



C&E NEWS

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Welcome to the second edition of our newsletter keeping you informed of our activities over the past month.

Promoting County Clare for Foreign Direct Investment and Tourism



Clare County Council will shortly be launching a short promotional video on the County. The video will be used to

encourage both Foreign Direct Investment and Tourism. This initiative is in response to an action in the CDB's Integrated Strategy under Economic Development "**which aims to assist agencies market the County as an ideal location for Inward Investment**". A small editorial group led by Martin O'Loughlen from Community & Enterprise, including Carmel Greene, Planning & Economic Development, Sean Lenihan and Betty Devanney, Corporate Services have been involved with developing this project.

The video will highlight how the County was at the forefront of Ireland's Industrial Renaissance through the development of the Airport and the large number of high class International Companies that have located here. In addition to this, the close proximity to Universities in Galway and Limerick will be promoted to show the availability of a highly skilled labour force. Quality of life is a key issue for those considering investing in Ireland.

The many fine tourism attractions in the County will be filmed as well as the wide range of cultural events available that has made County Clare the home of traditional entertainment in Ireland. Working in partnership with other development agencies, the Council's objective will be to ensure that County Clare is at the forefront for attracting foreign investment.

Project Shannon Launched



Project Shannon is being spearheaded by Clare County Council, Shannon Town Council and FÁS in the Mid West Region. This project

will involve key statutory and community interests working in partnership to promote and facilitate the economic, social and cultural development of the area. Particular interest will be paid to concerns of priority target groups: youth, elderly, long-term unemployed and local service providers.

Pádraig MacCormaic has being appointed as Development Officer and will work as part of Community and Enterprise Directorate of Clare Co. Council to assist with implementation of County Development Board's Integrated Strategy in the area. One of the immediate projects to be addressed will be priorities highlighted from a recently released skills audit conducted with FÁS for the area. Items in the Integrated Strategy relating to Shannon region will also be identified, planned and implemented through Project Shannon.

Features inside this issue:

Promoting Clare for Investment & Tourism...	1
Project Shannon Launched	1
RAPID	2
Agricultural Trends in Clare	2
Clare Community Forum	2/3
Language Initiative for the Killaloe Diocese..	3
Workshop of CDB Implementation Groups ..	3
Politics in Clare in Safe Hands	4
Social Inclusion Forum	4

RAPID



The Ennis *RAPID Programme* aims to prioritise agency spend on areas of disadvantage, foster inter-agency co-operation with the community and the avoidance of duplication. The acronym *RAPID*

stands for 'Revitalise Areas by Planning Investment & Development'. To date there has been progress on some 30 percent of projects submitted under the Programme. *RAPID* can be considered a localised implementation of the Integrated Strategy of Clare County Development Board. Challenges within the *RAPID* Programme centre around sustaining the motivation and commitment of both community and agency representatives given the obvious budgetary constraints within Government Departments. The incoming *RAPID* Co-ordinator, Leonard Cleary (Community & Enterprise Development Officer), takes over from Fiacre Hensey who departed recently to a new position.

Agricultural Trends in Clare

The Community and Enterprise Unit has carried an analysis of trends in agriculture following the publication of the results of the most recent Census of Agriculture. The Census is conducted approximately every ten years to update structural information in agriculture. The first full Census of Agriculture since 1991 was carried out in June 2000 and the results became available in December 2002. A number of indicators, which reflect the changes taking place in agriculture, were monitored to quantify changes that have occurred in agriculture in the county since 1991. National trends for the same period were also analysed in order to provide a comparison between Clare and the national picture.

