procurement completed in 2022
- Drumandoora - Procurement and construction completed in 2022
- Clarisford Park - Project design, procurement completed in 2022, construction beginning in 2021, with completion expected in Q2 of 2023.

Service Provision

Service provision carried out by the Supervisors and Outdoor staff included: road maintenance of all types, including expenditure of €207,500 on regional roads, and €551,000 on local road maintenance. Works also involved severe weather and winter maintenance emergency callouts, aiding An Garda Síochána and the emergency services, traffic management, and responding to complaints from the general public.

Continuing service provision in the Scarriff Office included:

- Collections of rates
- Collection of motor tax
- Customer complaints processing and recording
- Liaising with elected representatives, Tidy Towns and Community Councils
- Administration towards the delivery of the SMDW.

Shannon Municipal District

Councillor Michael Begley from Clonlara became the Cathaoirleach of Shannon Municipal District in June 2022, with Cllr Donna McGettigan being appointed as Leas Cathaoirleach. Cllr John Crowe served as Cathaoirleach from June 2021 to June 2022. We thank them for their valuable work and contribution to Shannon Municipal District during that time. The Elected Members played a vital role in representing and advocating for their communities and in improving the quality of life for the residents of the Shannon Municipal District.



Cllr Michael Begley, Cathaoirleach of Shannon Municipal District 2022/2023.

2022 was a very productive year for Shannon Municipal District, with the following notable projects and events coming to fruition.

Women's Irish Open Golf event

Shannon Municipal District was proud to work with the organisers of the Women's Irish Open Golf event in September 2022 to assist and ensure that all public realm enhancement and other environmental and preparatory works were carried out in advance of the tournament in Dromoland. It was a hugely successful event with the team in Shannon Municipal District working diligently to ensure all visitors to the area had an unforgettable experience. The inter-agency approach was very much to the fore over the four-day golfing duration and we



Councillors and staff attended a site visit to Ardnacrusha power station.

look ahead to supporting the event again in 2023.

Springfield/Clonlara flood protection

The embankment works which were substantially completed during 2022 at Clonlara provided the protection that was required to cope with high flood levels. Shannon Municipal District has a Flood Action Plan in place and works very closely with ESB Ardnacrusha and all relevant agencies including OPW and the Council's Project Management Office and the community to protect and safeguard homes.

ESB Ardnacrusha Power Station site visit/tour

A site visit of the Ardnacrusha ESB power plant was attended by Shannon MD Councillors and key Council personnel in October 2022, with a presentation by ESB and a tour of the plant. Engineering staff in Shannon MD worked closely with key ESB engineering staff and other relevant organisations, particularly during the winter months, to ensure water levels and discharges were strictly monitored and that appropriate plans were implemented.

Community grants

During 2022, a total funding allocation of €24,000 was awarded to 34 sporting, cultural, historical and community groups under the Community Grant Scheme of the Shannon Municipal District. The grants scheme encouraged and supported local community organisations and community groups to be active in the cultural, artistic and community development areas of the district.

Works to improve accessibility

Shannon Municipal District strives to ensure that its public spaces are designed for accessibility and inclusion thereby improving the quality of life for its communities. It is a future-focused and human-centred design approach that takes time to consider the needs of communities and how these needs may alter over time. A Walkability Survey was conducted in Shannon town in conjunction with Age Friendly which has resulted in the identification of a number of key action items.

Upgrade and widening of footpath including drop kerbs and tactile paving through the O'Brien Park, DeLacey Park, Purcell Park and Collins Park connecting St Tola School and



Shannon Municipal District retained the Green Flag Award in 2022.

Shannon Comprehensive School were carried out. Some practical examples of improvements in 2022 were:

- Shannon - footpath connecting Choil Mara and Arda na Mara
- Upgrade and widening of footpath with drop kerbs and tactile for access.

Bóthar Linne bus stop



Accessible bus shelter with designated clearance area, access ramp and kerb height for bus access.

Sixmilebridge

- New controlled pedestrian crossing with drop kerbs and tactile paving with bench located in town centre.
- New designated parking with line marking for clearance and footpath access by drop kerb and tactile paving.