The main points of note in the analysis are:

- There has been a decline of approximately one fifth in the number of farmers in Clare over the period (from 8,207 to 6,720), which is reflective of the trend nationally;
- The number of farmers who farm for their sole source of income fell by 40% (to 3,646) between 1991 and 2000. The decline nationally was 37%;
- Agriculture in Clare is significantly more dependent on the beef sector than is the

case nationally, and this dependence is increasing (70% of farms in Clare are specialist beef production, compared to 51% nationally);

- The number of farms that are specialist dairying has decreased by 47% (1,112) over the period (the decline nationally was 37%);
- The number of farms involved in organic farming, forestry and farm tourism have increased significantly from a low base, and these activities still represent a very small proportion of total agricultural activity in the county.
- Farms are becoming bigger – the average farm size in Clare increased by 19%, similar to the national trend;
- Nearly 40% of farmers in Clare are over 55, consistent with the age profile of farmers nationally;

Clare Community Forum

The Clare Community Forum (CCF) was established in 2000. The CCF is made up of 25 people representing the 5 Area Networks – East Clare, Ennis, North Clare, Shannon and West Clare (5 representatives from each Area Network). The CCF works to ensure its representatives have a say in policy decisions that reflect positively on the concerns of the community and voluntary sector in County Clare. The CCF is designed to provide a platform for community and voluntary groups to network, build linkages, consult and be consulted on a wide variety of topics relating to the social, economic and cultural development of County Clare.

National Forum

Pat Shannon, CCF Representative and Rionach Power (Development Officer) attended a meeting in Athlone for a National Community and Voluntary Forum Conference on 10th June 2003.

The purpose of the meeting was two-fold:

- Get agreement in principle on setting up a National Forum
- Decide on the aims and objectives of such a National Forum

23 of the 34 Community & Voluntary Fora's in the country attend the conference. There was a general consensus by those attending that a National Forum would be a positive step. However only 7 Fora representatives had a mandate for setting up a National Forum.

The majority of those attending needed to go back to their county/city Fora to discuss it.

Discussion on the role of a National Forum was discussed in 3 workshops and differing views were put forward. The organising committee for Athlone agreed to stay on and work on developing the National Forum issue further. Fora's which did not come with a mandate were requested to raise this issue at the next meeting and if agreed to nominate one representative and their proxy to attend the next National Forum meeting.

At the Clare Community Forum meeting of the 10th June, Pat Shannon was nominated as the CCF representative to the National Forum and Michael Nagle was nominated as proxy.

Pat Gaughran was nominated to sit on the Environmental Forum. Pat is also currently the CCF representative on the Environment, Emergency Services and Consumer Protection Strategic Planning Committee of Clare County Council.

Seamus Bane was nominated to sit on the Regional Drugs Task Force which meets in Limerick.

Community Information

The Directorate of Road Transport & Infrastructure operates a Burial Ground Priming Grant scheme and a scheme of grants to Assist Communities to Provide/ Develop a Burial Ground.

The Priming Grant Scheme is designed to assist community groups in the maintenance of burial grounds in their areas. A maximum of € 700 is available to cover costs such as materials and/or tools used in the maintenance of burial grounds. The Grant to Provide/ Develop a Burial Ground is designed to facilitate communities to provide a new burial ground locally. Applications are considered on their merits and a maximum of €8,888 can be granted.

Application forms for both these schemes are available by contacting Angela O'Connor or Catriona O'Connell on 065 6846 335 during office hours.

Also copies of the Dúchas handbook 'The Care and Conservation of Graveyards' are available on request from the County Council. Clare County Council stresses the need for community groups to adhere to the guidelines

for best practice in the care and conservation of burial grounds.

Late Applications

The Environment Section of Clare County Council are accepting late applications on the grants schemes ([illegal dump clean up](#), [village paint scheme](#), [amenity works](#)) and the [competitions \(best traditional shop front, best public seat, Clare in Bloom\)](#). The deadline was the 30th May.

Language Initiative for the Diocese of Killaloe by An Clár as Gaeilge and Supported by Clare County Council



(L-R) Roibeárd Ó Ceallaigh, Inis as Gaeilge; Nora Ní Dhálaigh, Comhairle Chontae an Chláir; Bishop Willie Walsh, Lisa Ní Shé, An Clár as Gaeilge

On Monday, 16th June 2003, the Cathaoirleach of Inis as Gaeilge, Roibeárd Ó Ceallaigh stated, on the occasion of the presentation to Bishop Willie Walsh of a set of 300 laminated cards for each parish of the diocese with the Principal Prayers in Irish, for use at all Liturgical occasions in the Diocese, particularly Sunday Mass, that he was delighted that this initiative was fully supported by Bishop Walsh with a view to ensuring an enhanced usage of our Irish Language prayers in the Diocesan Churches.