Green Flag Award retained in 2022

Shannon Municipal District retained the Green Flag Award in 2022, which is a benchmark standard for publicly accessible parks and is overseen by An Taisce and this achievement was made possible through collaboration with a number of bodies who work together to ensure the highest standards: some of our partners include the Shannon Leisure Centre, Councillors, Shannon Social Economy, Tidy Towns, An Garda Síochána and the staff from within the MD and across the Council.

New Ability Swing for Shannon Playground

Shannon Municipal District was pleased to introduce a new piece of inclusive playground equipment, the Ability Swing, to its existing playground at Tir na nOg in Shannon town. This has enhanced the existing play facilities, with a soft flooring play surface throughout and over 12 other different pieces of equipment. Tir na nOg Playground also incorporates a sensory communications board as well as a broad range of imaginative equipment such as multi-play slide, cradle swings, roundabout, junior multi-activity slide, gyro unit, basket swing and many more fun pieces.

Westbury wallplates

Shannon MD erected 'Westbury' nameplates on both entrance walls to the Westbury estate. These high-quality granite signs give an enhanced visual impact as well as a practical directional guide for all inhabitants and visitors to Westbury. This formed the final part of upgrade works at Westbury which included the stripping and replastering of the outer face of the entrance walls and refurbishment of railings. In addition upgrade works were carried out to the pumping station through Climate Change Funding.

Completion of car park at Illaunmanagh

Car parking at Illaunmanagh was completed in 2022 with road markings and entrance height restriction barriers erected.

Shannon MD sponsors Shannon Chamber Skillnet event

Shannon MD was pleased to be an associate sponsor of a strategic talent development event which was held in Dromoland in October 2022. A panel of speakers from academia and a range of sectors showcased how their businesses have benefited directly from implementing

comprehensive training programmes and the importance of future upskilling. It is recognised that talent is now the determining factor for companies to remain competitive and this requires continual investment in training. The Council was delighted to support this worthwhile, practical and informative event.

Shannon Town Park

Christmas Carol singing took place in December in the Town Park in Shannon. A special invitation was extended to Ukrainian friends who joined the festivities for an evening of joy and hope. The evening was not complete without the appearance of Mr and Mrs Claus also who delighted the children.

Embankment Walk

Shannon Municipal District erected further directional signage to safely guide visitors around the area. In addition in 2022, three bicycle stands have been installed at the Drumgeely entrance to the embankment walk making ease of access for cyclists more readily available.



Left to right: Linda Earlie, Clare County Council; Eoin Gavin, President, Shannon Chamber, and CEO, Eoin Gavin Transport; Helen Downes, CEO, Shannon Chamber of Commerce; Paul Healy, Skillnet Ireland Chief Executive; and Patricia O'Neill, Shannon Municipal District.

Summary of ongoing capital and other works and activities

The following works were also carried out in the Municipal District during 2022:

- Roadworks 2022 programme was completed, which included surface and overlay work
- Active Travel projects at Ballycasey commenced towards the end of 2022 and funding for Active Travel design measures at Bothar Sioda in Shannon approved
- Maintenance drainage works carried out around the district
- Design works on the Drumgeely Town and Village Renewal Scheme was commenced in 2022 with Part VIII planning submitted and subsequently granted in 2023
- 1,040m of footpath contract refurbishment/enhancement works completed in 2022
- Meelick Active Travel – We are continuing contact with affected landowners
- A new pedestrian crossing was installed at George's Street in Sixmilebridge
- The Bus Shelter Programme progressed in conjunction with National Transport Authority
- OPW secured funding in 2022 for drainage scheme at Gullett's Cross in Cratloe
- The Co-motion Bicycle Hire Scheme was expanded in 2022 with additional parking facilities for bicycles being made available
- Works under a Local Improvement Scheme was completed at the Graveyard in Cratloe and also at Gallow's Hill Cratloe
- The annual Hedgecutting Programme was completed.

West Clare Municipal District

The overarching vision for the West Clare MD is:

The regeneration and sustainability of our towns and villages with a view to making West Clare the best place to live, work and visit in that order of priority.

Municipal District (MD) meetings were held bi-monthly during 2022. The members of West Clare MD discussed the provision of services within the area and looked to progress the strategic development of facilities and amenities in the towns and villages in the district. The AGM of the West Clare MD took place on 23rd June, 2022. Cllr Shane Talty was elected Cathaoirleach with Cllr Ian Lynch elected Leas Cathaoirleach.

Councillors passed the Schedule of Municipal District Works (SMDW) at the March meeting of the MD. The members also adopted the budgetary plan and agreed a General Municipal Allocation of €323,676 for 2023 at their budget meeting on 25th November, 2022.

In September the Chief Executive appointed Siobhán McNulty as Senior Executive Officer (SEO) to the West Clare MD with responsibility for the Ennistymon Electoral Area, with John O'Malley, SEO, retaining responsibility for the Kilrush Electoral Area.

Members exercised their powers throughout the year in:

- Consideration and adoption of the SMDW for 2022
- Taking in charge of roads in estates in accordance with S11 of the Roads Act 1993
- S183 disposal of Council owned properties at various locations within the MD
- S38 traffic calming measures at a number of locations including multiple Active Travel projects.

Strategic workplan

Elected members along with the Executive continued in the delivery of the Strategy and Work Plan for the West Clare Municipal District which was developed in 2020. The plan sets out thematic based actions and tasks for the period 2019-2025.

Service provision

Service provision carried out by the supervisors and outdoor staff included road maintenance of all types, emergency callouts, aiding An Garda Síochána and the Fire Service, traffic management, responding to public complaints, installation and removal of 'Covid-19' signage in some towns.

Continuing service provision in the Ennistymon and Kilrush Offices included:

- Collection and receipting of monies, eg. housing rents, commercial rates, motor tax, etc.
- Assisting with customer queries and dealing with customer complaints
- Accepting and processing various applications – housing applications, scaffolding licences, road opening licence applications, etc.
- Liaison with elected representatives
- Administration towards the delivery of the SMDW.

Amenities

Summer 2022 brought unprecedented numbers to the Blue Flag beaches and amenities in north and west Clare. The significant footfall put considerable pressure on the MD crew to prepare and maintain the facilities to the high standard expected. We were supported with staff from other MDs to ensure continuity of cover for the season, which extended for a longer period during 2022.

Ennistymon Local Electoral Area

Examples of works funded and communities funded in 2022 were:

- Ennistymon streetscape upgrade
- Footpaths under Active Travel at Spanish Point, Doolin, Miltown Malbay and Ennistymon
- Pedestrian crossings at Boston, Ruan, Doolin and Lisdoonvarna.

Schedule of Municipal District Works 2022

Restoration Improvement Programme 2022 – 29km of road upgraded totalling €2,520,847.

Restoration Maintenance Programme 2022 – 35km of road upgraded totalling €761,806.

Drainage Grant

Works totalling €202,000 carried out including the upgrading of pipework and drainage ditches across the MD.

Footpaths

Multiple upgrades to footpath infrastructure across the MD including footpaths in Ennistymon, Miltown Malbay, Lisdoonvarna, Doolin, Inagh, Spanish Point and Ruan.

Local Improvement Scheme

Upgrade works to eight roads in the MD were carried out in 2022.

Community Involvement Scheme

Upgrade works to five roads in the MD were carried out in 2022.

Active Travel

The following Active Travel Projects were progressed over 2022:

- Ruan village pedestrian crossing - completed.
- Boston school pedestrian crossing - completed.
- Lisdoonvarna, five pedestrian crossings - works 90% complete. Await lights to be turned on.
- Miltown Malbay - Upgrades to existing end of life footpaths, resurfacing of Hills Lane

and commencement of Ennis Road new footpath.

- Lahinch - New public lighting installed along Miltown Road - Await turning on of lights.
- Ennistymon - Upgrades to footpaths outside Community Centre and Lahinch Road - complete.
- Doolin - New footpath and pedestrian crossing at Fitz's Cross - complete.
- Spanish Point - New public lighting and extension of footpaths - Works 50% complete in 2022 and will be completed in 2023.

Safe Route to Schools

Inagh National School received funding under the Safe Route to Schools programme to provide a safe walking and cycling route to school. Works commenced in October 2022 and are nearing completion.

Spanish Point footpaths.