The co operation of Comhairle Chontae an Chláir in printing these liturgical cards is a positive example of the partnership which is 'Inis as Gaeilge' working for the benefit of our community... "ní neart go chur le chéile" stated an tUasal Ó Ceallaigh.

Workshop of CDB Implementation Groups, Wednesday 11th June 2003

A Workshop of the six Implementation Groups under the County Development Board was held on Wednesday, 11th June at the West County Hotel, Ennis. The objective of the workshop, which was facilitated by Peter Quinn, Economic Consultant, was to prioritise the key actions to be delivered between now and the end of the year. Over 50 representatives from various organisations on the County Development Board and other specialist expertise attended.

Politics in County Clare in Safe Hands

Strong political ambitions among the youth were clearly evident recently in Co. Clare. The second Clare Comhairle na nÓg (Children's Council) was held at the West County Hotel, Ennis on Thursday 22nd May last.

It was organised by the Clare County Development Board, Clare County Childcare Committee and Clare Sports Partnership with inputs from the ISPCC. The City / County Development Boards have been given responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of the National Children's Strategy at a local level and the organising of a Comhairle na nÓg is part of this role. The main objective of the Comhairle na nÓg is to consult with children on issues of local and national importance and to commence the establishment of permanent structures in County Clare to ensure that children are given a voice in issues that affect them.

Over 100 children attended on the day and they were representative of all parts of the county. Alec Fleming, County Manager, Clare County Council was in attendance and Cllr. Richard Nagle, Mayor of the County of Clare, delivered the opening address where he congratulated all concerned and wished all the potential young councillors well for the future. During the day there were two workshops for children to participate in: 'Sport and Recreation' and 'Sense of Pride / Belonging in my Area'. Clare Youth Services provided a packed lunch on the day.

The age category of children present ranged from 7 to 17. A report of the day's events will be compiled and this will include details of the issues raised by the children on the day as recorded by observers. Representatives from County Clare will be selected to attend the 2003 Dáil na nÓg along with children from all over the country. The Dáil na nÓg will be held in the Mansion House, Dublin in Autumn 2003.

Social Inclusion Forum

On Thursday 12th June 2003, Clare CDB hosted an open seminar to review a model for the effective running of a Social Inclusion Forum. The model was developed by a Working Group * and is an action in the Integrated Strategy 'Shaping the Future'.

Over 100 groups were invited and it was advertised in the Clare Champion and on Clare

FM to ensure that those socially excluded or involved with social inclusion attended. Sue Targett, Chairperson of the Working Group, welcomed everyone and outlined the process from the previous meeting in February 2003 to date. She outlined the role of the ADM groups and their responsibility with regard to developing the model. Bernadette Kinsella, Director of Community & Enterprise, spoke on the role of her Department in establishing a fully representative Social Inclusion Forum. She stated that this would take time and commitment from organisations, to support those groups who are socially excluded to sit around the table. Ruairí O Conchúir, Rural Action Project presented the model outlining the link between the Social Inclusion Forum and the 5 Local Area Networks of the Clare Community Forum.

The model is based on 10 representatives coming from each of the 5 Area Networks (2 from each Network) and 6 – 10 others who will be decided upon after the Area Network representatives come forward. These 6 others will be decided upon with respect to those disadvantaged groups that have not come through from the Area Networks.

In general, the model was accepted by those attending. There was a consensus that the first step was the most important, most difficult and requiring the most time and resources – getting socially excluded groups to join the Area Networks and to come forward onto the Forum. Other comments included the need to understand and put a 'human face' on what is social exclusion, and to support the Forum when it is established agreeing its role and facilitating team building among its members. These and all the other comments on the day will be reviewed by the lead agencies and a report will be circulated to all those invited to attend.

* Working Group members: Clarecare; Ennis West Partners; Eiri Corca Baiscinn; Rural Action Project; County Childcare Committee; Ennis CDP; Clare County Council; Clare Community Forum Development Officer; Clare Supported Employment Services; DPOC

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