Ennistymon Streetscape.



Boston National School pedestrian crossing.



Kilrush Local Electoral Area

Works undertaken in the Kilrush LEA in 2022 included:

- Schedule of MD Works (see below)
- Footpaths under Active Travel at:
 1. Carrigaholt, Connolly, Cross, Kilbaha, Kilkee, Killadysart, Kilmihil, Kilrush and Quilty
 2. Kilmaley (in conjunction with Road Design Office)
 3. Lissycasey (in conjunction with Road Design Office)
- Beaches - maintaining our seaside towns and villages to a high standard during the summer season. This included the hiring of seasonal beach operatives
- Street cleaning - A crew in Kilrush and a crew in Kilkee dedicated to street cleaning. Both crews also service some satellite villages
- Other projects:
 1. Ballynacally wall (funded by Clare County Council) and footpath (funded by CLÁR)
 2. Emergency works to the Sea Wall at Marine Parade and Strand Line, Kilkee. These works were funded by Clare County Council.

Schedule of Municipal District Works 2022

Restoration Improvement Programme 2022 - 32km of road upgraded totalling €3,438,000.

Restoration Maintenance Programme 2022 - 50km of road upgraded totalling €1,445,000.

Drainage Grant

Works totalling €330,000 carried out including the upgrading of pipework and drainage ditches across the Kilrush LEA.

Grass Cutting

Contractors were appointed to maintain public green areas in Kilrush and Kilkee.

Local Improvement Scheme

Upgrade works to seven roads in the Kilrush LEA were carried out in 2022, at a cost of €357,000.

Community Involvement Scheme

Upgrade works to five roads in the Kilrush LEA were carried out in 2022, at a cost of €193,000.

Active Travel

The following Active Travel projects were progressed over 2022:

- Footpath improvements at Carrigaholt, Connolly, Cross, Kilbaha, Kilkee, Killadysart, Kilmihil, Kilrush and Quilty
- Kilmaley (in conjunction with Road Design Office)
- Lissycasey (in conjunction with Road Design Office)
- Works recommended by Kilrush Walkability Audit.

Climate change adaptation and resilience

A number of small projects were completed in 2022 including:

- Works to sea walls at Quilty, Cappagh/Aylevaroo and Carrowmore
- Drainage works at Moveen, Kyleatunna, Rathkerry and Ballynacally
- Raise road level and repaving at Ballycorick.
- Overall cost of projects was €380,000.

Low Cost Safety Scheme

Discussions continued to enable Clare County Council to purchase an agricultural shed located exactly on the road junction of the R-473 and L-82503 in Tiermaclane. The intention is to demolish the shed to improve available sightlines at this sub-standard junction.

Ballynacally footpath and wall

100 linear metres of footpath has been provided where none previously existed. Pedestrians can now make their way from the village centre (including the local National School, GAA pitch, etc.) to the junction before Ballycorick Church by footpath, without having to step onto the very busy R-474. Road safety is very much improved as a result.

Emergency works to the Sea Wall at Strand Line, Kilkee



Some preparatory works carried out by Clare County Council. Concrete blocks purchased and placed in position by contractor.

Miscellaneous other works



New footpath and protective railing at White Strand, Doonbeg.



Footpath works, Kilmihil.



Roadworks at Doonaha.



ABRIDGED FINANCIAL STATEMENT: YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

Income and Expenditure	2022	2021	2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
State Grants	58.0	67.0	79.8
Local Property Tax	8.0	8.0	8.0
Goods and Services	40.5	30.2	28.2
Commercial Rates	43.9	42.0	44.7
Income from Other Local Authorities	0.0	0.1	0.1
Pension Levy			
Total Income	150.4	147.3	160.8
Total Expenditure	132.5	135.1	148.3
Surplus / (Deficit) for year before transfers	17.9	12.1	12.5
Transfers to / from Reserves	(17.7)	(11.9)	(12.2)
Overall Surplus / (Deficit) for Year	0.21	0.18	0.26
General Revenue Reserve / (Deficit) - Opening	2.9	2.7	2.5
General Revenue Reserve / (Deficit) - Closing	3.1	2.9	2.7
Balance Sheet	2022	2021	2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
Fixed Assets	2,868.8	2,814.3	2,782.0
Work in Progress and Preliminary Expenses	56.7	60.9	42.2
Long term Debtors	41.7	32.6	22.6
Current Assets	104.4	76.2	75.0
Current Liabilities	(61.1)	(43.5)	(41.6)
Net Current Assets / (Liabilities)	43.2	32.7	33.4
Creditors (Amounts falling due after more than one year)	(113.1)	(92.9)	(81.3)
Net Assets	2,897	2,848	2,798
Financed by			
Capitalisation Account	2,868.8	2,814.3	2,781.6
Income Work in Progress	55.6	59.7	41.6
Specific Revenue Reserve	-	-	-
General Revenue Reserve	3.1	2.9	2.7
Other Balances	(30.2)	(29.3)	(27.5)
Total Reserves	2,897	2,848	2,798

SEMINARS/CONFERENCES/TRAINING ATTENDED BY CLARE COUNTY COUNCILLORS IN 2022

Conference entitled “Finance Act 2021” held in Carlingford, Co. Louth on 7th-9th January, 2022 (9 members attended).
AILG Elected Members Training Module 1 entitled “Elected Members Personal Safety and Risk Assessment” held in Westmeath on 17th February, 2022 (3 members attended).
AILG Elected Members Training Module 1 entitled “Elected Members Personal Safety and Risk Assessment” held in Co. Cork on 19th February, 2022 (13 members attended).
Conference entitled “Tourism and Digital Marketing” held in Carlingford, Co. Louth on 4th-5th March, 2022 (2 members attended).
Conference entitled “Off Shore Renewable Energy” held in Ringaskiddy, Co. Cork on 4th March 2022 (1 member attended).
AILG Annual Training Conference 2022 held in Buncrana, Co. Donegal on 23rd-24th March, 2022 (13 members attended).
LAMA Spring Training Seminar entitled “Rural Development” held in Kilkenny on 11th–12th April, 2023 (15 members attended).
The Suck Valley Way Conference held in Roscommon on 27th-28th April, 2022 (1 member attended).
Conference entitled “Councillor and Social Media” held in Limerick on 30th April, 2022 (1 member attended).
Conference entitled “Agriculture & Rural Development” held in Tullamore, Co. Offaly on 7th May, 2022 (1 member attended).
AILG Elected Members Training, Module 2 entitled “Climate Action - The Role of Local Government” held in Monaghan on 13th-14th May, 2022 (11 members attended).
AILG Elected Members Training Programme Module 3 - “Finalising Your Development Plan - Key Steps and Requirements from the development Plan Guidelines” held in Athlone, Co. Westmeath on 15 – 16th June, 2022 (8 members attended).
AILG Elected Members Training Programme Module 3 - “Finalising Your Development Plan - Key Steps and Requirements from the development Plan Guidelines” held in Castlecomber, Co. Kilkenny on 18th June, 2022 (10 members attended).
AILG Elected Members Training - Module 4 entitled “Local Authority Audit Committees and the Governance and Oversight Role of Elected Members” held in Bundoran, Co. Donegal on 23rd July, 2022 (12 members attended).
AILG Elected Members Training - Module 4 entitled “Local Authority Audit Committees and the Governance and Oversight Role of Elected Members” held in Thurles, Co. Tipperary on 27th and 28th July, 2022 (3 members attended).
AILG Autumn Seminar entitled “Celebrating Local Government” held in Trim, Co. Meath on 14th-15th September, 2022 (17 members attended).
Conference entitled “A Practical Guide of Budget 2023” held in Carlingford, Co. Louth on 30th September-2nd October, 2022 (2 members attended).
AILG Elected Members Module 5 Training entitled “Disability and Inclusion” held in Killarney, Co. Kerry on 22nd October, 2022 (11 members attended).

AILG Elected Members Module 5 Training entitled “Disability and Inclusion” held in Sligo on 27th October, 2022 (4 members attended).

Conference entitled “Delivering Regional Balance” held in Tuam, Co. Galway on 22nd October, 2022 (2 members attended).

LAMA Autumn Training Seminar 2022 entitled “Cost of living crisis and sustainable and renewable energy” held in Monaghan Town on 9th and 10th November, 2022 (17 members attended).

Conference entitled “The role of local authorities in addressing the needs of older people” held in Carlingford, Co. Louth on 11th-13th November, 2022 (1 member attended).

AILG Elected Members Training Programme - Module 6 Training entitled “Data Protection Legislation - What Councillors need to know” held in Waterford on 17th November, 2022 (7 members attended).

AILG Elected Members Training Module 6 Training entitled “Data Protection Legislation - What Councillors need to know” held in Navan, Co. Meath on 26th November, 2022 (3 members attended).

Contact information/telephone numbers

- **Clare County Council**
Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare Telephone: (065) 6821616,
Fax: (065) 6828233,
email: customerservices@clarecoco.ie,
website: www.clarecoco.ie

Hours of business: 9:00am to 5:00pm,
Monday to Friday

Note:

Public Counters at Planning Department and Cash Office: 9:00am to 4:00pm

Housing Department:
9:00am to 1:00pm

Emergency contact number: (087) 4169496 (outside office hours only)

- **Motor Tax**
Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis

Telephone: (065) 6844661, 9:00am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday
email: motortax@clarecoco.ie
Public Counter 9:00am to 1:00pm Monday to Friday

- **Clare County Museum**
Tel: (065) 6823382,
email: ClareMuseum@clarecoco.ie
- **Active Ennis Sports and Leisure Facilities**
Tel: (065) 6821604,
Fax: (065) 6823655
- **Glór Music Centre**
Tel: (065) 6845370

Direct dial in facility

To facilitate our callers all sections have a direct dial in facility. Individual sections can be contacted by dialling the following numbers:

- Archives, (065) 684 6402
- Arts Office, (065) 6899084

- Broadband & Digital, (065) 6899055
- Central Cash Office, (065) 6846208
- Corporate Services Department, (065) 6846209
- Environment Department, (065) 6846331, fax (065) 6846444
- Environment anti-litter freephone, 1800 606706
- Finance Department, (general queries), (065) 6846329
- Fire and Emergency Services Department, (065) 6846302
- Freedom of Information, (065) 6846405
- Group Schemes, (065) 6866119
- Housing Department, (065) 6846334
- Human Resources Department, (065) 6846415
- IT Department, (065) 6846339
- Local Enterprise Office Clare, (065) 6846463
- Partnership Facilitator, (065) 6846268
- Planning Department, (065) 6846232
- Records Management, (065) 6846219
- Register of Electors, (065) 6846363
- Revenue Department, (065) 6846530
- Transportation Department, (065) 6846333
- Road Design, (065) 6846479
- Rural and Community Department, (065) 6846222
- Tourism Department, (065) 6846283
- Veterinary Services Department, (065) 6846560
- Water Safety, (065) 6846270
- Water Services Department, (065) 6866110

Municipal District offices

- Ennis, (065) 6866133
- Killaloe, (061) 640815
- Shannon, (061) 362319
- West Clare, (065) 7072283/ (065) 9054310

Library branches

- Corofin, (065) 6837219
- De Valera Branch Library, (065) 6846353
- Ennis Library Headquarters, (065) 6846350, website: www.clarelibrary.ie
- Ennistymon, (065) 7071245
- Kilkee Sweeney Memorial Library, (065) 9056034
- Kilmihil, (065) 9050528
- Killaloe, (061) 376062, Fax (065) 376062
- Kilrush, (065) 9051504
- Lisdoonvarna, (065) 7074029
- Local Studies Centre, Ennis, (065) 6846271
- Miltown Malbay, (065) 7084822
- Newmarket-on-Fergus, (061) 368411
- Scariff, (061) 922893
- Shannon, (061) 364266
- Sixmilebridge, (061) 369678
- Tulla, (065) 6835919

Other useful numbers

- Central Waste Management Facility, Ballyduffbeg, Inagh, (065) 6836960
- Scariff Recycling Centre and Transfer Station, (061) 921735
- Shannon Recycling Centre, (061) 364483
- Lisdeen Recycling Centre and Transfer Station, (065) 9060175
- Ennis Recycling Centre, (065) 6893705



COMHAIRLE CONTAE AN CHLÁIR
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL