



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

2023

Cork County Council
Annual Report



2023

Cork County Council Annual Report

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Message from



Cllr. Frank O'Flynn
Mayor of the County of Cork



and Valerie O'Sullivan
Chief Executive of Cork County Council

We are pleased to present Cork County Council's Annual Report for 2023, highlighting the extensive activities, services, and support provided by the Council to the communities we serve.

There were many significant accomplishments in 2023 with progress across all directorates within the Council. Housing remained a top priority, with the Council implementing initiatives to deliver new housing units and improve housing services. There were 794 units allocated to successful applicants in 2023. This figure includes allocations to the Council's own Social Housing stock and to units provided by Approved Housing Bodies. Through our Affordable Housing Schemes and collaboration with developers, we allocated numerous units to successful applicants. We refurbished 126 vacant properties and carried out works to assist disabled persons in 159 local authority houses. Energy efficiency upgrades and efforts to address homelessness through the Housing First model were crucial components of our comprehensive approach to housing.

Transportation and road infrastructure saw major advancements, with notable progress on the Dunkettle Interchange Upgrade Scheme and the opening of the N22 Baile Bhuirne to Macroom Road. These projects amongst many more highlight our dedication to enhancing transportation and safety for all our citizens. Technical advisors were appointed to the M28 Cork to Ringaskiddy Project. Several Greenways and Active Travel Schemes were advanced during 2023 including route options for the Mallow to Dungarvan Greenway and feasibility and options assessment progressed on both the South Cork Greenway – Cork to Kinsale and the West Cork Greenway – Cork to Schull. Construction of Safe Routes to School also commenced at five schools in Bandon, Belgooly and Cobh.

Significant campaigns such as the New Climate Action Plan, Town Centre First regeneration plan for Skibbereen, and various affordable homes schemes underscored our commitment to sustainability and community development. Small business is at the heart of every town and community in Ireland and accounts for 43% of all people employed in our business economy. In 2023 Cork County Council's Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) supported 186 businesses directly with grant assistance of €2,018,003. 207 training courses were delivered with 2,675 owners/managers and staff participating. A further 1,020 mentoring assignments took place in the period.

The Dursey Island Cable Car reopened in June 2023 following €1.6 million upgrade works which included full replacement of the support tower structures and refurbishment of the cable car. Kinsale Library was officially opened. Work began on the comprehensive revitalization and enhancement programme of Camden Fort Meagher. Works also commenced on a €1.2 million upgrade of Fermoy Swimming Pool to assist in reducing energy consumption and to improve the operations of the pool.

Key investments across Cork County Council's eight Municipal Districts include €3.7 million spent on the maintenance of beaches, playgrounds, walkways and parks as well as €3.3 million invested in street cleaning and litter collection at beaches. A further €320,000 was shared among the six towns of Bandon, Castletownbere, Charleville, Fermoy, Macroom and Passage West as part of the Streetscape Enhancement Scheme.

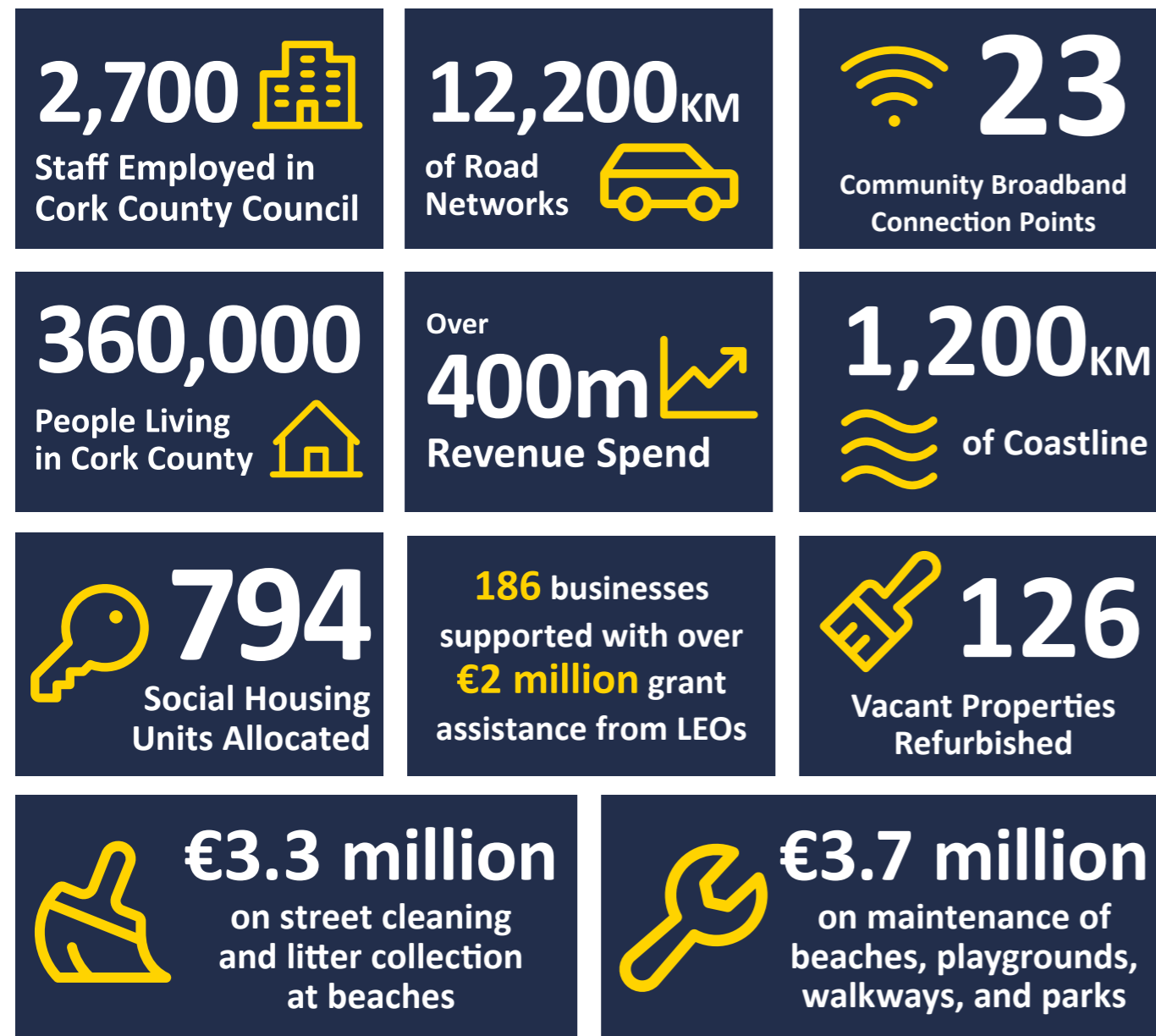
The achievements in 2023 would not have been possible without the unwavering dedication of our Elected Members, Council Staff, and the wide array of stakeholders from across Cork County, their hard work and commitment to serving our county have resulted in significant progress and accomplishments.

The resilience and unity of our community was once again evident as Cork County experienced several major storms in late 2023, including an extreme weather event on 18 October 2023 known as 'Storm Babet'. A months' worth of rain fell in 24 hours. Significant flood damage was recorded throughout the county, and in particular within the East Cork Municipal District, where the highest recorded rainfall was 126mm.

The response to the severe flooding in Middleton highlighted our capacity to oversee emergencies and provide critical support to affected communities. Cork County Council, in coordination with emergency services and community volunteers, worked tirelessly to ensure the safety and well-being of residents.

Cork County Council remains steadfast in its mission to enhance the well-being and quality of life for residents, communities, and businesses of Cork County. As we reflect on the past year, we express our sincere gratitude for the collective efforts that have contributed to these achievements. Together, we will continue to build a vibrant, sustainable, and prosperous Cork County.

2023 IN NUMBERS



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

Elected Members of Cork County Council



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

CARRIGALINE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT:

Cllr. Audrey Buckley
Cllr. Ben Dalton O’Sullivan
Cllr. Jack White
Cllr. Marcia D’Alton
Cllr. Seamus McGrath
Cllr. Michael Paul Murtagh / Cllr. Úna McCarthy

MACROOM MUNICIPAL DISTRICT:

Cllr. Eileen Lynch
Cllr. Gobnait Moynihan
Cllr. Martin Coughlan
Cllr. Michael Creed
Cllr. Michael Looney
Cllr. Ted Lucey

COBH MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Cllr. Alan O’Connor
Cllr. Anthony Barry
Cllr. Cathal Rasmussen
Cllr. Sean O’Connor
Cllr. Sheila O’Callaghan
Cllr. Sinead Sheppard

BANDON-KINSALE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Cllr. Alan Coleman
Cllr. Gillian Coughlan
Cllr. John O’Sullivan
Cllr. Kevin Murphy
Cllr. Marie O’Sullivan
Cllr. Sean O’Donovan

FERMOY MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Cllr. Deirdre O’Brien
Cllr. Frank O’Flynn
Cllr. Frank Roche
Cllr. Kay Dawson
Cllr. Noel McCarthy
Cllr. William O’Leary

KANTURK-MALLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Cllr. Bernard Moynihan
Cllr. Gearóid Murphy
Cllr. Gerard Murphy
Cllr. Ian Doyle
Cllr. James Kennedy
Cllr. John Paul O’Shea
Cllr. Liam Madden
Cllr. Pat Hayes
Cllr. Tony O’Shea

EAST CORK MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Cllr. Ann Marie Ahern
Cllr. Danielle Twomey
Cllr. Liam Quaide
Cllr. Mary Linehan Foley
Cllr. Michael Hegarty
Cllr. John Healy
Cllr. Susan McCarthy

WEST CORK MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Cllr. Danny Collins
Cllr. Declan Hurley
Cllr. Deirdre Kelly
Cllr. Joe Carroll
Cllr. Karen Coakley
Cllr. Caroline Cronin
Cllr. Patrick Gerard Murphy
Cllr. Paul Hayes
Cllr. Ross O’Connell

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT (MD) DETAILS

CARRIGALINE MD

Municipal District Officer: Carol Conway/Denise Kidney
Cathaoirleach: Cllr. Audrey Buckley

COBH MD

Municipal District Officer: Paraig Lynch
Cathaoirleach: Cllr. Alan O’Connor

BANDON-KINSALE MD

Municipal District Officer: Brian Dunne
Cathaoirleach: Cllr. Sean O’Donovan

EAST CORK MD

Municipal District Officer: Joe McCarthy
Cathaoirleach: Cllr. Susan McCarthy

FERMOY MD

Municipal District Officer: Margaret O’Donoghue
Cathaoirleach: Cllr. William O’Leary

KANTURK-MALLOW MD

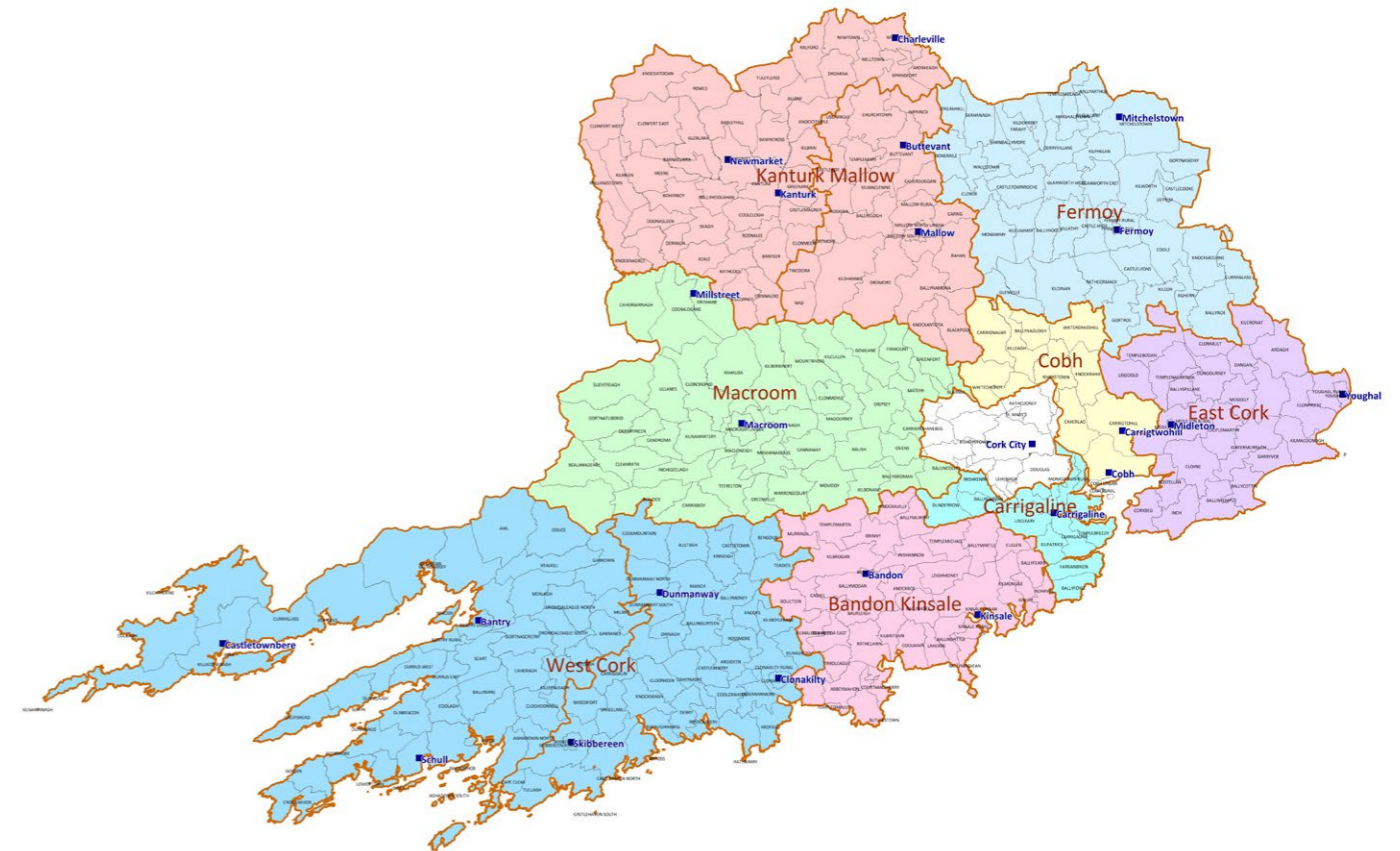
Municipal District Officer: Claire Barr
Cathaoirleach: Cllr. Ian Doyle

MACROOM MD

Municipal District Officer: Marie O’Leary
Cathaoirleach: Cllr. Ted Lucey

WEST CORK MD

Municipal District Officer: Jacqueline Mansfield
Cathaoirleach: Cllr. Joe Carroll



COMMITTEE AND SUBSIDIARY BODY MEMBERSHIP

NORTHERN COMMITTEE

Cllr. Kay Dawson	Cllr. Liam Madden	Cllr. Deirdre O'Brien	Cllr. Tony O'Shea
Cllr. Ian Doyle	Cllr. Noel McCarthy	Cllr. Frank O'Flynn	Cllr. Frank Roche
Cllr. Pat Hayes	Cllr. Bernard Moynihan	Cllr. William O'Leary	
Cllr. James Kennedy	Cllr. Gearóid Murphy	Cllr. John Paul O'Shea	

SOUTHERN COMMITTEE

Cllr. Anthony Barry	Cllr. Michael Creed	Cllr. Sheila O'Callaghan	Cllr. Jack White
Cllr. Audrey Buckley	Cllr. Marcia D'Alton	Cllr. Ann Marie Ahern	Cllr. Seán O'Connor
Cllr. John Healy	Cllr. Ben Dalton O'Sullivan	Cllr. Danielle Twomey	Cllr. Liam Quaide
Cllr. Martin Coughlan	Cllr. Michael Hegarty	Cllr. Cathal Rasmussen	Cllr. Sinéad Sheppard
Cllr. Mary Linehan Foley	Cllr. Michael Paul Murtagh / Cllr. Úna McCarthy	Cllr. Eileen Lynch / Cllr. Alan O'Connor	Cllr. Susan McCarthy
Cllr. Michael Looney	Cllr. Ted Lucey	Cllr. Seamus McGrath	Cllr. Gobnait Moynihan

WESTERN COMMITTEE

Cllr. Deirdre Kelly	Cllr. Gillian Coughlan	Cllr. Kevin Murphy	Cllr. Ross O'Connell
Cllr. Joe Carroll	Cllr. Paul Hayes	Cllr. Patrick Gerard Murphy	Cllr. John O'Sullivan
Cllr. Karen Coakley	Cllr. Declan Hurley	Cllr. Seán O'Donovan	Cllr. Marie O'Sullivan
Cllr. Alan Coleman	Cllr. Danny Collins	Cllr. Caroline Cronin	

CORPORATE POLICY GROUP (CPG)

Cllr. Anthony Barry	Cllr. Declan Hurley	Cllr. Gobnait Moynihan	Cllr. John Paul O'Shea
Cllr. Alan Coleman	Cllr. Seamus McGrath	Cllr. Patrick Gerard Murphy	Cllr. Frank O'Flynn
Cllr. Michael Hegarty	Cllr. Gearóid Murphy		

COMMITTEE AND SUBSIDIARY BODY MEMBERSHIP

SPC NO. 1 – PLANNING AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

Cllr. Joe Carroll	Cllr. James Kennedy	Cllr. Sheila O'Callaghan	Cllr. Frank O'Flynn
Cllr. Alan Coleman	Cllr. Ted Lucey	Cllr. Frank Roche	Cllr. Tony O'Shea
Cllr. John Healy	Cllr. Liam Madden	Cllr. Seamus McGrath	Cllr. Bernard Moynihan
Cllr. Michael Hegarty	Cllr. Michael Paul Murtagh / Cllr. Úna McCarthy		

NON-ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Billy Cotter	Aiden O'Neill	Bernadette Connolly	Michael O'Flynn
Carol Harpur	Tadhg Quill-Manley	Prof Donagh Berry	

SPC NO. 2 – ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE ACTION AND BIODIVERSITY

Cllr. Anthony Barry	Cllr. Kevin Murphy	Cllr. Jack White	Cllr. Ross O'Connell
Cllr. Audrey Buckley	Cllr. Gerard Murphy	Cllr. Alan O'Connor	Cllr. Liam Quaide
Cllr. Deirdre Kelly	Cllr. Michael Looney	Cllr. Deirdre O'Brien	Cllr. Cathal Rasmussen
Cllr. Marcia D'Alton			

NON-ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Chris Hayes	Madeleine Murray	Michael O'Shea	Proinsias O'Tuama
Cian Murphy	Raffaella Valenti	Caitríona Courtney	Conor O'Brien

SPC NO. 3 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE

Cllr. Martin Coughlan	Cllr. Michael Hegarty	Cllr. Noel McCarthy	Cllr. John Paul O'Shea
Cllr. Kay Dawson	Cllr. James Kennedy	Cllr. Susan McCarthy	Cllr. Gerard Murphy
Cllr. Pat Hayes	Cllr. Paul Hayes	Cllr. Gearóid Murphy	Cllr. Frank O'Flynn
Cllr. Ann Marie Ahern			

NON-ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Michael Delargey	Aidan Mangan	Dr John Hobbs	Martin Corkery
Jimmy Hosford	Bryan O'Donnell	Seamus Coffey	Owen Hurley

SPC NO. 3 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE

Cllr. Joe Carroll	Cllr. Declan Hurley	Cllr. Seán O'Connor	Cllr. Deirdre Kelly
Cllr. Karen Coakley	Cllr. Pat Hayes	Cllr. Seán O'Donovan	Cllr. Marie O'Sullivan
Cllr. Alan Coleman	Cllr. Paul Hayes	Cllr. Susan McCarthy	Cllr. John O'Sullivan
Cllr. Danny Collins	Cllr. Mary Linehan Foley		

NON-ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Derry Cronin	Aaron Mansworth	Dr Josephine O'Driscoll	Doug Lucey
Clayton Love	Valerie Murphy	Eileen O'Shea	

COMMITTEE AND SUBSIDIARY BODY MEMBERSHIP

SPC NO. 4 – TOURISM

Cllr. Joe Carroll	Cllr. Paul Hayes	Cllr. Seán O'Donovan	Cllr. John O'Sullivan
Cllr. Karen Coakley	Cllr. Declan Hurley	Cllr. Deirdre Kelly	Cllr. Danny Collins
Cllr. Alan Coleman	Cllr. Mary Linehan Foley	Cllr. Marie O'Sullivan	Cllr. Pat Hayes

NON-ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Derry Cronin	Aaron Mansworth	Dr Josephine O'Driscoll	Doug Lucey
Clayton Love	Valerie Murphy	Eileen O'Shea	

SPC NO. 5 – HOUSING

Cllr. Anthony Barry	Cllr. Ben Dalton O'Sullivan	Cllr. Patrick Gerard Murphy	Cllr. Sinead Sheppard
Cllr. Danny Collins	Cllr. Mary Linehan Foley	Cllr. Cathal Rasmussen	Cllr. Danielle Twomey
Cllr. John Healy	Cllr. Noel McCarthy	Cllr. Seamus McGrath	Cllr. Liam Madden

NON-ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Colm J. Cronin	Stephen McCarthy	Jose Ospina	Margarita O'Driscoll
Susan R. Cullen	Eileen Kelly McCarthy		

SPC NO. 6 – ROADS AND TRANSPORT

Cllr. Gillian Coughlan	Cllr. Frank Roche	Cllr. Deirdre O'Brien	Cllr. Ann Marie Ahern
Cllr. Michael Creed	Cllr. Michael Looney	Cllr. William O'Leary	Cllr. Tony O'Shea
Cllr. Ben Dalton O'Sullivan	Cllr. Ted Lucey	Cllr. Kevin Murphy	Cllr. Eileen Lynch
Cllr. Declan Hurley	Cllr. Michael Paul Murtagh / Cllr. Úna McCarthy		

NON-ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

John Bowen	Supt. Adrian Gamble	Bríd Coakley	Aled S. Williams
Denis Ryan	Dr Darren McAdam-O'Connell		

SPC NO. 7 – SOCIAL INCLUSION, COMMUNITY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Cllr. Audrey Buckley	Cllr. Ian Doyle	Cllr. Gobnait Moynihan	Cllr. Danielle Twomey
Cllr. Michael Creed	Cllr. Bernard Moynihan	Cllr. Liam Quaide	Cllr. John Paul O'Shea
Cllr. Marcia D'Alton	Cllr. Caroline Cronin	Cllr. Marie O'Sullivan	Cllr. Kay Dawson

NON-ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Eddie Mullins	Mair Kelly	Gavin Falk	Pat Dooley
Ana Ospina	Pauline O'Dwyer		

COMMITTEE AND SUBSIDIARY BODY MEMBERSHIP

SPC NO. 8 – ARTS, CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

Cllr. Ross O'Connell	Cllr. Gobnait Moynihan	Cllr. Jack White	Cllr. Sinead Sheppard
Cllr. Karen Coakley	Cllr. Gearóid Murphy	Cllr. Sheila O'Callaghan	Cllr. Alan O'Connor
Cllr. Martin Coughlan	Cllr. Caroline Cronin	Cllr. Patrick Gerard Murphy	Cllr. William O'Leary

NON-ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Kenneth Buckley	Geoff Gould	Eamon Lankford	Michael De Buitléir
Ann Davoren	Mary Hegarty	Colum Cronin	Judith Gilbert

LCDC (LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES) SOUTH

Cllr. Marcia D'Alton	Cllr. Michael Hegarty	Cllr. Séamus McGrath	Cllr. Cathal Rasmussen
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LCDC (LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES) WEST

Cllr. Alan Coleman	Cllr. Declan Hurley	Cllr. Patrick Gerard Murphy	Cllr. John O'Sullivan
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LCDC (LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES) NORTH

Cllr. Bernard Moynihan	Cllr. Gerard Murphy	Cllr. Pat Hayes	Cllr. Gearóid Murphy
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AUDIT COMMITTEE

Cllr. Marcia D'Alton	Cllr. Michael Hegarty	Cllr. Séamus McGrath	Cllr. Cathal Rasmussen
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NON-ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Dr. Philip Byrne	Dr. Michelle Carr	Edel Clancy	Eileen O'Shea
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COASTAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Cllr. Audrey Buckley	Cllr. Ross O'Connell	Cllr. Joe Carroll	Cllr. Karen Coakley
Cllr. Danny Collins	Cllr. Marcia D'Alton	Cllr. Michael Hegarty	Cllr. Mary Linehan Foley
Cllr. Kevin Murphy	Cllr. Ann Marie Ahern	Cllr. Jack White	Cllr. Deirdre Kelly
Cllr. Cathal Rasmussen	Cllr. Sinead Sheppard		

COUNTY LIBRARY COMMITTEE

Cllr. Anthony Barry	Cllr. Noel Collins	Cllr. Seán O'Donovan	Cllr. Marcia D'Alton
Cllr. Ian Doyle	Cllr. Noel McCarthy	Cllr. Ann Marie Ahern	Cllr. Martin Coughlan

COMMITTEE AND SUBSIDIARY BODY MEMBERSHIP

INTERNATIONAL AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

Cllr. Audrey Buckley	Cllr. Joe Carroll	Cllr. Alan Coleman	Cllr. Ben Dalton O'Sullivan
Cllr. Kay Dawson	Cllr. Ian Doyle	Cllr. Eileen Lynch	Cllr. Susan McCarthy
Cllr. Gerard Murphy	Cllr. Deirdre O'Brien	Cllr. Alan O'Connor	Cllr. Frank O'Flynn
Cllr. William O'Leary			

HISTORIC MONUMENTS COMMITTEE

Cllr. Audrey Buckley	Cllr. Danny Collins	Cllr. Michael Looney	Cllr. Liam Madden
Cllr. Susan McCarthy	Cllr. Alan Coleman	Cllr. Deirdre O'Brien	Cllr. Alan O'Connor
Cllr. Kevin Murphy			

COMMEMORATIONS COMMITTEE

Cllr. Anthony Barry	Cllr. Alan Coleman	Cllr. Ian Doyle	Cllr. Paul Hayes
Cllr. Declan Hurley	Cllr. Eileen Lynch	Cllr. Noel McCarthy	Cllr. Susan McCarthy
Cllr. Gobnait Moynihan	Cllr. Deirdre O'Brien	Cllr. Frank O'Flynn	

RURAL WATER MONITORING COMMITTEE

Cllr. Anthony Barry	Cllr. Ben Dalton O'Sullivan	Cllr. Kay Dawson	Cllr. Ian Doyle
Cllr. Paul Hayes	Cllr. Eileen Lynch	Cllr. John O'Sullivan	

LOCAL TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION COMMITTEE

Cllr. Gillian Coughlan	Cllr. Ian Doyle	Cllr. Paul Hayes	Cllr. Michael Hegarty
Cllr. Ted Lucey	Cllr. Michael Paul Murtagh	Cllr. Cathal Rasmussen	Cllr. Kay Dawson

JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

Cllr. Joe Carroll	Cllr. Karen Coakley	Cllr. Ben Dalton O'Sullivan	Cllr. Kay Dawson
Cllr. Ian Doyle	Cllr. Michael Paul Murtagh	Cllr. Michael Looney	Cllr. Ted Lucey
Cllr. Gearóid Murphy	Cllr. Kevin Murphy	Cllr. Deirdre O'Brien	Cllr. Seán O'Donovan
Cllr. Cathal Rasmussen	Cllr. Frank Roche	Cllr. Danielle Twomey	

CASP POLICY COMMITTEE

Cllr. Marcia D'Alton	Cllr. Pat Hayes	Cllr. Liam Madden	Cllr. Noel McCarthy
Cllr. Susan McCarthy	Cllr. Séamus McGrath	Cllr. Gearóid Murphy	Cllr. Sheila O'Callaghan
Cllr. Ann Marie Ahern	Cllr. Liam Quaide		

COMMITTEE AND SUBSIDIARY BODY MEMBERSHIP

SOUTHERN REGIONAL DRUG AND ALCOHOL TASK FORCE

Cllr. Ian Doyle

CORK COUNTY SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

Cllr. Kay Dawson Cllr. Declan Hurley Cllr. Gobnait Moynihan

IRISH PUBLIC BODIES

Cllr. James Kennedy

COBH HERITAGE TRUST CLG

Cllr. Seán O'Connor

CORK EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD

Cllr. Karen Coakley Cllr. Alan Coleman Cllr. Ben Dalton O'Sullivan Cllr. Kay Dawson
Cllr. James Kennedy Cllr. Noel McCarthy Cllr. Patrick Gerard Murphy

REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Cllr. Joe Carroll Cllr. Gerard Murphy Cllr. Deirdre O'Brien Cllr. Seán O'Connor
Cllr. Sheila O'Callaghan

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

Cllr. Audrey Buckley Cllr. Danny Collins Cllr. Pat Hayes Cllr. Mary Linehan Foley
Cllr. Eileen Lynch Cllr. Susan McCarthy Cllr. Gearóid Murphy Cllr. Caroline Cronin
Cllr. Seán O'Donovan

LAMA

Cllr. Bernard Moynihan

AILG

Cllr. Bernard Moynihan Cllr. Gobnait Moynihan Cllr. Kevin Murphy Cllr. Ann Marie Ahern

BOTTLEHILL LIAISON COMMITTEE

Cllr. Pat Hayes Cllr. Noel McCarthy Cllr. Sheila O'Callaghan

COMMITTEE AND SUBSIDIARY BODY MEMBERSHIP

BOARD OF CORK OPERA HOUSE

Cllr. Gearóid Murphy

BOARD OF VISIT CORK

Cllr. Alan Coleman

BOARD OF LEISURE WORLD

Cllr. Audrey Buckley

BOARD OF CRAWFORD ART GALLERY

Cllr. Susan McCarthy



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

Human Resource Management



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

In the spring of 2023, the HRM senior management team held 8 briefing sessions in 5 locations across Cork County, which were attended by approximately 400 indoor and outdoor staff. The HRM senior management team also visited all 20 Fire Stations and delivered the briefing session to the Retained Fire-Fighters. The purpose of these sessions was to:

- Introduce the HRM Senior Management Team.
- Outline the role and responsibilities of the HRM function.
- Provide an understanding of the HRM function.
- Provide information on:
 - Pensions
 - Other staff benefits and how these can be accessed
 - Key HRM policies procedures and guidelines
 - Training and development opportunities
 - Health and safety and wellbeing processes and initiatives
 - Recruitment processes
 - Compliance processes
- Gather feedback on what staff wanted to see in future workshops/sessions

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

A total of 1,002 staff were trained in Cork County Council in 2023 across 78 training programmes. The leadership training programme “Leading from Within” continued. General climate action awareness training and more targeted climate action courses such as Empowering Change, Championing Leadership, Building Capacity, and Climate Action Green Public Procurement (GPP) were delivered. 19 induction briefings were held with 187 employees attending.

The Ballincollig Regional Training Centre was successful in its application to SOLAS to be reregistered as an approved training organisation. In 2023 the centre delivered training to staff of Cork County, Kerry County, and Cork City Councils as follows:

LOCAL AUTHORITY	NO. OF ATTENDEES	ATTENDANCE DAYS
Cork City Council	1,110	1,407
Cork County Council	2,612	3,429
Kerry County Council	680	828
Other LAs	27	169
Other	158	204
TOTAL	4,587	6,037

Courses in firefighting skills, breathing apparatus, hazardous materials and transportation incidents were also delivered to staff working in the fire service.

RECRUITMENT

The recruitment team ran 159 competitions in 2023. There were 330 new starters and 144 promotions within Cork County Council in 2023.

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT

The transition of water services from Cork County Council to Uisce Éireann entered a new phase in 2023. The signing of the Master Co-operation Agreement (MCA) provided for full accountability and the management and direction of Cork County Council’s water services from 6 September 2023. Cork County Council’s HRM Directorate continued to support this challenging change programme and the 327-water services staff impacted by the transition. Briefings on the transition were provided to staff across the four water zones and in laboratories. Detailed statements of current pay and conditions were provided to all water services staff to enable them to engage with Uisce Éireann around future careers in water services. A forum with the trade unions party to the Workplace Relations Commission agreement was established and met regularly to discuss progress and issues arising. A protocol around the nationally agreed reassignment of water services staff was agreed with the trade unions. A forum with Uisce Éireann management was established to monitor and discuss critical vacancies and reassignments arising during the transition. Work commenced on the drafting of a support services agreement supplementary to the MCA to establish parameters around support to be provided during the transition period.

SAFETY, HEALTH, AND WELFARE AT WORK

Cork County Council achieved reaccreditation of its Safety Management System (SMS) to ISO 45001 by the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI), in November 2023. The integration of safety into all council operations and activities was recognised with 2 awards at the National Irish Safety Organisation’s annual safety awards 2023: “Consistent High Achiever” and “Higher Distinction”.

A series of well-attended briefings was organised by the Safety, Health, and Wellbeing section on the following topics:

- The hazard of radon
- Occupational road safety
- Water safety
- Electrical safety (ESB Networks)
- Statutory engineering inspections
- Facilities management matrix

A health and safety governance committee was established between Cork County Council and Uisce Éireann to assess the impact of the transition of water services on compliance with the SMS and to progress any actions identified as necessary.

Cork County Council was named in the “Leading in Wellbeing – Top 100 Companies 2023” index. This recognition highlights companies that excel in workplace well-being through their commitment to best practices, creating a lasting impact on both their employees and the broader business community. Cork County Council was also awarded IBEC’s KeepWell 2023 Mark for best-in-class physical activity. Accreditation of the Employee Wellbeing Program to the IBEC KeepWell Mark standard was also maintained following an audit by IBEC in October.



KeepWell Awards 2023 Physical Health Winner

Following a health screening programme heart health was identified as a risk factor for Cork County Council employees. An information and awareness session for outdoor staff in partnership with key stakeholders such as the HSE and the Irish Heart Foundation was piloted in November in Corrin Mart for the Fermoy and Mitchelstown crews. This event attended by 45 staff received positive feedback and is currently being rolled out to all outdoor staff across the county.



Let's Talk – Your Health and Wellbeing Event, Corrin, Fermoy



Cork County Council Employees at the Let's Talk – Your Health and Wellbeing Event, Corrin, Fermoy



Speakers at the Let's Talk – Your Health and Wellbeing Event, Corrin, Fermoy

Various classes were rolled out in 2023, both on-line and in the wellbeing studio, including mindfulness, yoga, Couch to 5k, and total body tone. A series of staff summer walks were held at various locations throughout the county along with various webinars, seminars, and awareness days.



A wellbeing room for all staff equipped with a seating area, a fridge, and tea and coffee making facilities was established in County Hall.



Wellbeing Room, Floor 7 County Hall



CCC Green Ribbon Campaign September 2023



Niall O' Keffe (SEO), Deirdre Carey (SSO), Louise Manley (AO), Ciara Lynch (A/Health Promotion Officer), Eddie Ronayne (Head of Safety and Wellbeing) and Teresa O'Donovan (Head of HRM) – HRM, CCC at our Let's Talk event Fermoy.



Members of CCC staff on our one of Summer Series of walks, on this occasion Spike Island, July 2023



Ann O'Mahony, AHR speaking at our Let's Talk event Fermoy, November 2023



Galtee Hike, June 2023 Ciara Lynch and Linda Skillington, Asst. Safety Officer CCC, October 2023



Members of CCC staff who successfully completed the RUN 100 2023 campaign with the Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Danny Collins, April 2023



Anthony Buckley and Ciara Lynch (Health Promotion Team) and Sophie Moran (IBEC). CCC receiving first in class for physical activity, May 2023

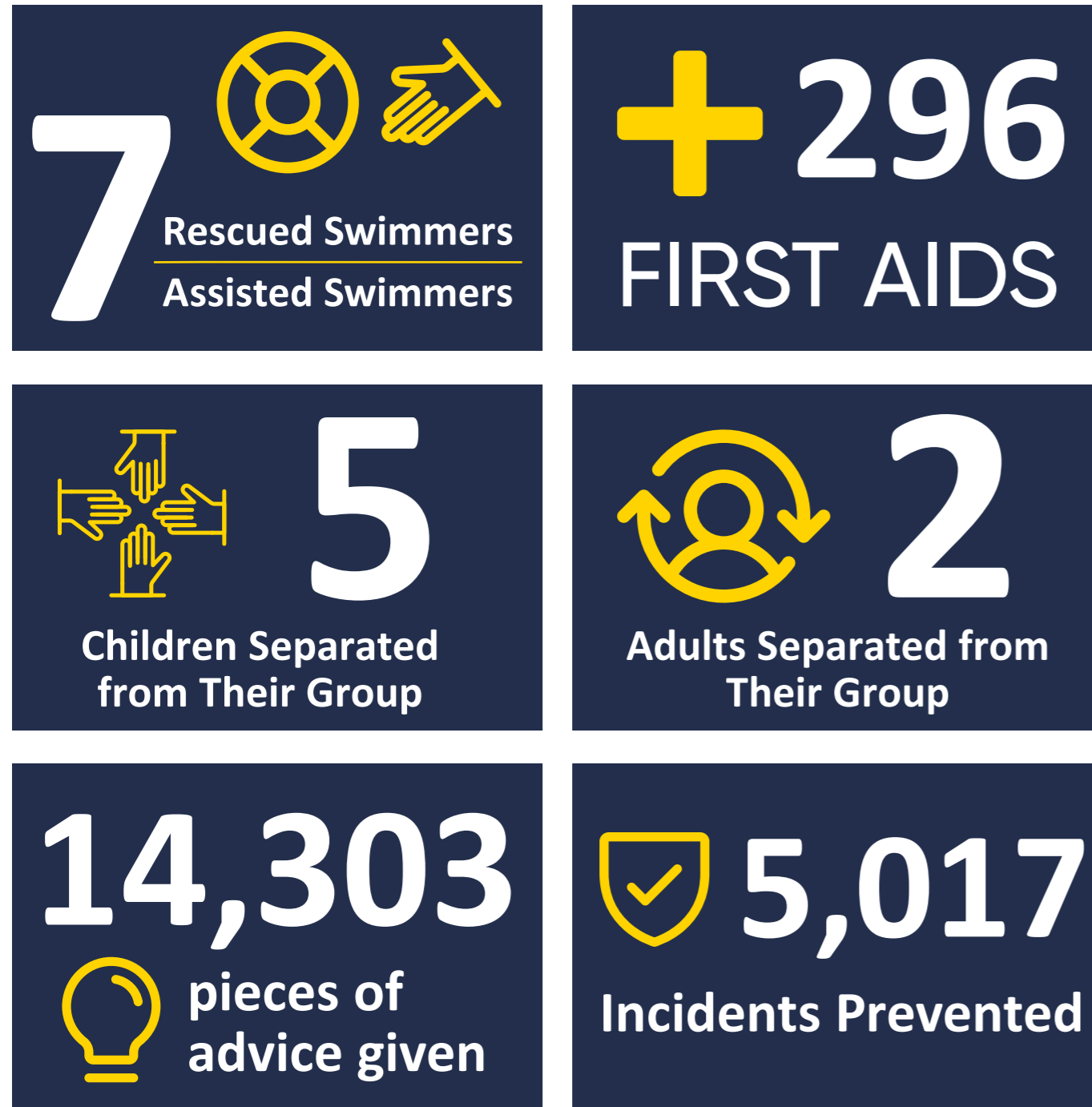
WATER AND ROAD SAFETY PROMOTION

Water and road safety promotion education sessions were provided to over 19,185 people, mainly primary and secondary school students across the county in 2023.

Education Session Type:	Numbers Involved
Water Safety Webinars	3,600 Primary Students
Water Safety Education Days	5,500 Primary Students
Road Safety Webinars	5,000 Primary Students
Private Group Workshops	370 Adult Participants
On Site Secondary School Workshops	3,700 Secondary Students
Blue Light Events	4 Day Long Events
Cork Summer Show Stand	2 Days in June
Charleville Summer Show Stand	2 Days in June
In Person Education Events	400 Primary Students
On Site Primary School Workshops	800 Primary Students
In Person Cycle Right Training	65 Primary Students
On Site School Warden Crossing Workshops	550 Primary Students

WATER SAFETY PROMOTION

The beach guard service provided the following assistance to the public during the bathing season in 2023:



Targeted water safety education took place in East Cork and South Cork with over 5,000 children attending.

The Beach Lifeguard Academy worked in schools and ran a targeted course for Barleycove to encourage applications for the role of beach lifeguard.



Water Safety Workshops in East Cork and South Cork

A water safety film was produced by Cork County Council to highlight some hazards around open water swimming. Rip currents were the main focus of the film, which is now available for group and school education.



Water Insight Safety and Education film produced by Cork County Council and delivered by VR Technology

The annual National Water Safety Development Officers conference was hosted in County Cork in 2023.



Annual National Water Safety Development Officers Conference

ROAD SAFETY PROMOTION

Cork County Council road safety promotion service has continued to work in partnership with An Garda Síochána, the Road Safety Authority, the County Fire Service, Aviva Driving School, and Cork GAA to enhance road safety around County Cork.

A joint initiative approach to road safety proved very beneficial during 2023, a programme of education was developed based on a survey of members of Age Friendly Groups during 2023.



'Cross Only If It is Safe' programme delivered by Cork County Council in partnership with An Garda Síochána.

Several public and secondary school multi agency events took place during the year which incorporated the RSA Education Shuttle Bus.

Autumn and winter webinars, facilitated by Cork County Council's road safety officer in collaboration with An Garda Síochána, serve approximately 5,000 students annually. The growing number of Cork County Council School Safe Cycle Hubs is expanding cycle safety education to areas previously lacking such resources, benefitting vulnerable road users.



Cork County Council School Safe Cycle Hubs in collaboration with An Garda Síochána

SAFETY TRAINING

A total of 425 safety training courses were run in 2023 with 3,823 attendees over 3,311 training days. 84 of these courses were delivered directly by the Assistant Safety Advisors.

- 368 completed Safe Pass training
- 679 completed manual handling training (both indoor and outdoor staff)
- 183 completed office safety training
- 137 completed first aid training (first aid, refresher and AED training)
- 97 completed CPC driver training
- 361 completed phase 1 safety induction
- 168 completed phase 2 safety induction
- 91 completed banksman training
- 121 completed the abrasive wheels training
- 121 completed confined space training

The section reduced its paper-based approach to training to improve the accessibility and sustainability of its method of training delivery and moved the following courses to the online training platform:

- Fire safety awareness
- Office safety awareness
- Grey fleet driving for work
- Manual handling refresher
- Induction phase 2 for new starts
- Induction phase 2 for firefighter recruits

PENSIONS

The HRM pensions team manages the local authority pensions schemes for staff and pensioners in Cork County Council. The number of pensioners on 31 December 2023 was 1,513. During 2023, a total of 76 retirements were processed and 461 pension estimates provided to staff.

The single public service pension scheme is in operation for all staff who started in the public service for the first time after 1 January 2013, or who re-joined after a break in service of at least 26 weeks. Each member of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (SPSPS) must be provided with a benefit statement each year. In accordance with the requirements of this scheme, a total of 1,236 annual benefit statements were calculated in 2023 and issued to SPSPS members.

STAFF RELATIONS

The staff relations team continued to engage with staff and their representative bodies both internally and at third party to resolve any issues regarding working terms and conditions, and workplace relationships. Nationally agreed revisions to pay scales and other entitlements for staff were progressed. In accordance with the revised Dignity at Work code, Cork County Council produced a video on dignity at work which was launched on 11 September.

The staff relations team is responsible for supporting compliance with the policies and procedures of Cork County Council such as the sick leave scheme, the induction policy and for the processing of a range of staff entitlements and leave applications such as:

- Blended working - 231 applications were received and processed in 2023
- Force majeure – 84 applications processed; 137 days granted
- Jury duty – 21 Council staff attended for jury duty in 2023, 47 days processed
- Shorter Working Year – 143 applications processed; 433 weeks granted
- Bereavement Leave –processed requests from 515 staff, 1,605 days granted
- Paternity Leave –29 applications received; 58 weeks processed
- Parents Leave – 50 applications received; 183 weeks processed
- Parental Leave – 5,740 days processed for 174 staff
- Maternity leave-24 applications received and processed in 2023
- Carers Leave- 3 applications received, 137 weeks granted
- Work-sharing- 35 applications received and processed
- Career Breaks- 6 applications received and processed
- Interview Leave- 153 requests received; 106 days granted



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

Roads, Transportation and Safety



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

ROADS, TRANSPORTATION AND SAFETY

NATIONAL ROADS

The overall Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) national roads allocation to Cork County Council in 2023 for improvement and maintenance works was circa €83.6 million. The following schemes identified in the National Development Plan 2018-2027 (Project 2040) were progressed during 2023:

N22 BAILE BHUIRNE TO MACROOM ROAD DEVELOPMENT

JONS Civil Engineering Ltd/John Craddock JV was appointed as the main construction contractor in October 2019. The total scheme budget was €280 million. The approximately 9-kilometre Macroom section of the scheme, described as the Macroom Interim Bypass, was opened to traffic on 9 December 2022. A further sectional opening to Toonlane was achieved on 11 August 2023. The balance of the scheme opened to traffic on 6 November 2023.



N22 Baile Bhuirne Macroom Road Development – 502C Concrete Arch Bridge at the top of Cut 1 on the Baile Bhuirne bypass section of the scheme.



N22 Baile Bhuirne Macroom Road Development – Looking West toward Kerry with the Bohill River Bridge in the foreground.

M28 CORK TO RINGASKIDDY PROJECT

The Project was approved by An Bord Pleanála on 29 June 2018. On 1 March 2021 a decision of the High Court to refuse leave to appeal to the Supreme Court effectively marked the end of a legal challenge to the scheme, enabling the project to proceed. Notices to treat were issued in March and notices of entry were issued in 2021. A land valuer was appointed in 2022 and engagement with affected landowners commenced. A number of advance works elements were ongoing during 2022 and 2023, including site clearance, fencing, utilities diversions and archaeology. A submission was made to the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) in early 2023 seeking approval to use the NEC Form of Contract for the main construction contract. Approval was received following a meeting with the OGP on 5 April 2023. A tender competition to appoint technical advisors for the balance of phase 5, and phases 6 and 7 was completed during 2023. Gate 2 approval under the public spending code was received and a pre-qualification competition to select suitably qualified tenderers was completed in Q4 2023.



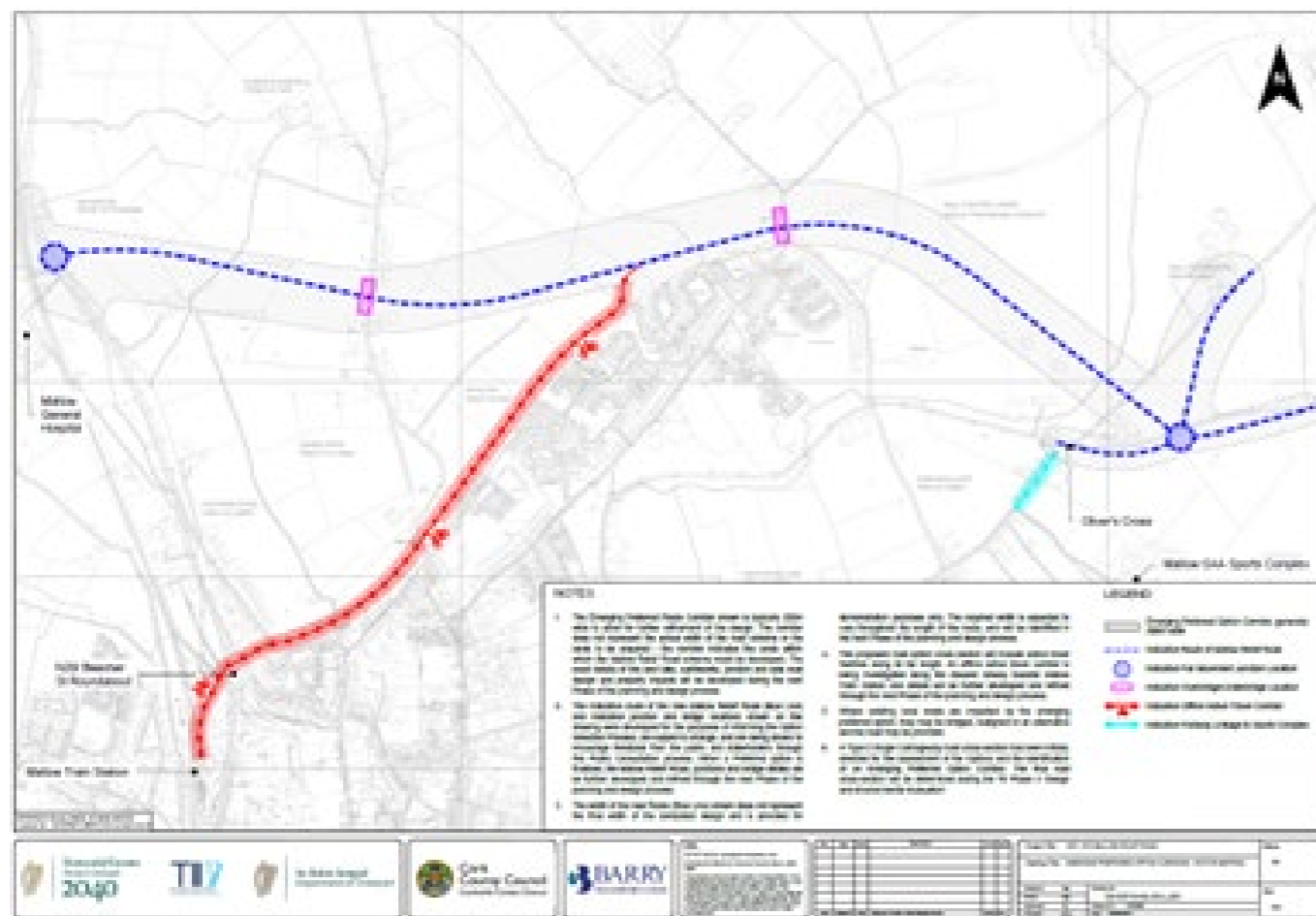
M28 Cork to Ringaskiddy Project

N25 CARRIGTWOHILL MIDLETON UPGRADE SCHEME

SWECO UK Ltd. was appointed as technical advisor in December 2019. Multi-criteria analysis and appraisal of the route options was completed in 2021. Public consultation no. 1 on route options commenced in October 2020 and concluded in November 2020. The outcomes of this were assessed and a report compiled. The preferred route option was identified in mid-2021. An options selection report was completed in Q3 2021 and a peer review of the report was undertaken and completed in late 2021. There was no funding provided for this project in 2022, or 2023 and consequently the project has been suspended.

N72/N73 MALLOW RELIEF ROAD

Barry Transportation was appointed technical advisor to this scheme in December 2019. Phase 1 concept and feasibility was completed in May 2020 while the phase 2 constraints identification and stage 1 preliminary option assessment process were also progressed during 2020. Initial options presented during the first public consultation of July/August 2020 were assessed, leading to a shortlist of options in December 2020. The shortlisted options were further assessed under stage 2 of the TII option selection process during 2021. The emerging preferred route (option C) was presented to the Northern Committee in June 2021. The options selection report was finalised during 2021 with TII peer review completed in late 2021. Site investigations and topographical surveys along the route corridor were progressed during 2022. This project was largely suspended during 2023 due to limited funding availability.



Mallow Relief Road

N25 MIDLETON TO YOUGHAL

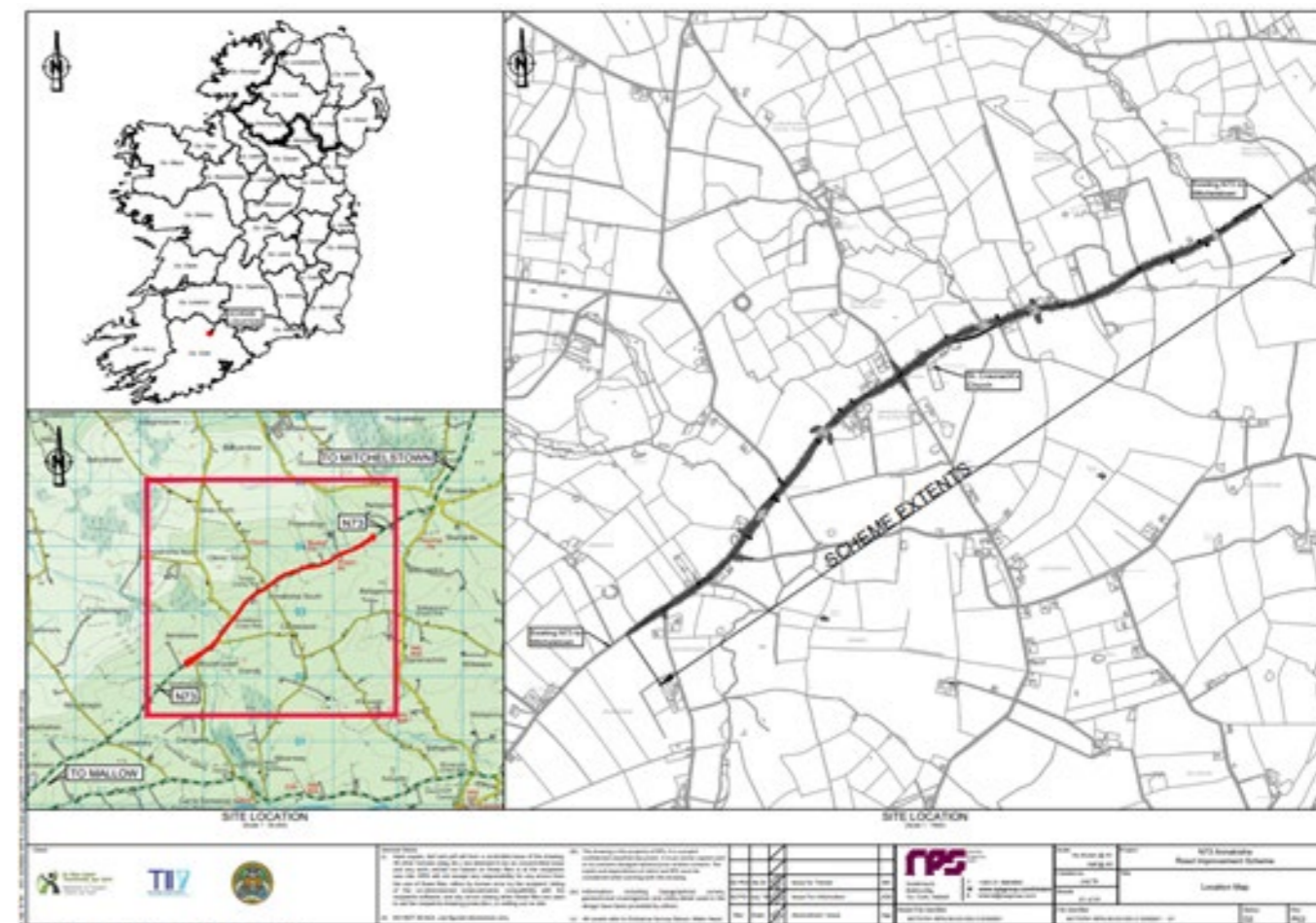
A strategic assessment report (SAR) for the N25 between Midleton and Youghal was progressed during 2022. The project is currently being progressed as a major project. A final draft SAR was completed in Q4 2022. The project management guidelines phase 1 reports and associated documentation for this project were developed during 2023.

MINOR WORKS

The following schemes were advanced during 2023:

N73 ANNAKISHA SOUTH IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

RPS appointed to end of phase 5 for this circa 3.5-kilometre realignment scheme. Contract and tender documents were completed during 2022 and a request to progress a tender competition was submitted to TII. Approval to proceed to tender was received in January 2023. The tender competition commenced on 10 February 2023 and tenders were returned on 24 March 2023. The construction contract was awarded at the end of June 2023 and construction is expected to be completed by the end of 2024.



Annakisha South Improvement Scheme

N73 CLOGHER CROSS TO WATERDYKE REALIGNMENT SCHEME

Roughan and O'Donovan (RO'D) appointed to end of phase 5 for this 2.7-kilometre scheme. Preparation of tender documents completed for the main construction contract. TII approval to progress a tender competition was received in early 2022, a tender competition was completed, and the construction contract awarded in mid-2022. Construction commenced in July 2022 and reached substantial completion by March 2023. An official opening of the scheme took place on 13 June 2023.



N73 Clogher Cross – Looking North-East

N72 BALLYMAQUIRKE JUNCTION

This junction was a particularly high accident location and designated as a HD15 site for improvement as a road safety scheme by TII. An online presentation to local councillors took place on Friday, 7 May 2021. The compulsory purchase order (CPO) was published on 3 June 2021. An Bord Pleanála (ABP) confirmed that no objections were received, and that Cork County Council could approve the CPO. The Natura Impact Statement (NIS) notice was published on 17 June 2021 and the consultation period for NIS was concluded in Q3 2021. An Bord Pleanála approval was received on 25 February 2022. Notice to Treat and Notice to Enter were issued to affected landowners in Q3 2022. A tender competition for the scheme was progressed in Q3 and Q4 2022 and a construction contract for this scheme awarded in early 2023. Construction commenced in early February 2023 and was completed by 17 November 2023.



N72 Ballymaquirke Junction – Looking South-West

N71 NEWMILLS/OWENAHINCHA

Approval request for the Gate Review Statement (Phase 0 to 1) was approved by TII in November 2020. Phase 1 deliverables completed and submitted to TII for approval in Q4 2021. Options selection and appraisal commenced in Q4 2021. Public consultation on the route options took place in Q3 2022. The project was appraised against the updated TII Project Management Guidelines (2023) during 2023 and updated accordingly in advance of publishing a tender competition to appoint technical advisors to progress the scheme, subject to TII approval.

N71 BANDON BYPASS EXTENSION

Approval request for Gate Review Statement (Phase 0 to Phase 1) was approved by TII in November 2020. Phase 1 deliverables completed and submitted to TII for approval in Quarter 4 2021. Options selection and appraisal commenced in Q4 2021. Public consultation on the route options took place in Q2 2022. The project was appraised against the updated TII Project Management Guidelines (2023) during 2023 and updated accordingly in advance of publishing a tender competition to appoint technical advisors to progress the scheme, subject to TII approval.

PAVEMENT AND MINOR IMPROVEMENT WORKS

A number of pavement and minor Improvement Works were advanced during 2023. Selected schemes are outlined below:

N71 GLENGARRIFF PAVEMENT STRENGTHENING SCHEME

Detailed design and tender documents were completed in Q2 2022. A tender competition was progressed in Q3 2022. Approval to award contract received and the Construction contract awarded in September 2022. Construction works reached substantial completion by year end 2023.

N72 ANNABELLA TO LACKNAMONA PAVEMENT STRENGTHENING PHASE 2

Detailed design and tender documents were completed in Q2 2022. A tender competition for Spa Road and Park Road was progressed in Q3 2022. Approval to award contract was received and the construction contract was awarded to Priority Construction in early 2023. Construction works reached substantial completion by year end 2023.

N72 BALLYENAGHAN

Detail design and contract documents were completed and issued for tender on 3 January 2023. Tenders returned 27 January 2023. Construction contract awarded and the contractor was mobilised to site in late March/early April 2023. Construction works reached substantial completion by year end 2023.

GREENWAYS AND ACTIVE TRAVEL

A number of Greenways and Active Travel Schemes were advanced during 2023. Selected schemes are outlined below:



Mallow to Dungarvan Greenway

MALLOW TO DUNGARVAN GREENWAY

Multi criteria analysis and route options progressed during 2023. A TII peer review of the draft route options and assessment report commenced in late 2023.

CLARE O'LEARY WALKWAY

Part 8 approval for a 900-metre extension to this scheme was received on 23 April 2023. Construction on a pre-existing section commenced in Q3 2023 and will continue into 2024.

SOUTH CORK GREENWAY – CORK TO KINSALE

Feasibility and options assessment progressed together with a strategic assessment report. A tender competition to appoint technical advisors to progress phases 1-4 of the TII Project Management Guidelines for this project was progressed during 2023.

WEST CORK GREENWAY – CORK TO SCHULL

Feasibility and options assessment progressed together with a strategic assessment report. Tender competitions to appoint technical advisors to progress phases 1-4 of the TII Project Management Guidelines for this project was progressed during 2023.

NATIONAL ROAD PROJECTS IN CORK COUNTY MANAGED BY OTHER AUTHORITIES

DUNKETTLE INTERCHANGE UPGRADE SCHEME

The letter of acceptance for the main construction contract was issued to John Sisk & Son Ltd. in mid-October 2020. Significant progress was achieved during 2023. In terms of link openings, several of the new links opened simultaneously to their permanent alignment in early July 2023. Link D: Northbound (N40 to M8) was opened to traffic in September 2023. This link takes traffic from the tunnel to the M8 on its permanent alignment and is working well.

- All structures reached substantial completion by year end 2023.
- In overall terms, at the end of 2023 the works were well on track for completion by the due date of early February 2024.



Dunkettle Interchange – Looking North-East



Dunkettle Interchange – Looking West

N/M20 CORK LIMERICK ROAD IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Barry Transportation, SWECO & WSP are the appointed technical advisors for the scheme. Phase 1 gate review statement was approved by TII in 2020. The study area for the scheme was published and the first public consultation for route options commenced in November 2020, with a briefing to elected representatives, and was extended until January 2021. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, a web based virtual public consultation was progressed. The preparation of the constraints report, the feasibility of rail options, and a list of option comparison estimates for the scheme, as well as a procurement strategy, was progressed in 2021. In Q4 of 2021 the project team progressed its appraisal of the shortlisted options against government policy updates relating to the National Development Plan review and sustainable transport infrastructure such as Draft National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI) Report. The publication and public display of the preferred option for the N/M20 Cork to Limerick project took place on 30 March 2022. A virtual project update briefing took place on 21 February 2023 with invitations issued to elected members, elected representatives and senior management from Cork County Council, Limerick City and County Council, and Cork City Council. A further virtual briefing for elected representatives was scheduled for 9:30am on Monday 27 November 2023. This project update was the second in a series of updates to take place during Phase 3 as the project team worked to develop the design and the environmental evaluation for the project.

- Site investigations and topographical surveys were also progressed along the preferred route corridor during 2023. Further information is available at www.corklimerick.ie

REGIONAL AND LOCAL ROADS

The overall road grant allocation for 2023 from the Department of Transport was approximately €71.3 million. This allowed for:

- The strengthening of 309 kilometres of regional and local roads in 316 locations under the following programmes: restoration improvement, discretionary grant, climate change and adaptation resilience, former national roads grant, and community involvement schemes, by direct construction by council outdoor staff and fleet and also through resurfacing contracts.
- 403 kilometres of regional and local roads were surface dressed in 242 locations by council outdoor staff and fleet under the restoration maintenance programme and the CCAR programme.
- 9 road safety improvement schemes were either fully or partially completed in 2023.
- A total of 23 structures (bridges, retaining walls or embankments) were repaired or replaced in 2023.



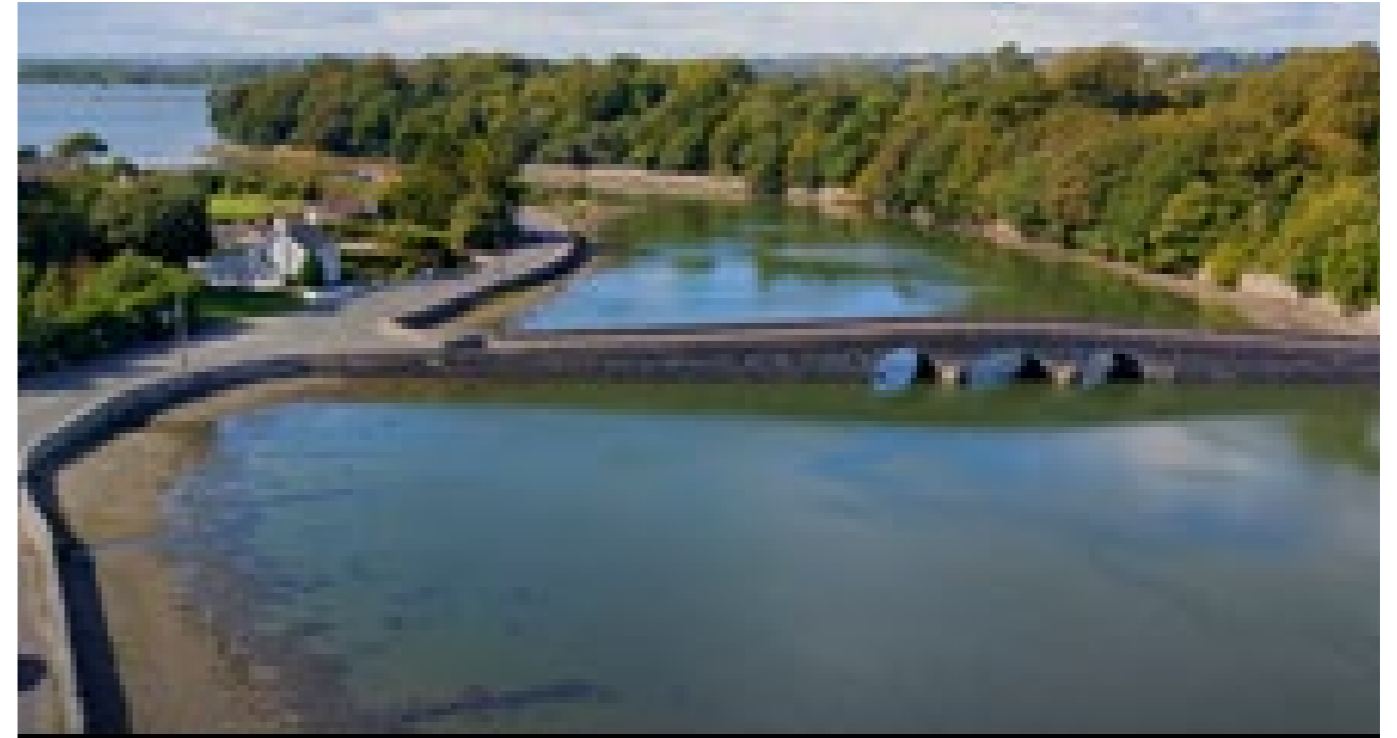
Works undertaken on R605 Innishannon to Kinsale Road at Shipool to widen the road and improve forward visibility.

STRATEGIC ROAD IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

Several strategic road improvement schemes were advanced in 2023. Some are outlined below.

GREAT ISLAND TRANSPORTATION STUDY

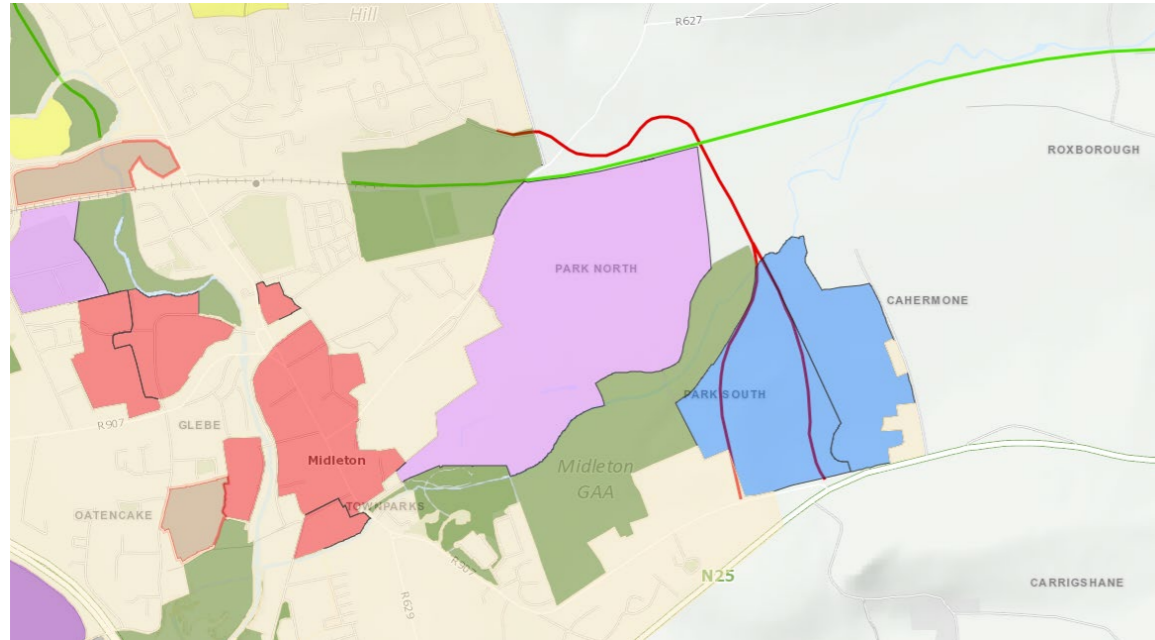
Transportation links between the N25, Marino Point, and Cobh require upgrading. The improved infrastructure will support the ongoing development of Cobh, particularly in the residential development of the town, as well as supporting commercial development at Marino Point. A project outline document (POD) was compiled during 2023 for submission to the Department of Transport in early 2024.



Great Island Transportation Study

MIDLETON NORTHERN CONNECTIVITY CORRIDOR

This is the third and final phase of a connectivity corridor designed to reduce traffic in the town centre and to promote the development of the town. The detailed design stage of the scheme commenced during 2023 following engagement with key stakeholders including Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), Office of Public Works (OPW), and National Transport Authority (NTA).



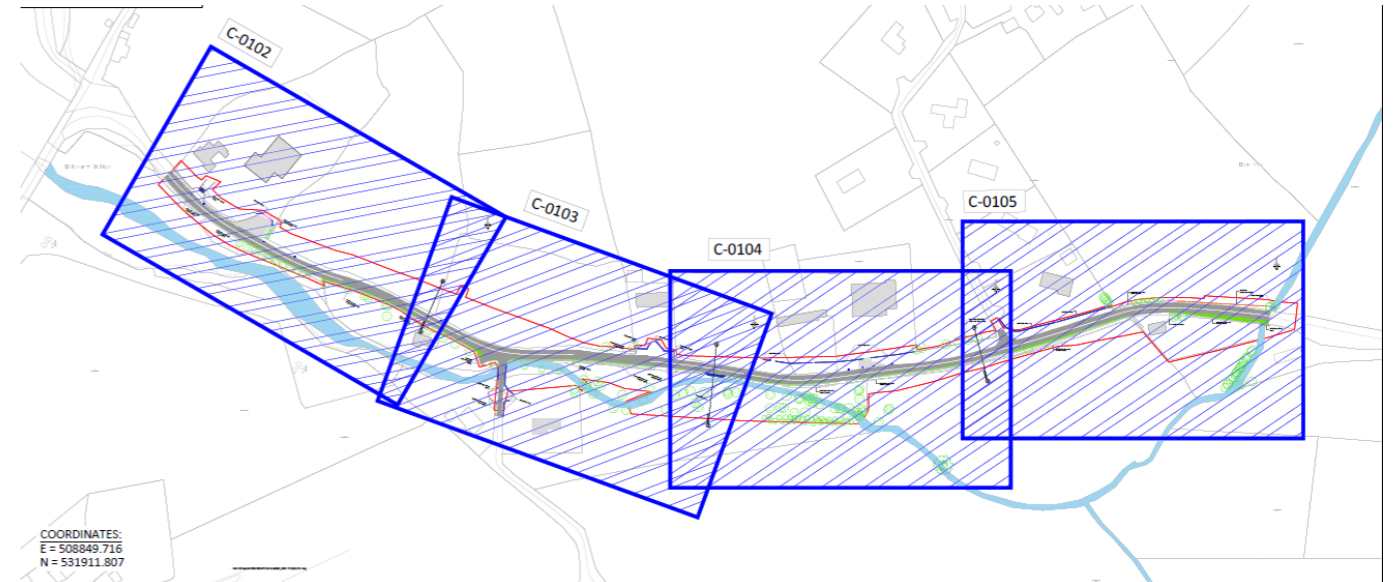
Midleton Northern Relief Road Phase 3

BANTRY CULVERT

A section of culvert requires replacement to ensure structural integrity and adequate hydraulic capacity. Preliminary design and an options report were progressed in 2023, including engagement with the Office of Public Works (OPW) and Uisce Éireann (UÉ).

R595 REALIGNMENT AT OLD COURT, SKIBBEREEN

The realignment is required to enhance road safety and promote regional connectivity and economic development. Land acquisition and advance works continued in 2023 and the detailed design was developed.



R595 realignment at Old Court, Skibbereen

R586 REALIGNMENT AT ILEN BRIDGE

The realignment is required to enhance road safety and promote regional connectivity and economic development. Land acquisition and significant advance works were progressed in 2023.



R586 realignment at Ilen Bridge

R600 BOWEN'S CROSS UPGRADE

The upgrade is required to enhance road safety. The preliminary design and statutory processes were progressed in 2023.

R572 REALIGNMENT AT ADRIGOLE

The realignment is required to enhance road safety and promote regional connectivity and economic development. The preliminary design was advanced in 2023.



R572 realignment at Adrigole

LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

Works were carried out on 47 private roads under the Local Improvement Scheme, with funding of €2,580,961 from the Department of Rural and Community Development, as well as local contributions.

SEVERE WEATHER

Cork County experienced a number of major storms in late 2023, including an extreme weather event on 18 October 2023 known as 'Storm Babet'. This was a 36-hour storm with a rainfall return period over 1 in 200 years. Significant flood damage was recorded throughout the county, and particularly in the East Cork Municipal District, where the highest recorded rainfall was 126mm.

Road Operations carried out an initial assessment of damage to the regional and local road network following the event, which was estimated to be in the order of €50 - €55 million. In addition, a further estimated €16 million worth of damage was recorded on the national roads network. A business case for funding including detailed work programmes, was submitted to the Department of Transport and Transport Infrastructure Ireland.

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL UNIT

Cork County Council received funding of approximately €24.4 million from the National Transport Authority (NTA) for sustainable travel projects in 2023.

METROPOLITAN CORK

EASTERN SUSTAINABILITY CORRIDOR - INTER-URBAN PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE ROUTE (IU1) – DUNKETTLE TO MIDLETON

Cork County Council, with funding from National Transport Authority (NTA), is progressing the East Cork Sustainability Corridor (IU-1). The East Cork Sustainability Corridor forms part of the wider National Pathfinder Programme that will ultimately provide a sustainable means of transport between the cities of Cork and Waterford. The East Cork Sustainability Corridor will provide high quality pedestrian and cycle connectivity within and between the settlements of Midleton, Carrigtwohill and Little Island as well as providing connectivity to the Strategic Employment Centres at Little Island and Carrigtwohill, and to Cork City. It is also fully integrated with the public transport system thereby providing a tangible sustainable transport alternative to the private car.

The Sustainable Travel Unit (STU) have completed several phases of the corridor providing a shared pedestrian and cycleway between Dunkettle and Glounthaune. Construction is on-going between the Elm Tree and Carrigtwohill. The remainder of the route connecting Carrigtwohill to Midleton has planning consent.

Little Island is a key employment area and the Little Island Sustainable Transport Infrastructure (LISTI) project, which forms part of the Eastern Active Travel Corridor, has Part 8 planning approval. Detailed design of the project is substantially complete. It will enhance sustainable transport infrastructure including bus corridors, segregated and enhanced walking and cycling facilities and facilitate connectivity with the wider corridor.

The Ballinacurra to Midleton Cycleway will provide active travel infrastructure through Midleton connecting the town to both the IU-1 from Dunkettle and to the Midleton Greenway. It will eventually provide multimodal connections with rail and bus services. Phase 1 Ballick Road is complete, and the next phase will go to tender in Q2 2024.



IU-1 Dunkettle – Glounthaune



Ministerial Opening



Before Photo



IU-1 Dunkettle – Glounthaune



IU-1 Dunkettle – Glounthaune



IU-1 Dunkettle – Glounthaune



Ballick Road shared pedestrian and cycleway



Junction of Ballick Road and Broderick Street



Ballick Road Spring Planting

SOUTHERN SUSTAINABILITY CORRIDOR

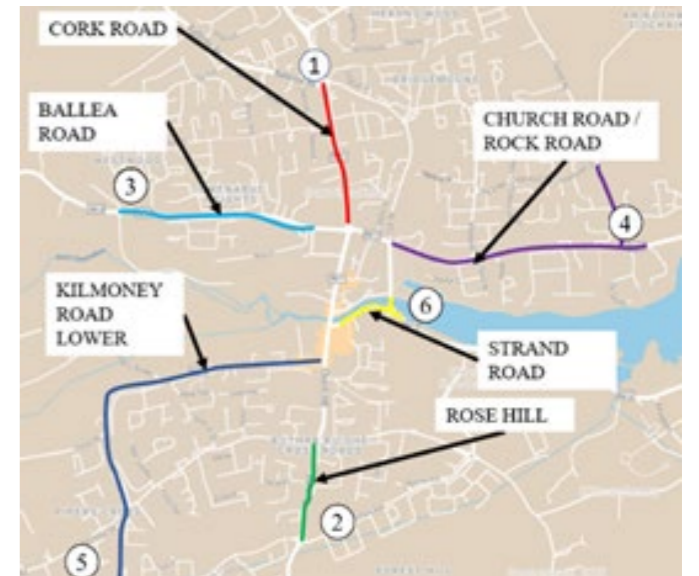
Cork County Council has secured funding from the NTA for the delivery of the Passage West Link which is a project that will provide connectivity between the city boundary to Passage West, Monkstown, Ringaskiddy, Carrigaline, and Crosshaven. It will also form part of the Lee to Sea Cycleway. Planning consent is in place for the Glenbrook to Raffeen section with detailed design on-going. The outline design and planning documentation is being progressed for the remainder of the route.

The Carrigaline Transportation and Public Realm Enhancement Plan (TPREP) was endorsed by the Carrigaline Municipal District elected members in July 2021. The CTPREP aims to create an integrated transportation framework focused on addressing the transportation infrastructure and public realm enhancement required to support the sustainable development of the town of Carrigaline. It includes shared pedestrian and cycle routes and enhanced public realm through Carrigaline and will offer a realistic active travel alternative. In 2023 the STU completed the Bóthair Guidel junction upgrade and cycle route phase which comprised the enhancement of existing cycle infrastructure and construction of 250 metres of segregated cycle lane. The Bridgemount Cycle Link is under construction and later phases will progress from detailed design to construction in 2024.

CARRIGALINE TPREP:



Carrigaline TPREP Extents of Phase 1



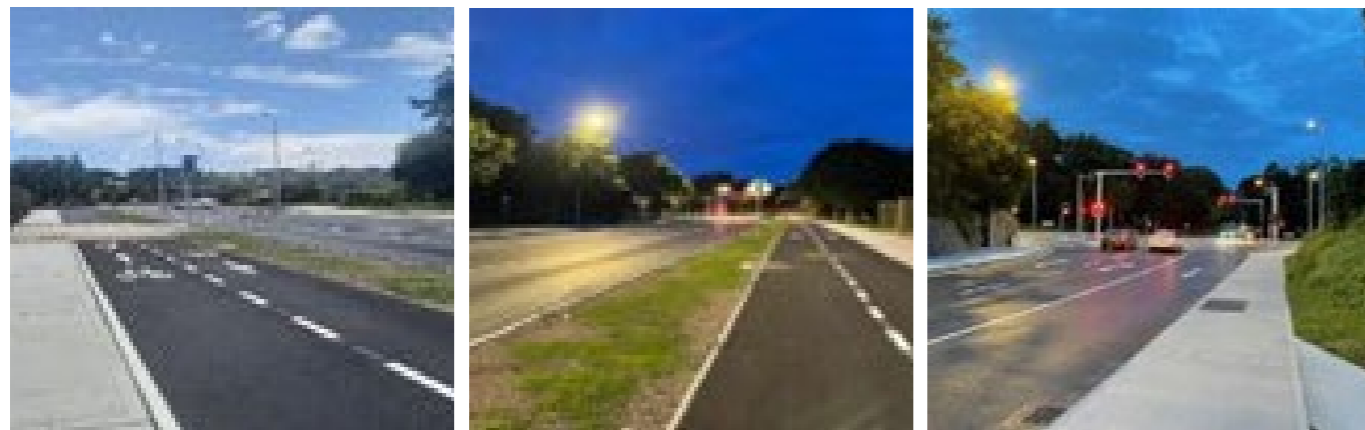
TPREP 1B

BRIDGEMOUNT:



Bridgemount

BÓTHAR GUIDEL:



Bóthar Guidel completed works

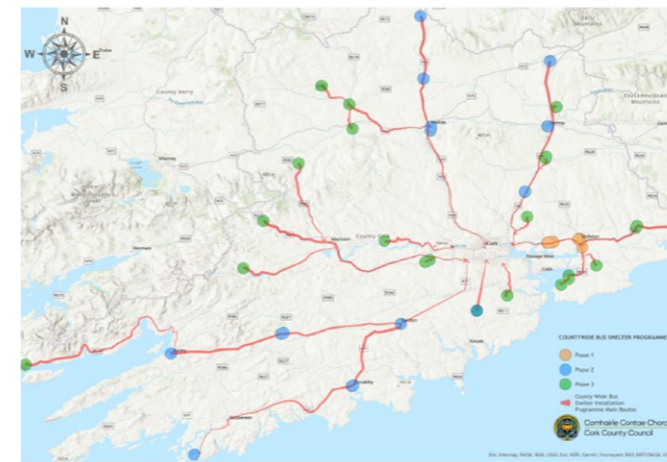
TOWNS AND VILLAGES

Cork County Council secured approval under the NTA's Active Travel Towns and Villages Programme, targeted at increasing active travel in county towns and villages across Cork County Council's eight municipal districts. The interventions being developed under this funding stream include footpath upgrades, public lighting upgrades, pedestrian crossings, junction tightening, cycle parking, traffic calming, and feasibility studies all aimed at enhancing permeability and safety for vulnerable road users. Whilst the funding stream is coordinated by the Sustainable Travel Unit, the majority of these projects are delivered by area engineers.

BUS SHELTER AND ACCESSIBLE BUS STOP PROGRAMME

The NTA is providing funding to upgrade existing bus stops and to provide new bus stops nationwide including improving bus stop facilities for wheelchair users, mobility impaired and visually impaired. During 2023, 9 bus shelters were upgraded under phase 2 of the programme. This included 3 solar powered shelters. In addition, the design and tendering of phase 3 was undertaken. Phase 3 entails the upgrade of 27 bus stops and these works are currently ongoing.

In 2021, phase 1 of the Bus Shelter and Accessible Bus Stop Programme focused on upgrading 16 bus stops in East Cork and Carrigaline. Phase 2 of the Bus Shelter and Accessible Bus Stop Programme was undertaken in 2022 which focused on upgrading 16 bus stops in North and West Cork.



Upgraded Bus Routes County Cork



Solar powered bus shelter installed in Belgooly

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SRTS)

The STU works in partnership with the NTA and An Taisce in the delivery of the SRTS Programme across County Cork. The SRTS Programme is funded by the Department of Transport through the NTA and aims to accelerate the delivery of walking / scooting and cycling infrastructure on key access routes to school and to provide “front of school” treatments which will enhance access to school grounds. The SRTS Programme is designed to provide for an integrated design approach that removes or at least reduces traffic volumes at the front of schools, reduces speeds, discourages set down, and provides an alternative and sustainable means of travel to school for students at primary and secondary levels.

60 primary and secondary schools in County Cork applied for inclusion in the SRTS Programme. 10 of the 60 schools in County Cork that applied for the SRTS Programme were selected as Round 1 schools. 2 “School Zones”, with associated infrastructural improvements and enhanced facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, and those who scoot to school were completed in 2022 at Scoil Phádraig Noafa, Bandon and at Bunscoil Rinn an Chabhlaigh, Cobh. During 2023, construction commenced at five schools in Bandon, Belgooly and Cobh, respectively. These works have subsequently been completed with students, staff and local residents benefitting from the school zones.

A further 7 schools across the County were selected by the NTA as Round 2 schools. Delivery Plans will be compiled for these schools by An Taisce in 2024 following which preliminary design will be undertaken. Once the design has been approved the necessary consent process will follow.



Gaelscoil Dhroichead na Bandon



Bishop Street in Cobh (Colaiste Muire, Scoil Iosaef Naofa, and St. Mary's National), Before and After Photos



Scoil Mhuire na nGrást (Belgooly)



PUBLIC LIGHTING

OPERATIONS

The Public Lighting Unit was involved in the provision of new and improved lighting under schemes funded from sources such as National Transport Authority, town and village renewal, and new road projects. Under these schemes 71 new lights were erected. In addition to this, a further 160 new or improved public lights were erected throughout the county, at a cost of approximately €350,000.



Lighting of Greenway in Glounthane

PUBLIC LIGHTING ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROJECT (PLEEP) - SOUTH WEST REGION

Cork County design work commenced in September 2023 and was approximately 19% complete by the end of December 2023. Retrofitting of LED luminaires commenced in the Bandon-Kinsale Municipal District in April 2023. Overall progress in Cork was at approximately 16% by the end of December 2023. The planned completion date for all LED retrofitting in Cork County is the end of Q1 2025. The overall PLEEP South-West project is estimated at €57.5 million and the planned completion date is Q4 2025.

Cork County Council is the lead authority (Section 85 Agreement) responsible for the administration, management and delivery of the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP) for the South-West Region. The participating authorities include: Clare County Council, Cork County Council, Kerry County Council, Limerick City and County Council, and Waterford City and County Council, including Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) public lights. The scope of work involves the retrofitting of approximately 77,000 luminaires across 24 municipal districts in 5 local authorities in the South-West region.

The contractor appointed to undertake the design build works was Le Chéile Consortium (comprising of Enerveo Ireland Ltd, Electric Skyline Ltd, Al Read Ltd.) who commenced the condition rating / surveying of public lighting assets in Cork County in April 2022 and completed in February 2023.



PLEEP SW: The Meadows, Mogeely, Co Cork



PLEEP SW: Dungourney, Co Cork

ROAD SAFETY

The Cork Road Safety Together working group met periodically throughout 2023 and discussed measures to improve road safety. The Cork County road safety officer implemented road safety programmes in schools and other community settings and supplementary funding was provided to Cork Sports Partnership to train 1,000 pupils in safe cycling.

There was a total of 13 fatalities on Cork County's road network in 2023, as compared to a total of 18 in 2022. Each of these locations was checked for any possible road contributory factors.

SPEED LIMITS

A number of speed limit appeals were received in 2023. Two appeals were upheld and those speed limits will be formally changed within the speed limit byelaws in 2024, in conjunction with changes required as a result of the opening of the N22 Macroom bypass.

FLEET MANAGEMENT UNIT

The Fleet Management Unit (FMU) is tasked with the provision, management, and maintenance of the local authority fleet (fleet size circa 700 vehicles) for the service delivery of local authority operations, by its direct labour force, within its various programme groups, such as Roads, Environment, Housing, Library Services and Water Services, under a Support Services Agreement (SSA) with Uisce Éireann (UÉ). The FMU is tasked with operating the fleet service in an efficient and sustainable manner, ensuring that this fleet is maintained in accordance with Commercial Vehicle Registration Testing (CVRT) legislation and to Road Safety Authority (RSA) standards, whilst also ensuring FMU staff operate in accordance with Safety Management Systems (SMS), so as to comply with Health and Safety Authority (HSA) standards.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY

The council is continually reviewing ongoing developments around energy to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and achieve the Climate Action 2030 targets.

Cork County Council, including its fleet operations, has demonstrated its commitment to energy efficiency by becoming the first local authority in Ireland, in May 2016, to become fully certified to the ISO 50001 standard, the international standard for energy management. In March 2022, an ISO 50001 audit was conducted on the council, including the FMU, for its Energy Management System (EnMS), and the council successfully retained its ISO 50001 accreditation. Successful surveillance audits were conducted during April 2023 to ensure its continued compliance.

Cork County Council continues with its use of newer technologies and fleet telematics to achieve greater energy efficiencies as the council works on reducing its carbon footprint. Cork County Council also provides driver awareness and fuel-efficiency training to its drivers.

The council continues to substantially invest in its fleet, with newer technologies to achieve efficiencies – Euro 6 energy efficient engines, and also with lightweight bodies, where possible, for fuel efficiency purposes, with the aim to upgrade the fleet in order to meet its 2030 climate change targets.

Fuel consumption reduction and emissions reduction will be necessary to reduce the existing carbon footprint. Alternative fuels are also being considered with new storage tanks and pumps fitted in two of the machinery yards, and one area yard to facilitate storage of alternative fuels and trials.

In October 2023 Cork County Council commenced a trial using hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) in 38 heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) across 3 locations; Mallow, Skibbereen and Fermoy. The trial completed recently, and Cork County Council saved over 59 tonnes of CO2 within the period. The trial has proved very successful and HVO will play a significant role in reducing the council's greenhouse gas emissions.

All fuel supplies have been integrated into the vehicle telematics system which will further assist with fuel reduction measures and the structured rollout of electric vehicles (EVs) in the fleet. Cork County Council added further EVs to its fleet in 2023 with two GTX ID.4 Volkswagen SUVs for the M28 project.



Cork County Council Electric Vehicles added to the fleet in 2023

The council now has a number of EV charging points in the machinery yards in Mallow and Skibbereen, County Hall, Glanmire and Carrigaline area yards, and the M28 project offices. The council is continuing to pilot EVs with a view to further rollout of EV fleet, as circumstances and charging infrastructure allow.

OPERATIONS

The FMU was involved in the provision of new and improved fleet, under its 2022/2023 fleet purchasing program. New vehicles delivered included:

32 Tonne Tipper Truck - Used for works including road re-surfacing and transporting salt. Its increased load carrying ability is resulting in reduced journeys.



New 32 Tonne Tipper Truck

Loader - Used for loading surface dressing chips during the surface dressing season and salt during the winter.



New Loader

10 Tonne Tipper Truck - Used for works carried out by Cork County Council including drainage works and general area duties.



New 32 Tonne Tipper Truck

Velocity Patcher - Used for repair of range of road defects including potholes, edge deterioration, centreline joints, cracks and crazing, deformation and, also for pre-surface dress patching repairs.



Velocity Patcher

13,500 Litre Tar Sprayer - For controlled spraying of bitumen as part of surface dressing operations.



13,500 Litre Tar Sprayer

The FMU also facilitated the replacement of the Mayor's car in 2023.

ROADS FLEET OPERATIONS

Surface dressing is the most economical road surfacing technique that restores and seals the road surface in one process, making the road waterproof and protects against frost and water damage. It also improves the skid resistance, making the roads safer. Cork County Council carries out a programme of surface dressing each year between April and September by direct labour using the council fleet including tar sprayers, chip spreaders, rollers, trucks, and sweepers.

In 2023, the FMU facilitated the purchase, delivery and spraying of more than 13,200 tonnes of bitumen across the county.

ROADS MATERIALS TESTING LAB

The Materials Testing Lab based in Newberry machinery yard in Mallow undertakes ongoing testing programme of road making materials supplied to Cork County Council. The Materials Testing Lab also monitors the performance of FMU tar sprayers and gritters throughout the year by completion of quality control checks during surface dressing operations.

To achieve greater efficiencies, a second sub-lab was set up in the Skibbereen machinery yard in 2022, to facilitate material testing locally in West Cork, during the main surface dressing season.

Three student engineers will assist with material testing during the summer of 2024.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND WINTER MAINTENANCE



Cork County Council acquired 6 Salters in 2023, 4 of which were funded by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII).

Cork County Council is tasked to respond to winter weather conditions by mobilisation of a fleet of trucks to pre-salt in response to forecasted low temperatures to reduce the likelihood of frost and ice forming on key routes.

Cork County Council also operates an emergency call-out service, 24/7, during severe weather events, alerts, and incidents, with dedicated call-out vehicles deployed in areas for this purpose.

Significant and ongoing fleet investment is essential so that the council has sufficient fleet requirements for agility in responding to ever more frequent severe weather events: flooding, storms, snow, and ice.

COMMERCIAL ROAD WORTHINESS (CVR) COMPLIANCE

All commercial vehicles one year and older must, by law, be CVR tested on an annual basis. In addition to the annual CVR testing, commercial fleet owners are also required by law to ensure the fleet is periodically inspected and that any defects notified are remedied. The periodic vehicle inspection is carried out by an appropriately licensed vehicle inspector, and any defects notified are documented for repair. Cork County Council ensures compliance for its fleet of vehicles and over 1,600 vehicle inspections were carried out in the last 12-month period.

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMPLIANCE

The council's ISO:45001 reaccreditation audit was successfully carried out in November 2023, and specifically mentioned the Fleet Management Unit as follows: "Fleet and Equipment is well managed and has excellent traceability and tracking, it is to a standard seen in international logistics organisations."

STATISTICS FOR 2023

 **221**
TEMPORARY ROAD
CLOSURE

 **4763**
ROAD OPENING
LICENCES

 **394**
ABNORMAL LOAD
PERMITS

 **1,821**
ROADS & SERVICES
CERTIFICATES ISSUED

10,623 Number of Roads related
queries logged on
'Your Council' online portal

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

The Roads and Transportation SPC held four meetings in 2023, and considered the following:

- Road Grant Allocations 2023
- School Transport
- Cork Road Safety Plan
- Active Travel Investment in Cork County
- Footpath Design – Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS)
- Maintenance of chamber covers on public footpaths and roads by utility companies
- E-Scooters Regulation
- Local Link Cork attended one meeting



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

Water Services and County Engineer's Department



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

WATER SERVICES AND COUNTY ENGINEER'S DEPARTMENT

In accordance with the Framework for the Future Delivery of Water Services, which was published in June 2022, Cork County Council signed a Master Co-Operation Agreement (MCA) with Uisce Éireann in May 2023. The MCA replaced the service level agreement which was in place since January 2014 to facilitate the provision of water services by Cork County Council to Uisce Éireann. The MCA provides for the transition of services, responsibility, and accountability for water services functions to Uisce Éireann in 2023. This transition is happening in stages across all local authorities and marks a key change in the role of local authorities in the provision of water services on behalf of Uisce Éireann.

In accordance with the MCA, Uisce Éireann confirmed the effective date of 6 September 2023 with Cork County Council. This means that that Uisce Éireann became solely responsible for the delivery of networked water services in Cork County, as well as the management and direction of all eligible water services staff in Cork County Council, from 6 September 2023.

While under the remit of the County Engineer's Section to the effective date, the Water Services Capital Projects Office provided full life cycle project management services to facilitate the execution of the Uisce Éireann Capital Investment Plan 2020-2024, a programme which includes 36 major infrastructure projects for Cork County. These projects, along with network improvement projects and capital programmes, were managed by the Water Services Capital Projects Office.

Major schemes completed and commissioned in 2023 were:

- Mallow Wastewater Treatment Plant and Sewerage Scheme
- Bandon Watermain and Sewer Network Upgrade
- Castletownsend WWTP and Network Upgrade
- Work also commenced on the Ballycotton Sewerage Scheme and Whitegate Sewerage Scheme and Treated Water Storage Programme in Killeagh and Kerry Pike, with works expected to be completed in late 2024
- Approximately 105 kilometres of new mains were laid in Cork County through a number of Uisce Éireann programmes, including approximately 68 kilometres of watermains replacement under the Leakage Reduction Programme
- €17 million Bandon to Clonakilty Water Augmentation Scheme, funded under the Growth and Development Programme, was commissioned
- Work also commenced under the Rationalisation Programme to provide a new drinking water supply to both Killavullen and Rahan from Mallow, involving the laying of 11.5 kilometres of new mains, as well as works to rationalise Roberts Cove, Knockburden, Aghabullogue, Kilcraheen and Derry

RURAL WATER

The Rural Water Section provides significant assistance to Group Water Schemes which serves thousands of households across the county. This assistance includes managing the Rural Water Programme and providing engineering and administrative support. They also administer the Domestic Well Grant scheme which resulted in over 780 grants being issued with a total value of over €2.7 million to households in County Cork in 2023.

COASTAL AND FLOOD RELIEF PROJECTS

FLOOD PROJECTS

Cork County Council's Coastal and Flood Projects Section continued their ongoing work in 2023, in conjunction with Office of Public Works (OPW), on several major flood relief schemes and interim works packages within the county to mitigate flood risk to those communities affected. Cork County Council is managing the operation and maintenance of a number of completed flood relief schemes as agents of OPW. The following summarises the primary projects ongoing in 2023:

- **Midleton Flood Relief Scheme (Estimated €50 million)**
Stage 1 (Development and Design) was completed in late 2023, with Stage 2 (Planning Design/ Environmental Impact Assessment) commencing in 2024. Following Storm Babet in October 2023, significant works are ongoing in relation to interim and advance flood mitigation measures.
- **Skibbereen Flood Relief Scheme (Estimated €24.7 million)**
Main contract works completed. Cork County Council now managing operation and maintenance stage acting as agents of the OPW. Agreement on service level agreement pending. Follow-on contracts also progressing.
- **Bantry Flood Relief Scheme (Estimated €8 million)**
Stage 1 (Scheme Development and Design) continued in 2023. It is anticipated that a preferred scheme will be identified in late 2024.
- **Crookstown Flood Relief Scheme (Estimated €1.6 million)**
This scheme will commence in 2024 with the appointment of a consultant. The project will be financed through a combination of OPW, SSIP and Roads Directorate funding.
- **Ballymakeera Flood Relief Scheme (Estimated €5.5 million)**
Cork County Council is assuming Client and PM role for Main Scheme. Scheme design consultant tender scheduled for 2024. An interim works construction contract is also scheduled to progress in 2024.
- **Ballinhassig Flood Relief Scheme (Estimated €1.4 million)**
Cork County Council is assuming Client and PM role for Main Scheme. Preferred tenderer for Consultancy Services identified in Q4 2023 following a tender process. Consultants scheduled to be appointed in Q1 2024.
- **Douglas Flood Relief Scheme (Estimated €13.5 million)**
Main Works Contract completed in 2022. Client role transferred to Cork City Council with Cork County Council acting as project coordinator.
- **Glashaboy Flood Relief Scheme (Estimated €21 million)**
Construction works commenced in Q3 2023 and are expected to be completed in Q1 2026. Client role transferred to Cork City Council with Cork County Council acting as project coordinator.
- **Bandon Flood Relief Scheme (Estimated €22.9 million)**
Contract Works complete. Cork County Council now managing operation and maintenance stage acting as agent of the OPW. Agreement on service level agreement pending.
- **Clonakilty Flood Relief Scheme (Estimated €21 million)**
Contract Works complete except for completion of Ring Road remedial works. Cork County Council now managing operation and maintenance stage acting as agent of the OPW. Agreement on service level agreement pending.
- **Lower Lee Flood Scheme**
OPW, with Cork City Council and Cork County Council in liaison role.
- **Mallow Flood Relief Scheme**
Cork County Council now managing operation and maintenance stage acting as agent of the OPW. Agreement on service level agreement pending.

- **Fermoy (North) Flood Relief Scheme**

Cork County Council now managing operation and maintenance stage acting as agent of the OPW. Agreement on service level agreement pending.

- **Smaller flood relief schemes are developed under the OPW's Minor Works Programme.**

OPW funded projects in Ballintubber and Ballymakeera are well advanced, and it is anticipated that these will progress on site in 2024. The Coastal and Flood Projects Section is also managing delivery of the Fermoy Weir project. Subject to receipt of planning permission from An Bord Pleanála, detailed design for this project will commence in 2024.

COASTAL PROJECTS

The Coastal and Flood Projects Section manages capital coastal infrastructure projects. The Council receives the bulk of its coastal infrastructure funding from Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), under the Fishery Harbour and Coastal Infrastructure Development Programme, which covers harbour development, marine leisure and storm damage. Cork County Council secured funding from the Department under the Brexit Adjustment Local Authority Marine Infrastructure (BALAMI) Scheme 2022-2023 for 21 projects with a total construction cost of €6,577,591 including VAT. This scheme is aimed at rejuvenation of Ireland's coastal and marine infrastructure specifically to address the economic consequences of Brexit arising from the implications to the Irish fishing industry. The completed projects are listed as follows, except for Ballycotton Harbour dredging which has been deferred to 2024:

- Courtmacsherry dredging (Completed 2022)
- Fisherman's pontoon replacement, Kinsale
- Ballycotton sea wall repair
- Baltimore safety improvement works
- Laheratanvally pier remedial works
- Pallas pier improvement works (Completed 2022)
- Turk Head pier improvement works
- Green Quay Youghal Improvement work
- Kinsale slips improvement works
- Glengarriff dredging
- Cunnamore Pier improvement works
- Glandore pier safety improvement works
- Heir Island pier remedial works
- Courtmacsherry pontoon replacement
- Courtmacsherry pier safety improvement works
- Youghal Lighthouse upgrade works
- Sherkin Lighthouse refurbishment
- Baltimore pier D-fendering
- Schull Pier improvement works
- Baltimore Weighbridge
- Ballycotton Harbour dredging (deferred to 2024)

Consultation is also carried out with the public, and elected members at Coastal Committee meetings in relation to projects.

Assessments of sites for OPW Coastal Protection/Minor Works Scheme were progressed and 2 locations granted funding in 2022 were Glandore and Roches Point. The remedial works for the wall at Roches Point were successfully completed in 2023. The design for the project at Glandore was completed and planning permission submitted in 2023. Cork County Council also sought funding from the OPW to complete a coastal erosion study on 9.5 kilometres of the coastline from Youghal to Ring which includes Pilmore beach. The OPW approved €150,000 to complete the study. The contract was advertised, and a consulting engineer was appointed in 2023.

The Coastal and Flood Projects team is collaborating with University College Cork (UCC) to complete a countywide vulnerability study which will provide information on the rate of erosion of the coastline. The project commenced in November 2022 and is estimated to require three and a half years to complete. The project includes UCC researchers undertaking a detailed review of the 1,199 kilometres of Cork coastline. The study will identify the erosion rates and highlight the most vulnerable areas which will be useful in planning future infrastructure and coastal management along the Cork coastline.

Cork County's Oil/HNS Contingency Plan is also managed by Coastal and Flood Projects section and ensures preparedness in the event of an oil spill by completing drills. This includes mandatory training and maintenance of an equipment stockpile and deployment of personnel and contractors to assess and deal with oil spill incidents. In 2023, Coastal and Flood Projects managed nine oil spill incidents which were reported to the Irish Coast Guard.

The Coastal and Flood Projects section is also responsible for the technical maintenance and upkeep of Dursey Cable Car. The council and its specialist consulting engineers in cooperation with the Commission for Railway Regulation (CRR) completes regular reviews of the cableway. The system was shut on 31 March 2022 and, following replacement of towers, island anchor, and track ropes, reopened on 6 June 2023.



Laheratanvally Pier Remedial Works



Refurbishment of Sherkin Lighthouse



Glandore Pier Safety Improvement Work



Fisherman's Pontoon Replacement, Kinsale



Turk Head Pier Improvement Works



Courtmacsherry Dredging and Pontoon Replacement



Baltimore Weighbridge

CAPITAL PROJECTS IMPLEMENTATION UNIT

The Capital Projects Implementation Unit is responsible for the co-ordination of the development and implementation of Cork County Council's Social Sustainability Investment Programme (SSIP) throughout the county of Cork. The team works closely with other capital delivery arms within the Council and liaises with the divisions and municipal districts in terms of identification and prioritisation of schemes.

The council's SSIP is funded by a combination of central government funding under Project 2040, Urban Regional Regeneration Funds (URDF), Rural Regeneration Development Funds (RRDF), Cork County Council capital reserves and loan funding from European Banks. Cork County Council has put in place a combined loan finance agreement of up to €65 million with the European Investment Bank and the Council of Europe Development Bank to support their Social Sustainability Investment Programme.

There were 37 capital infrastructure projects under the SSIP being advanced through various stages of feasibility, planning, design, tender, construction during 2023.

Major capital projects currently being managed by the Capital Programme Implementation Unit during 2023 include:

MIDLETON YOUGHAL GREENWAY (DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION)

Development of 23 kilometres of greenway between Midleton and Youghal along a disused railway line. The construction of the greenway has been supported by TII and is a significant investment in sustainable transport within the County.

When complete, the greenway will form part of the Pathfinder Programme and the East Cork Sustainability Corridor, implementing the National Sustainable Mobility Policy, by providing cycle connectivity between Cork and Waterford, and will also be incorporated into the EuroVelo 1 route.

Works completed in 2023 included habitat enhancement through the planting of native trees and wildflowers, provision of bird and bat boxes, and the elimination of invasive plant species. Contracts ongoing at the end of 2023 included the trailheads at Midleton, Roxborough and Mogeely to allow opening of the first 8 kilometres of the greenway in February 2024.



Midleton – Youghal Greenway

BANDON TRAFFIC PUBLIC REALM ENHANCEMENT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION (CONSTRUCTION)

When complete the Bandon TPREP Implementation Project will significantly enhance Bandon Town centre streetscape, with the provision high quality street pavement, enhanced pedestrian permeability, urban greening, and the provision of historic wayfinding signage. The objective is to increase footfall in the town centre and enhance the economic and social vibrancy of the town streets.

During 2023 works at Ballymodan Place and North Main Street were completed, works commenced on Bridge Street/Bridge Lane and Glasslyn Road, while tenders were advertised for Market Street and South Main Street.



Ballymodan Place, Bandon, Co. Cork



St. Peter's, Bandon, Co. Cork



North Main Street, Bandon, Co. Cork



Glasslyn Road, Bandon, Co. Cork

COBH NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS (NBS) PILOT PROJECT

In May 2023, Cork County Council and the Department of Housing, Local Government, and Heritage signed a memorandum of funding agreement to fund and deliver the Cobh Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) Pilot Project. The project is a pioneering collaboration to deliver sustainable urban drainage to Cobh town centre, which will improve surface water management, enhance water quality, foster biodiversity, and create a high-quality built environment. The project is being delivered in three stages over several years and is an integral part of the wider Cobh Public Realm Urban Design Plan.



Launching the East Beach Demonstrator in September 2023 with Minister Malcolm Noonan TD, local representatives, community groups, and representatives of Cork County Council.

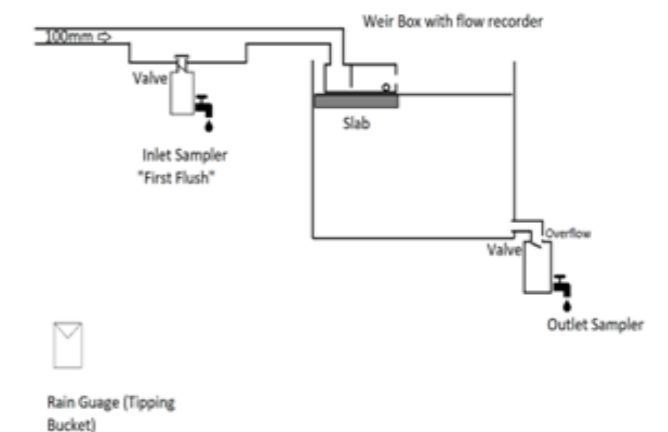
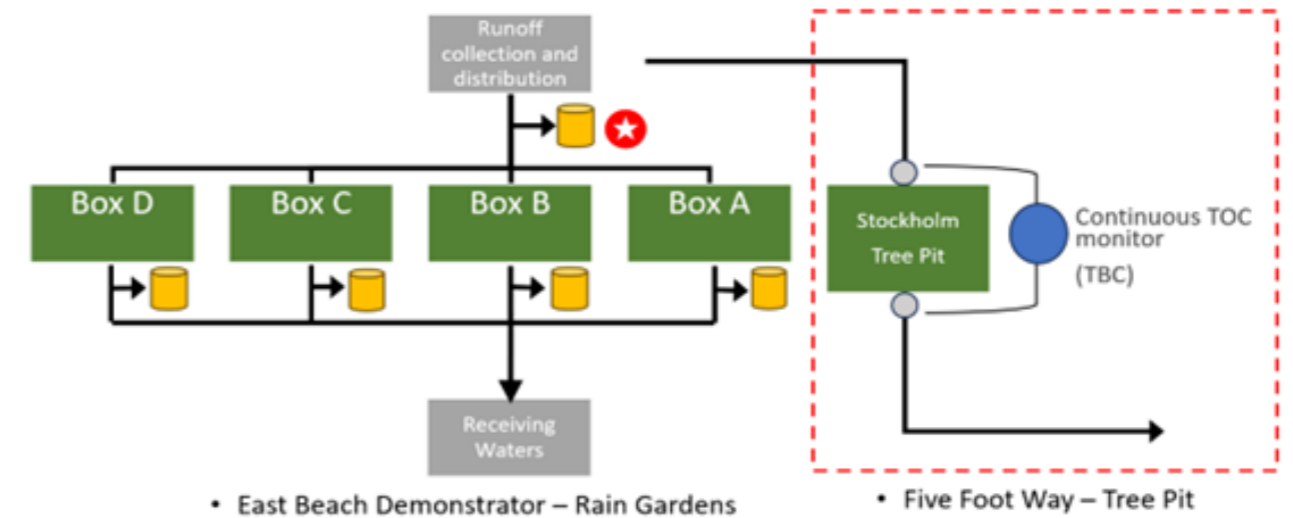
EAST BEACH DEMONSTRATOR

The East Beach Demonstrator is the first stage of the project and was launched in September 2023. Four temporary raingardens were constructed to hold four varieties of specialised bioretention soil. Environmental technicians from Cork County Council are currently conducting a 12-month monitoring period of rainwater run-off at the site. The raingardens are designed to filter polluted rainwater from the adjacent road through the bioretention soils. The levels of contaminants entering and leaving the raingardens are recorded to assess the suitability of each soil type and its impact on plants and fauna. The filtered water is subsequently released into the waters of Cork Harbour. The results of the monitoring will inform the construction of future permanent NBS infrastructure in the town.

Community engagement is central to the success of the project. Ahead of the project launch, local schoolchildren were invited to attend a series of workshops on how nature-based solutions and urban greening will soon transform their town. The schoolchildren were also on hand in September 2023 to launch the East Beach Demonstrator where they presented the scheme to Minister Malcolm Noonan TD, local representatives, and community groups. A series of educational/promotional videos were commissioned to document the cross-community engagement on the project and demonstrate the sustainable vision for the town.



Following a series of workshops on biodiversity and NBS in Cobh, local schoolchildren presented the new raingardens at the launch of the East Beach Demonstrator in September 2023



Cork County Council environmental technicians are undertaking a 12-month monitoring regime of the raingardens. Samples of rainwater run-off from the adjacent street are tested for contaminants to assess the most suitable system for future raingardens in Cobh.

SHANTYMAN POCKET PARK

The second stage of the Pilot Project is the Shantyman Pocket Park at the Five-Foot Way in Cobh. Part 8 planning permission was granted in August 2023 for a new community pocket park which includes a new corten steel sculpture of a shantyman, which has generously been donated to the town. The scheme includes a significant raingarden comprising specialised bioretention soils and pollinator-friendly trees and planting. Rainwater run-off from the plaza and surrounding car park will be filtered through the raingarden to improve the quality of run-off entering the water of Cork harbour in the area. Construction is expected to commence on site in summer 2024.



Image of proposed Shantyman Pocket Park submitted as part of the Part 8 Planning application.

WESTBOURNE PLACE/PROMENADE

The final stage of the NBS project is the construction of permanent raingardens at Westbourne Place in Cobh town centre. These raingardens will be integrated with high-quality public-realm enhancement, which will also address additional active mobility, placemaking, and traffic-calming objectives. This will serve as a national pilot for NBS application in sensitive heritage town centres across the country. The stage is being delivered within the first phase of the Cobh Public Realm Urban Design Plan.

COBH PUBLIC REALM URBAN DESIGN PLAN

The Cobh Public Realm Urban Design Plan is a transformational regeneration of strategic urban zones in Cobh town centre. The plan encompasses the minimum strategic area required to realise the ambitions set forth for the town in Project Ireland 2040, promoting compact, sustainable urban growth and reactivating the town's unique historic centre. The key pillars of the project are ensuring quality, safety, sustainability, and inclusivity in the historic town centre through high-quality urban design. The project has been designed in-house by CPIU architects of Cork County Council, who have been supported by a multidisciplinary team of specialist consultants. Cork County Council has successfully completed the Part 8 planning process for the project, which was adopted by elected members on 26 October 2021.

In November 2023 Cork County Council was awarded the Public Space Planning Award at the KPMG Property Industry Excellence Awards in recognition of the Cobh Public Realm Urban Design Plan's pioneering approach and holistic approach to urban design.

Appointment of lead design consultants for the project is ongoing ahead of commencement of detail design.

SHANTYMAN POCKET PARK

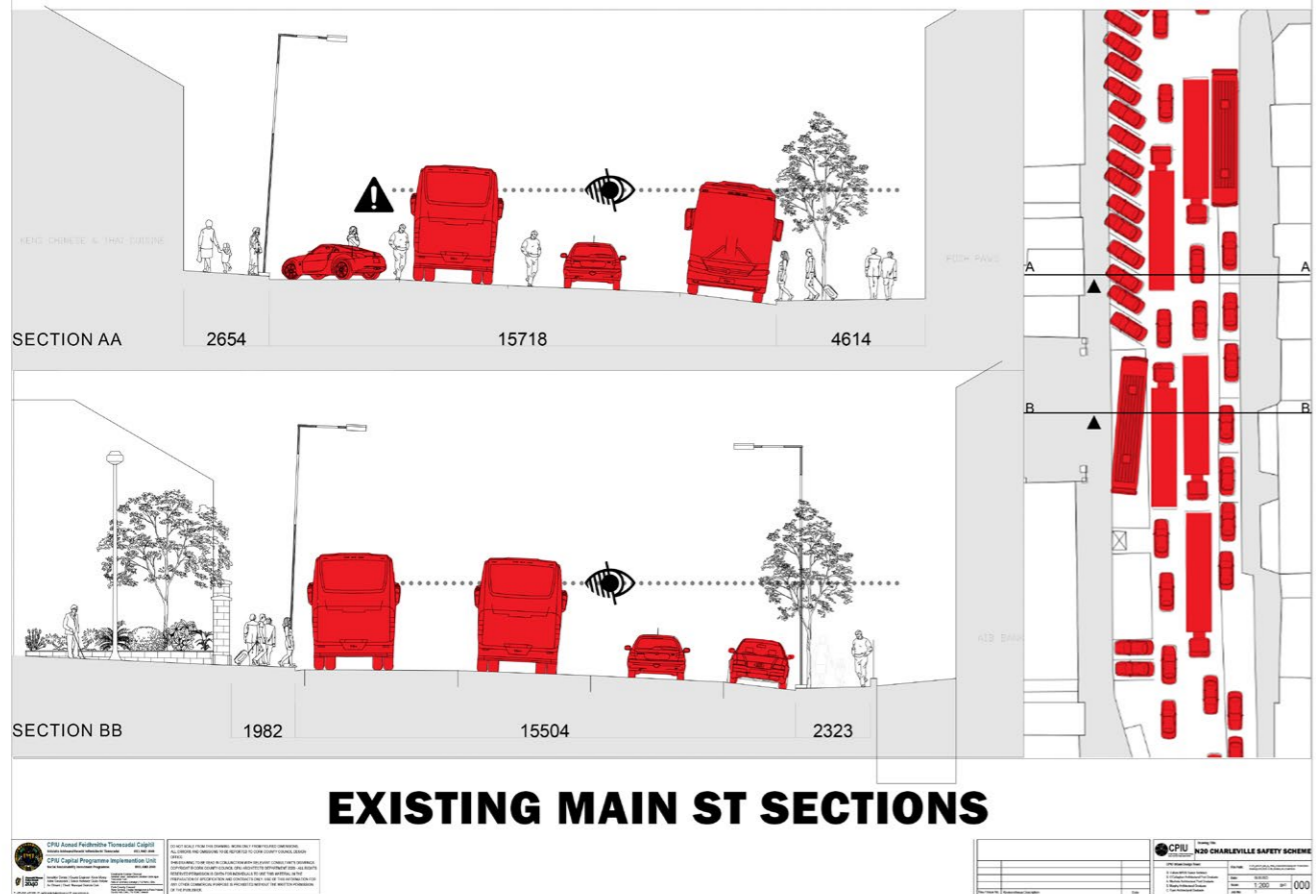
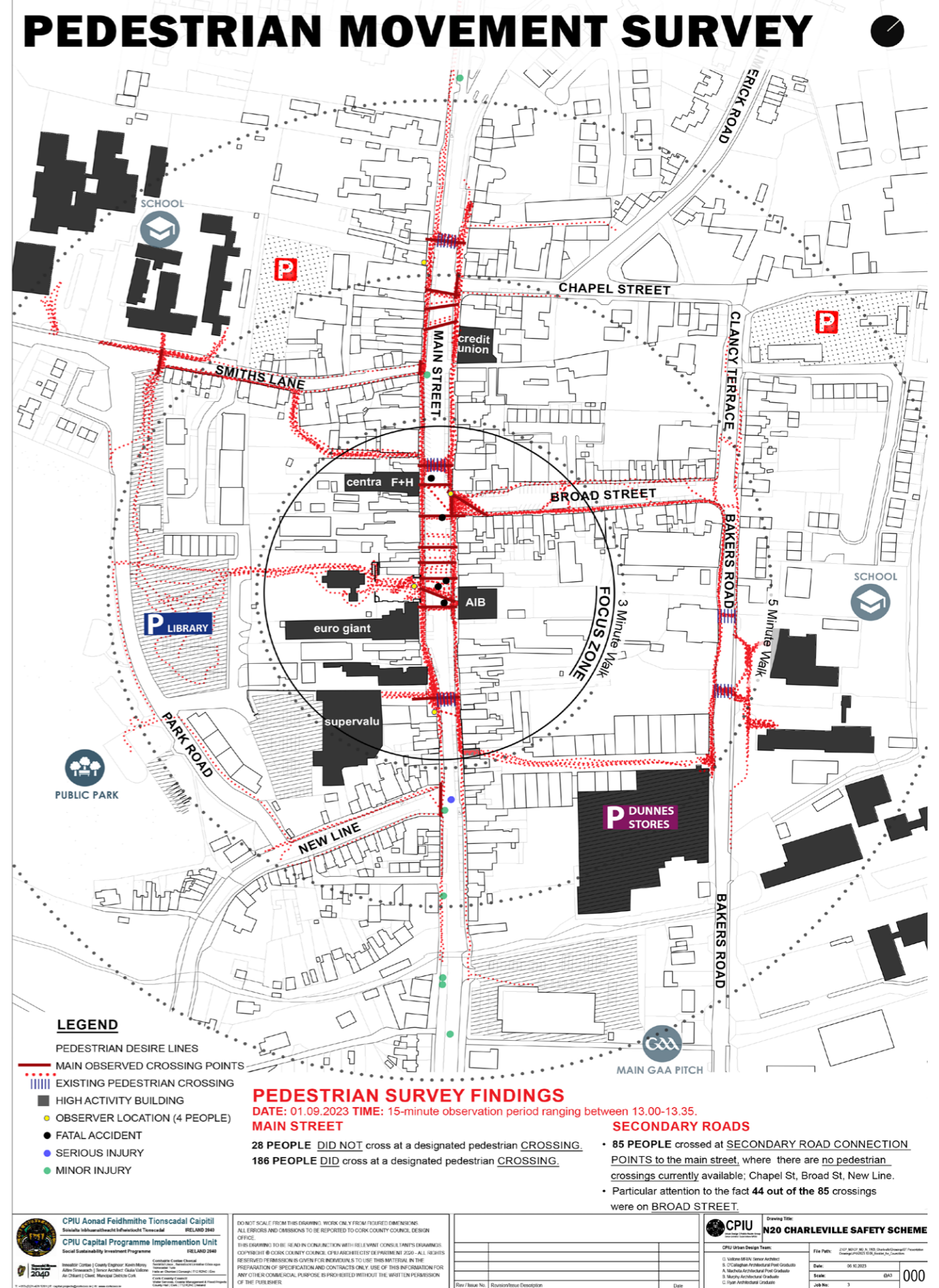
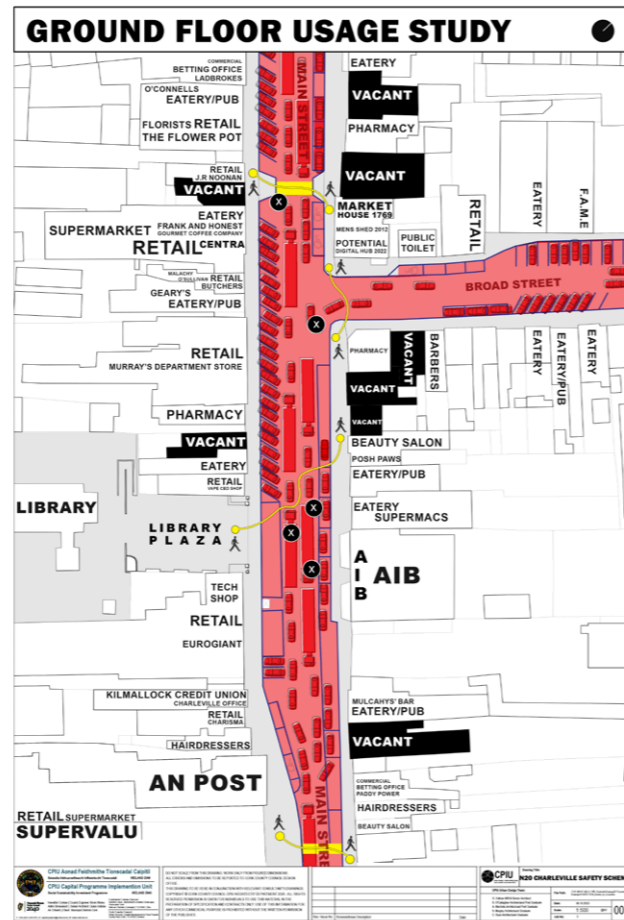
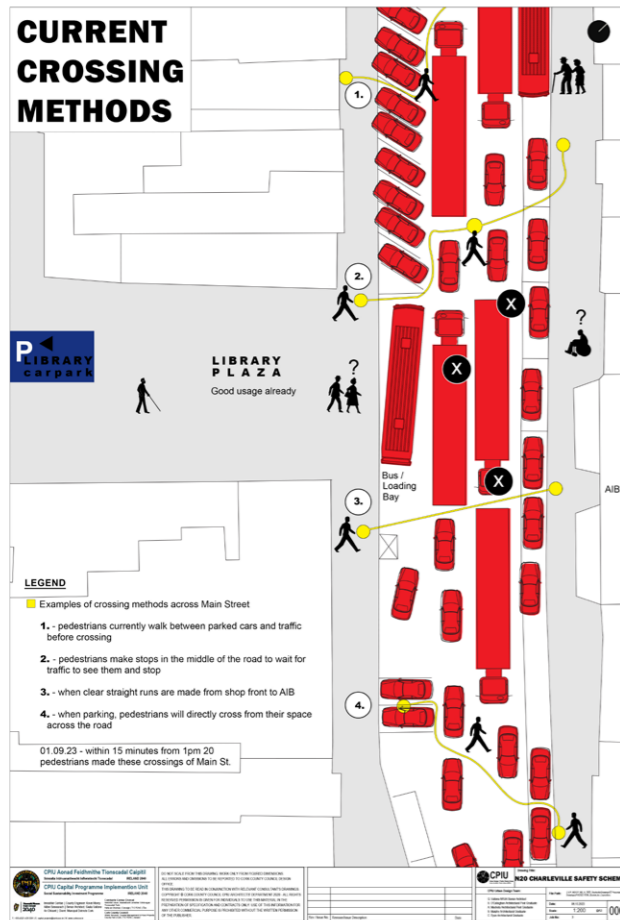
As mentioned above, the Shantyman Pocket Park is a significant new public space being delivered along the Five-Foot Way in Cobh. The town has been generously donated a significant sculpture of a shantyman by the artist Ray Lonsdale that reflects Cobh's maritime and musical heritage. Part 8 planning permission for the scheme was granted in August 2023 and detail design is currently underway. Construction is expected to commence in summer 2024. The scheme includes a significant raingarden comprising specialised bioretention soils and pollinator-friendly trees and planting. Rainwater run-off from the plaza and surrounding car park will be filtered through the raingarden to improve the quality of run-off entering the water of Cork harbour in the area.



Design development of the Shantyman Pocket Park. A new plaza is bordered by a significant new raingarden.

CHARLEVILLE TOWN CENTRE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY SCHEME

The Charleville Town Centre Pedestrian Safety Scheme was instigated in response to serious safety issues faced by pedestrians on the town's main street. Main Street is the commercial core of Charleville, but it also is the primary thoroughfare for traffic along the N20 which connects Cork and Limerick. The Capital Programmes Implementation Unit (CPIU) at Cork County Council are working with the National Roads Office (NRO) and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) to adjust road and street infrastructure in the town centre with a focus on improving pedestrian safety and enhancing the streetscape.



Examples of pedestrian and vehicle analysis of Charleville town centre undertaken in preparation of a design strategy for the pedestrian safety scheme.

Pedestrian movement in the town centre was crucial to identifying areas of high-frequency footfall and desire lines across the town. This information was read in conjunction with areas where traffic incidents occurred.

In preparation for developing a strategy for street enhancement, CPIU undertook a series of town-wide analysis of pedestrian and vehicle movements to identify hazards and opportunities for improvements.

Analysis of current street layouts, parking locations, and pedestrian crossings highlighted the unique challenges and hazards faced by pedestrians in the town centre on a daily basis. Pedestrian and traffic movement was surveyed to identify areas where impactful change could be achieved with minimal interference to commuters, local stakeholders, and the community.

Early proposals for the safety scheme aim to drastically improve the pedestrian experience of the town through the delivery of a high-quality public realm scheme that prioritises pedestrians and reverses car dominance on Main Street. It presents an opportunity to revitalise the commercial core of the town and encourage people to linger longer in their town centre.

The initial stage of delivery is a new pedestrian crossing at the library plaza; construction is expected to commence in summer 2024. The location was chosen in response to existing pedestrian desire lines to ensure high usage at a core location in the town centre. The reduced road width provides a shorter crossing distance for vulnerable pedestrians and forces vehicles to reduce their speed on approach. New urban greening and raingardens will introduce Sustainable urban Drainage (SuDS) to the town while simultaneously contributing to traffic control measures. Existing parking and bus stops will be relocated within the town centre.

HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

The Housing Infrastructure Implementation Team (HIIT), County Engineer’s Directorate (currently) (within the Planning Directorate until October 2023), has delivered:

LOCAL HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE ACTIVATION FUND - LIHAF

WATER ROCK LIHAF

Part 8 approved in March 2019.

BAM Civil Ltd. tender Price of €8,376,467 (Including VAT) accepted in July 2022.

Construction commenced 18 August 2022. Works 95% completed December 2023.

Cork County Council has a pre-connection enquiry from Irish Water confirming capacity for 2,500 units in Water Rock by Q4 2023.

The Section 48 Water Rock Development Contribution Scheme was approved by council on 26 April 2021. The Scheme will enable cost recovery of the proposed €20 million public infrastructure spend required to unlock the development lands at Water Rock.

Planning applications have been granted by CCC to LIHAF landowners/developers for circa 1,400 residential units and non-residential development.

SHANNON PARK

Planning permission in place for 550 units. Circa 380 units completed by end 2023. Roundabout upgrade is complete.

WATER ROCK ROAD UPGRADE:

Detail design substantially completed, and land acquisition agreements concluded.

Advance clearance and fencing works contract completed in December 2023.

URBAN REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT FUND (URDF)

CARRIGTWOHILL URDF:

Consulting engineers appointed in January 2020. Preliminary design and traffic and transport assessment substantially completed.

Two Part 8 planning applications are now approved/completed for URDF infrastructure in Carrigtwohill.

Carrigtwohill URDF Initiative Public Realm Infrastructure Bundle Part 8 was approved at a meeting of full council in June 2022. The infrastructure proposals focus on the town of Carrigtwohill and provides for public realm upgrade, road and junction improvements, pedestrian and cycle connectivity through the settlement, and interim advance capacity measures at Junction 3 N25 (Cobh Cross). Cost estimate is circa €27.5 million (Including VAT and design fees).

Carrigtwohill URDF Initiative Urban Expansion Area Infrastructure Bundle includes for infrastructure in the UEA to facilitate the commencement of development. The Part 8 planning application included for new link roads (circa 3.7 kilometres) and high-quality pedestrian and cycle infrastructure to provide for a high quality, integrated, and sustainable extension of Carrigtwohill and was approved at a meeting of full council in September 2023. Cost estimate is circa €51.5 million (Including VAT and design fees).

The delivery of the relevant sections of the Interurban Cycleway (Part 8 approved Q1 2022) is being advanced by Traffic and Transport under the NTA funding stream.

WATER ROCK LINEAR PARK:

Consulting Engineers appointed in Q3 of 2020. Third party surveys, preliminary design and first phase consultation is concluded.

Topographical surveys, archaeology surveys (including underwater), heritage surveys, and ecological surveys have been undertaken. Preliminary design of new pedestrian/cycle Owenacurra bridge crossings have been completed.

OPW Section 50 approval in place for the 2 new pedestrian/cycleway bridge structures crossing the Owenacurra River, Middleton.

Landscape architect tender process concluded Q2 2022; park design concluded Q4 2022. Public Consultation undertaken Q4 2022.

The plans and particulars of the proposed Water Rock Linear Park were finalised and submitted to An Bord Pleanála (ABP) in July 2023 (for approval of local authority development). Cork County Council is currently waiting ABP’s decision.

Project Name	Project Team	Description	Total potential for housing long-term
Carrigtwohill URDF Initiative Grant Amount (€750,000)	HIIT	Design and planning phase of a combination of existing Public Realm and Urban Expansion Area related infrastructural development proposals	UEA (c. 2,500 housing unit yield)
Middleton URDF (Linear Park)	HIIT	(subproject) Design and planning phase for a Linear Park infrastructure at WaterRock UEA	To complement the housing yield at Water Rock UEA (c. 2,500)

Housing



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

HOUSING

HOUSING RENT COLLECTION

The income from housing rent in 2023 amounted to €26.8 million with a further €1.1 million collected in respect of Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) properties. The overall collection rate was 95%. The rent assessment unit continued with a rolling rent review and revised rents were applied in West Cork in 2023.

ROLE OF HOUSING FINANCE UNIT

The main responsibility of the Housing Finance Unit (HFU) is the maximisation of recoupments from the Department and all other sources of allocated funding. The HFU was responsible for preparation of over 428 recoupments to the Department in 2023, with a combined value of over €103.8 million.

The HFU provides support to all sections within the Housing Directorate in terms of the preparation of reports and figures for senior management, divisional committees, NOAC performance indicators and quarterly statistical returns to the Department.

The HFU also has a role in the preparation of the annual budget estimate, which involves liaising with all budget holders and budget managers and collating relevant information to present to the Director of Housing for approval and sign-off. The HFU is in constant contact with both Revenue and Capital sections in the Finance Directorate regarding the monitoring of income and expenditure on all codes.

HOUSING ALLOCATIONS

There were 794 units allocated to successful applicants in 2023. This figure includes allocations to the Councils own Social Housing stock and to units provided by Approved Housing Bodies.

VACANT HOUSES

A total of 126 vacant properties were refurbished in 2023. These council properties were repaired through the continuation of a funding stream made available by the DHPLG to facilitate the return of vacant properties to productive use. The total value of the works undertaken was €3 million.

Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant – Croí Cónaithe

This is a national scheme that provides grant funding of up to €50,000 (up to €70,000 in certain circumstances) to be made available to the public to refurbish an existing vacant property and bring it back in to use for occupation or letting. Properties must be vacant for 2 years or more. 540 applications were received during 2023 with 349 being approved by 31 December 2023.

DISABLED PERSONS GRANTS

In 2023, works to assist disabled persons were carried out on a total of 159 local authority houses. These included 144 minor works projects and 15 extensions. The total cost of these works was €2.5 million, 90% of which was recouped from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG). The remaining 10% was provided from the council's own resources.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

In 2023, the council progressed affordable housing schemes at Clonmore, Mallow (Phase 1) – 30 houses, The Waters Edge, Carrigaline – 32 Houses, and Cluain Ard, Cobh (Phase 1) – 49 Houses. This involved a mix of 2, 3 and 4 bed units across the schemes involved.

The houses were made available for sale by Cork County Council in partnership with developers of each scheme.

The council is working with developers in a number of towns in the county, including Fermoy, Bandon, Middleton, Youghal, Bantry, Carrigtwohill, to progress other affordable housing schemes in 2024 and beyond.



Completed Affordable houses in The Waters Edge, Carrigaline.

In 2023, the council also advanced affordable housing proposals on council owned lands in Clonakilty, Kinsale and Mallow, all of which are at design/planning consent stage.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY SCHEME

195 properties benefited from energy efficiency upgrades in 2023. These works were undertaken through the new Deep Energy Retrofit Programme, which was part funded by the DHPLG. These measures include the provision of external wall insulation, new windows and doors, attic insulation and heat pumps. The total value of the works undertaken was €5.6 million.

APPROVED HOUSING BODY (AHB) LEASING UNIT

In 2023, 90 units were delivered within the following schemes: 66 units capital advance leasing including acquisition and turnkey, 18 units mortgage to rent and 6 units AHB private lease.

CAPITAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME

28 units were delivered through the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) in 2023.

- 18 units were constructed at the former Mercy Convent, Bantry
- 9 units were constructed at Church View, Charleville
- 1 unit was delivered through Cork Simon Community at Market Square, Kinsale

There are two construction schemes on site:

- Bandon GCC – St. Michael's, Bandon – 6 units
- Tuath Housing – Daniel O'Brien Terrace, Buttevant – 9 units

There is also one turnkey construction scheme on site through Tuath Housing:

- Ard na Mara, Schull - 12 units

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENT (HAP)

Administration of the HAP Scheme continued countywide during 2023 with 498 households transferred to HAP. The total number of active tenancies at 31 December 2023 was 3,461.

Rental Standards

A total of 2,055 property inspections were carried out in the county during 2023. These covered HAP, RAS, other private rented tenancies, and responding to complaints received.

HOMELESSNESS

Cork County Council continues to work closely with both Cork City Council, via its Accommodation Placement Unit, and Kerry County Council, to deal with homelessness on a regional basis through the Strategic Management Group on Homelessness and the Regional Homeless Forum. A Placefinder Officer continues to assist homeless persons in securing HAP accommodation. This is a targeted support for homeless households to source HAP tenancies and the Placefinder Officer is working with both landlords and homeless persons to source suitable accommodation.

HOUSING FIRST

In 2021 the Housing First model was introduced in Cork County. Housing First provides a housing led solution for individuals that suffer from chronic homelessness, have high support needs and have been reliant on emergency accommodation on a long-term basis. Cork County Council is working in conjunction with the HSE, Focus Ireland, and Cork Simon Community on the programme. 7 Housing First tenancies were created in 2023.

LOCAL AUTHORITY HOME LOAN SCHEME

The Local Authority Home Loan Scheme was introduced on 4 January 2022, replacing the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan Scheme. The Local Authority Home Loan is for the purchase of new or second-hand residential properties and for self-builds. It also includes the purchase of homes through state schemes such as the Tenant Purchase Scheme and Affordable Housing Schemes, except for the First Home Scheme. The 'Fresh Start Principle' applies to this scheme.

In 2023, Cork County Council received 143 applications under the Local Authority Home Loans Scheme. During the year, a total of 33 loans (Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan (RIHL) and LAHL) were advanced/part advanced with a total loan value of over €3.949,803.74.

TENANT (INCREMENTAL) PURCHASE SCHEME

Amendments were made to the Housing (Sale of Local Authority Houses) Regulations 2015 to encompass two main changes to the scheme effective from 1 February 2022. These changes included (1) the minimum income requirement being revised downward and (2) an increase in the period that an applicant(s) must be in receipt of social housing supports to be eligible for the scheme.

In 2023, the Council processed 46 full applications, having received a total of 100 expressions of interest; 41 properties were sold in 2023.

HOUSING ADAPTATION GRANTS FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

During 2023, the council received 1,368 applications and paid out a total of €7,053,281 in grants under the Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme for People with a Disability, the Mobility Aids Grant Scheme, and the Housing Aid for Older People Scheme. The number of applications received in 2023 represents an increase of 22% on the number of applications received in 2022 and the grant payments in 2023 represents an increase of approximately 13.5% on grant payments in 2022.

ESTATE MANAGEMENT

The Estate Management Unit continued to work with residents' associations to maintain and improve their estates during 2023. Funding is allocated to active residents' associations to assist with costs incurred.

TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION

The Traveller Accommodation Programme, which runs for the period 2019 to 2024, sets out how the council intends to meet the existing and projected needs of travellers in its functional area over that 5-year period. A mid-term review of this plan was completed in August 2022. In 2023 the council provided standard local authority/Approved Housing Body lettings to 19 traveller families and one household was provided with accommodation through the HAP scheme.

HOUSING ACQUISITIONS

Cork County Council acquired 34 standard units (including 1 CAS acquisition), 2 Buy and Renew units and 38 tenant in situ acquisitions for social housing in 2023.

CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME

Cork County Council continued to progress its construction programme during 2023. In 2023 the Part 8 process was completed in respect of 50 units and the Section 179A development process was completed in respect of 13 units. 41 units were delivered through the council's own build programme in 2023; 118 through the turnkey model and 93 through the Part V process.

A number of SHIP, turnkey, Part V and single stage construction projects are currently onsite and will deliver 373 dwellings. A further 639 dwellings are at various stages of the approvals process.



Housing Construction Programme 2023

SOCIAL HOUSING PPP BUNDLE 6 PROJECT

In 2023, DHLGH announced the Bundle 6 sites - 7 sites in total, with 4 in Cork (Bantry, Mitchelstown, Carrigtwohill, Midleton), 2 in Kildare and 1 in Wicklow. Cork County Council is again the lead authority for Bundle 6 (similar to Bundle 2 completed in 2021).

The Initial proposals involve approximately 480 social housing units across the 7 sites (approximately 220 units across the 4 Cork sites), in tandem with affordable housing on 4 of the sites.



Cluain Ard, Cobh



Cluain Ard, Cobh



Cluain Ard, Cobh



2023 Delivery 7 units at Pound Lane Kilworth



Ard Na Gréine, Courtmacsherry



Love Lane Charleville



Love Lane Charleville

ELECTED MEMBERS REPRESENTATIONS

There were 1,995 representations received, processed, and responded to during 2023. The dedicated online Representations Portal continues to streamline the issuing of responses.

CHOICE BASED LETTING

Cork County Council's Choice Based Letting system continues to be a very successful method of advertising and allocating vacant Cork County Council and Approved Housing Body properties that are ready for letting. 2,975 properties have been accepted through the Choice Based Letting system to date.

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

The Housing SPC met 4 times during 2023. Among the issues considered were:

- Housing for All - Housing Delivery Action Plan 2022-2026
- Affordable housing
- Cost rental programmes
- Local Strategy for People with Disabilities
- Homelessness
- Revisions to the Allocation Scheme
- Approval of Tenants' Handbook
- Approval of new Housing Maintenance system
- Part 8 Planning exemptions
- Capital Programme
- Local Authority Home Loans Scheme (LAHL)
- Budget 2024
- Circular: Housing 16/2022- Revised Arrangements for Social Housing Acquisitions in 2022 (as it specifically relates to HAP properties)
- Policy for Housing applicants that are undergoing a separation
- Traveller Accommodation - Funding
- Housing First- Presentation from Housing Agency
- Tenant in Situ- Update
- Section 85 Agreement- PPP Bundle 6

Environment



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

ENVIRONMENT

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE (SPC)

The Environment Climate Action and Biodiversity SPC under Chairperson Cllr. Anthony Barry met 4 times in 2023. All meetings were blended and policy areas considered by the committee included:

- Development of council's statutory Climate Action Plan
- Tree Policy
- National End of Waste Criteria
- Policy on pesticide use
- Consultation on Draft National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy
- Circular Economy Programmes at Recycling Sites and elsewhere
- Community Climate Action Fund
- Clean Air Public Awareness Strategy

CLIMATE ACTION

Public consultation on the draft Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 closed for submissions on 27 November 2023. 43 submissions were received.

COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION FUND

€1,241,000 of the €21 million national fund was allocated to Cork County.

COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS PROGRAMME

Environmental Awareness Programmes delivered directly or supported by the council in 2023 included:

SCHOOL PROGRAMMES

- Muintir na Tíre Schools Garden Competition
- An Taisce Green Schools Programme
- Picker Pals Schools Litter initiative
- Climate Literacy Programme for Schools
- Fast Fashion Schools Project
- Composting for Schools Programme



Hassan Azam, 1st class pupil Carriganima National School, with Cllr. Gobnait Moynihan

OTHER AWARENESS PROGRAMMES

- Waste Electrical Equipment (WEEE) collection events
- Cork Summer Show Recycling and Reuse Stands
- Green Festivals Initiatives
- Relove Paint Recycling Programme
- Community Recycled Paint Grant Scheme
- National Food Waste Recycling Week
- Social Media Messaging on environmental themes
- Dispose of Unused Medicine Properly (DUMP) Campaign



Free cloth nappy starter pack

- Annual Clean Air Campaign
- Green Hubs Pilot – Community level circular economy initiative
- Cloth Nappy Scheme
- Bicycle Reuse initiatives at selected Civic Amenity Sites (CAS)

ANNUAL LITTER CHALLENGE COMPETITION

Having relaunched following a 3-year COVID-19 hiatus, the annual Anti-Litter Challenge competition concluded with a very successful awards ceremony in September 2023.



Mayor Councillor Frank O'Flynn presents Carrigaline with 1st Prize Award in 2023 Anti-Litter Challenge for Large Towns Category A.

ENVIRONMENTAL WORK PROGRAMMES

AIR

AIR MONITORING PROGRAMMES

As part of our annual scheduled air quality work programme a wide range of operators and activities licensable under the Air Pollution Acts (APA), continued to be regulated, licenced and monitored, including;

- 10 Industries licensed under APA
- 16 Dry Cleaners
- 38 Spray Painters
- 113 Petrol Stations
- 120 Solid Fuel Inspections

A total of 244 air and noise related complaints were also investigated.

WASTE AND RECYCLING

As an essential service, council civic amenity, recycling and bring bank sites remained operational throughout 2023 and the numbers are outlined below:

At our 12 civic amenity and recycling centre sites we collected a total of:

- 11,789 tonnes of recyclables
- 10,535 tonnes of waste

At the council's 138 bring sites across the county we collected a further 6,232 tonnes of recyclables broken down as follows:

Material	Tonnage
Glass Bottles	5,690.00
Beverage Cans	77.50
Food Cans	97.22

Waste enforcement staff, including wardens and other technical staff carried out 1,144 waste enforcement related inspections.

END OF EXEMPTION FOR THE BURNING OF AGRICULTURAL GREEN WASTE

1 December 2023 saw the end of the long-standing derogation under Waste Management Regulations, which allowed farmers to dispose of green agricultural waste by burning. The burning of green agricultural waste after that date became an offence.



The burning of green waste agricultural waste was prohibited from 1 December 2023

WATER QUALITY

The significant work programmes delivered by the council's water quality teams in 2023 included:

- 853 samples taken from 146 public drinking water supplies – over 18,000 parameters analysed
- 254 samples taken from 126 private group water schemes and other small private water supplies- 4,486 parameters analysed
- Over 3,000 samples taken at public and industrial wastewater treatment systems
- 932 Farm Inspections
- 176 bathing water samples taken at 29 beaches
- 136 residential septic tanks inspected

BEACHES

Cork beaches were awarded a record 26 flags by An Taisce at the 2023 National Beach Awards. In all, 11 Blue Flags and 15 Green Coast Flags were awarded. In addition, Kinsale Marina and Royal Cork Yacht Club Marina both retained their Blue Flag status.

The full list of flags awarded for County Cork for 2023 is as follows:

BLUE FLAG

Barleycove, Fountainstown, Garrylucas, Inchydoney East Beach, Inchydoney West Beach, Owenahincha, Tragumna, Youghal Claycastle, Youghal Front Strand, Youghal Redbarn.

GREEN COAST

Ballyrisode, Cadogan's Strand, Dooneen Pier, Fountainstown, Galley Cove, Garnish Beach-Lehanmore, Inch Strand, Inchydoney East, Oysterhaven, Ballynamona Beach (Shanagarry), Red Strand, Ring, Rocky Bay, Shanagarry-Ardrinahinch and Sherkin Island Silver Strand Beach.



Garrylucas Beach

VETERINARY AND FOOD SAFETY

The Veterinary Department of the council again delivered a wide-ranging work programme in 2023 including:

- 28,901 dog licenses issued
- 1,425 dog related fines and enforcement notifications issued
- 76 dog control prosecutions
- Monitoring of 34 registered dog breeding establishments
- Delivery of inspection programs across 66 registered food premises
- Laboratory analysis under contract for Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI)
- Collection of 41 stray horses

FIRE AND BUILDING CONTROL

During 2023 Cork County Council's Fire and Building Control Department maintained the delivery of a broad range of functions from emergency operational response to fire safety and building control to protect the people of Cork County. These services include - Fire Fighting and Emergency Operational Response, Fire Prevention and Building Control, Community Fire Safety, Major Emergency Planning (Management) and Civil Defence.

FIRE SERVICE OPERATIONS

The county is served by 20 retained fire stations – Mallow, Millstreet, Kanturk, Charleville, Fermoy, Mitchelstown, Middleton, Cobh, Youghal, Bandon, Macroom, Kinsale, Carrigaline, Crosshaven, Bantry, Castletownbere, Schull, Skibbereen, Dunmanway and Clonakilty.

Overall, 2023 was a challenging year for emergency operational response across the Republic of Ireland, including in Cork, due to a prolonged period of industrial action during the summer months of 2023. Despite the industrial action all emergency incidents were responded to in Cork and the effective response provided is due to the commitment and dedication of all staff in ensuring essential services were maintained.

The Workplace Relations Commission made recommendations surrounding the terms and conditions of retained fire-fighters and the recommended staffing levels in stations. These recommendations will result in a significant decrease in the number of personnel leaving the service and have also resulted in the number of retained fire-fighter posts in Cork County increasing by 42 personnel. The process of filling these additional posts is currently underway.

As in previous years the number of structural fires resulting in callouts continued to decline in 2023. However, emergency responses to other types of incidents are increasing, from medical emergencies, ambulance assists, car accidents. The impact of climate change has also contributed to the increased response due to adverse weather events including storms, floods and wildland fires.

The total number of incidents responded to in 2023 was 2,184 an increase of approximately 4% on the 2022 figures.

Incident Type	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	% Change in 2023
Fire	800	750	795	715	643	-10%
RTC	339	267	301	420	452	+7.6%
False Alarms	300	280	316	372	375	=
Special Services including Ambulance Assists	439	531	514	596	714	+19.8%
Total Incidents	1878	1828	1926	2103	2184	+3.9%

Total number of turnouts to Fires in 2023	1,025
Average of turnout times	5.12 mins
% Of calls with a response time of less than 10 minutes	35.1%**
% Of calls with a response time of between 10 and 20 minutes	42.2%**
% Of calls with a response time greater than 20 minutes	22.7%**

(** REPRESENTS INCIDENTS WHERE AN IN-ATTENDANCE TIME WAS RECORDED)

Total number of turnouts to Non-Fire Emergencies in 2023	1,262
Average of turnout times	5.08 mins
% Of calls with a response time of less than 10 minutes	33.2%**
% Of calls with a response time of between 10 and 20 minutes	43.8%**
% Of calls with a response time greater than 20 minutes	23%**

(** REPRESENTS INCIDENTS WHERE AN IN-ATTENDANCE TIME WAS RECORDED)

THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF TRAINING COURSES ORGANISED AND ATTENDED DURING 2023:

Breathing Apparatus Wearers (BA)	Occupational First Aid	Fall Arrest Instructor Training
Compartment Fire Behaviour Training	Emergency First Responder (EFR)	FS Swift Water and Flood First Responder
Emergency Services Driving Standard (ESDS)	Incident Commander Development Course	Water and Flood Awareness
Road Traffic Collision (RTC)	Managing Fire Service Incidents	NDFEM Fire Service Trainer
Aerial Appliance Training	Incident Commander Certificate of Professional Competency (CPC) Course	NDFEM Effective Decision Making
Fire Service Winch Instructor Training	CPC Wearers Course	Haz Mat for Incident Commanders
Abrasive Wheel Training Course	NDFEM Fire Service Assessment	NDFEM FS Management



Images from Operation Training Courses during 2023

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

Construction of the new fire station in Clonakilty commenced in 2023 with completion expected in Q4 2024. Cahalane Bros. Ltd, Dunmanway have been appointed main contractors for the project.

Part VIII Planning for the project was granted on the 28 May 2018. The project is expected to take 13 months.



New Fire Station, Clonakilty

The project will be funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. This new fire station will be located on the western side of Clonakilty Bypass and will replace the existing station in Kent Street.

This project is being delivered as part of the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management €61 million programme of construction/refurbishment of 27 fire stations for the five-year period 2021-2025.

DELIVERY OF NEW FRONT-LINE APPLIANCES



Pictured at the Cork County Hall were: Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Danny Collins, Tim Lucey, Chief Executive, and Seamus Coughlan, Chief Fire Officer. Image: Brian Lougheed

Cork County Council’s Fire Service took delivery of three new fire engines to serve the communities of Fermoy, Carrigaline, Skibbereen and surrounding areas.

The fire engines were funded by the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Each state-of-the-art fire engine can accommodate eight crew, has an integrated body, an 1,800-litre water tank and comes fitted with a water and compressed air foam pumping system. The appliances also carry a set of ladders capable of reaching up 13.5 metres in height.

Cork County fire stations in Fermoy, Carrigaline and Skibbereen serve a combined population of 70,000 people and respond to circa 400 calls each year. These new appliances will be the first turn out appliance for these stations. The continued investment in the modernising of the Fire Service fleet in Cork County will ensure that firefighters are well equipped to respond to emergencies with the very latest in firefighting technology.

COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY

Throughout 2023 we continued delivering our Community Fire Safety Program in partnership with other agencies and community groups. As part of our Community Fire Safety Plan, vulnerable groups are identified and targeted, activities are arranged to deliver fire safety messaging to them. Brigades delivered fire safety talks and presentations to ICA, IFA, Youth, HSE Community and Community Alert groups around the county. We continued to deliver the Primary Schools Community Fire Safety Program and the Secondary School program, which involved carrying out multi agency RTC demonstrations.

We also continued the roll out of our Community Smoke Alarm Scheme, which is supported by the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management, where 10-year battery smoke alarms are provided to community groups and organisations. Firefighters also carried out home fire safety checks on the homes of elderly people and fitted smoke alarms where required.

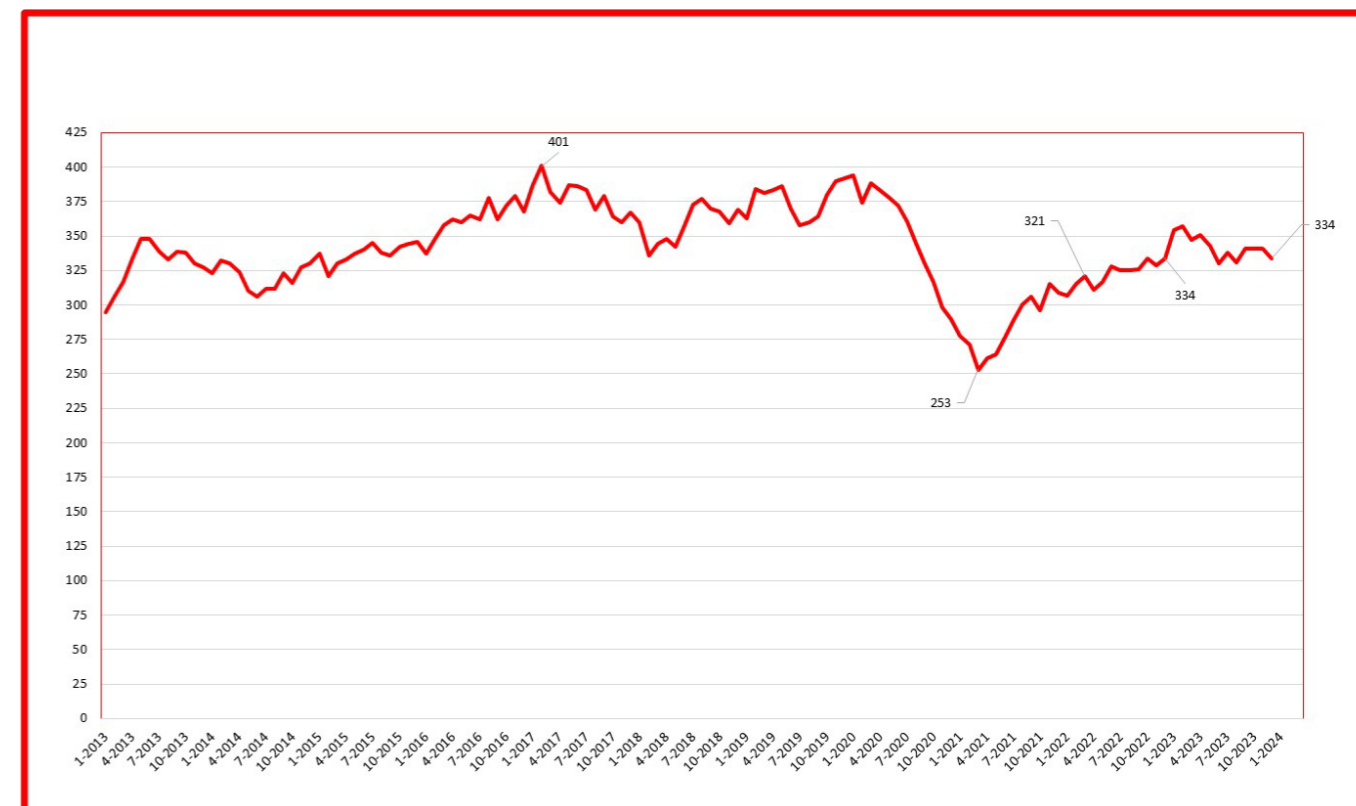
FIRE SAFETY

The Fire Safety Section assessed all valid fire safety certificate applications submitted and provided advice on current fire safety standards required for proposed and existing developments. Fire safety inspections of non-domestic buildings were carried out throughout the year, licensing applications were processed, and reports issued to the Courts Service as required, planning referral reports were completed as required.

The following table and chart show the number of Fire Safety Certificate (FSC) applications received and granted in 2023:

Month	Applications Received	Decisions Made
Jan-23	31	25
Feb-23	26	25
Mar-23	23	38
Apr-23	26	16
May-23	37	32
Jun-23	32	28
Jul-23	39	24
Aug-23	18	22
Sep-23	34	36
Oct-23	22	39
Nov-23	27	35
Dec-23	19	13
Total	334	333

VALID FSC APPLICATIONS RECEIVED – 12 MONTH ROLLING TOTAL

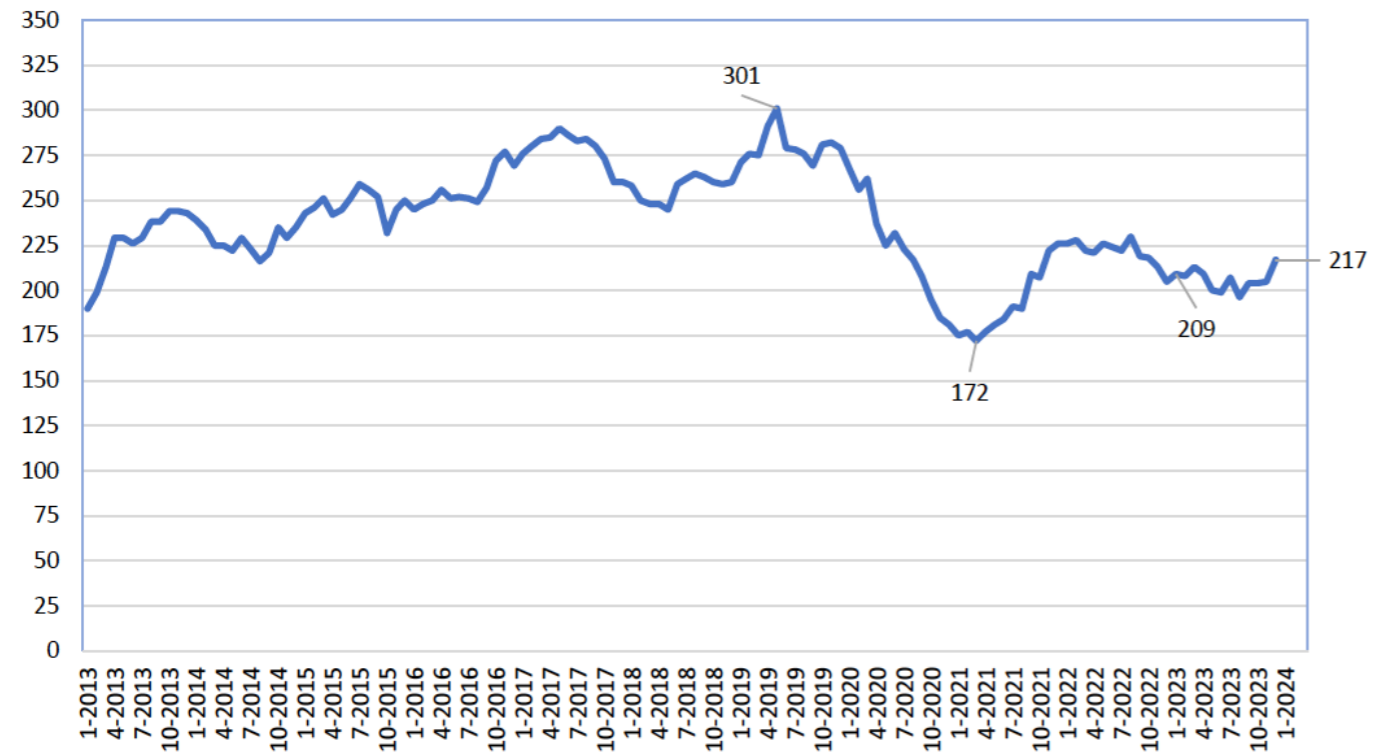


BUILDING CONTROL

The following table and chart show the number of Disability Access Certificate (DAC) applications received and granted in 2023:

2023	Applications Received	Decisions Made
Jan-23	17	15
Feb-23	13	12
Mar-23	21	18
Apr-23	12	10
May-23	22	18
Jun-23	22	22
Jul-23	29	14
Aug-23	10	26
Sep-23	20	20
Oct-23	11	25
Nov-23	19	18
Dec-23	21	13
Total	217	211

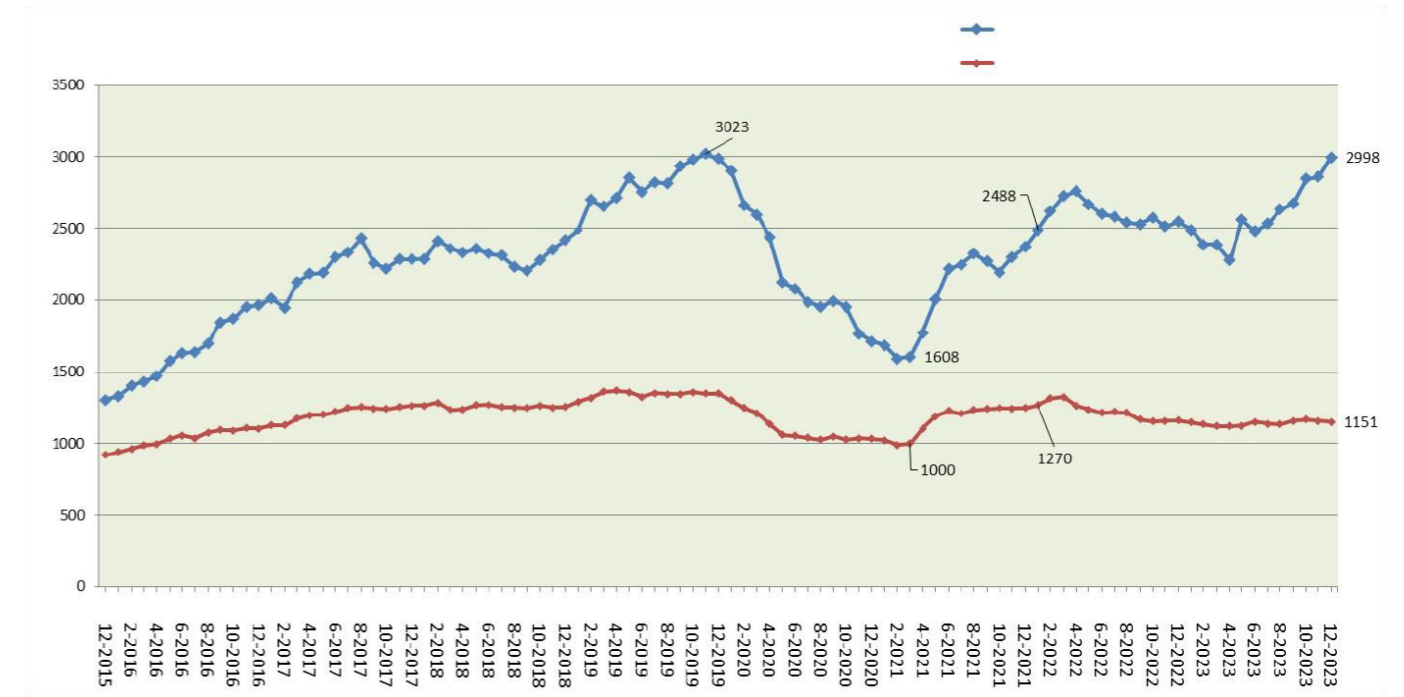
VALID DAC APPLICATIONS RECEIVED – 12 MONTH ROLLING TOTAL



The following table shows the number of valid commencement notice and 7-day notice submissions received in 2023:

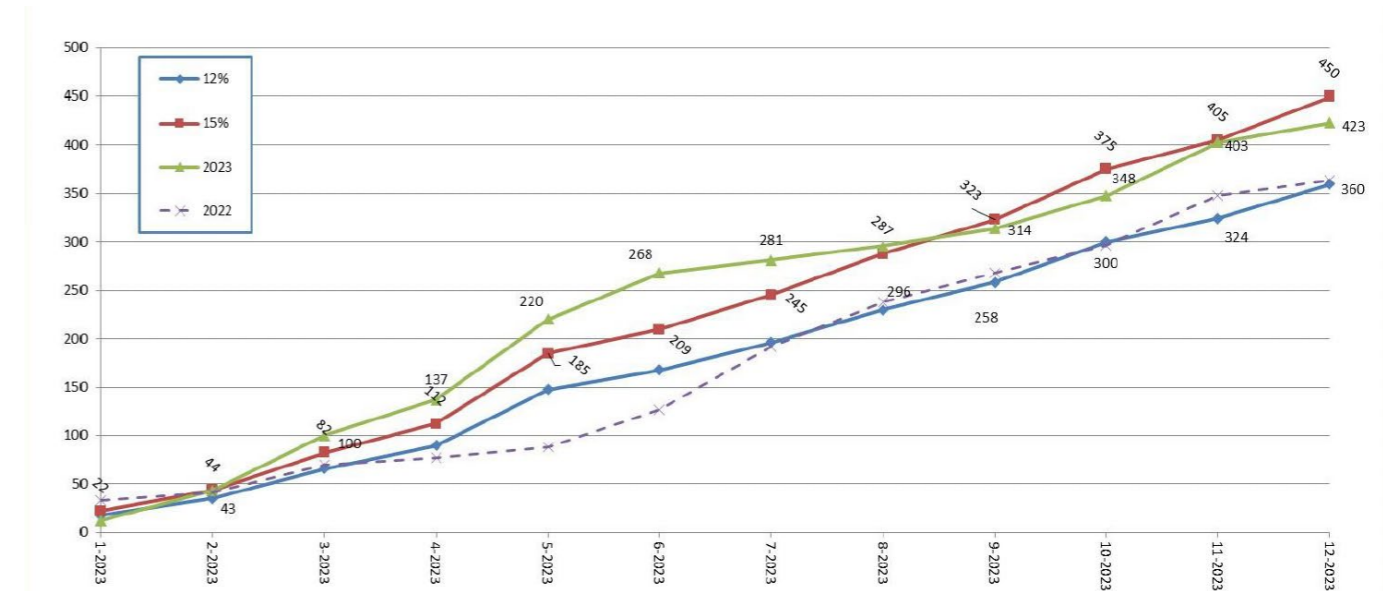
Month-Year	Buildings	Notices
Jan-2023	147	81
Feb-2023	143	81
Mar-2023	257	101
Apr-2023	200	100
May-2023	483	123
Jun-2023	166	135
Jul-2023	240	100
Aug-2023	280	105
Sep-2023	237	103
Oct-2023	349	98
Nov-2023	201	75
Dec-2023	295	49
Total	2,998	1,151

NUMBER OF VALID COMMENCEMENT NOTICES – (12 MONTH ROLLING TOTAL)



During 2023, Building Control Inspections were carried out on 423 of the 2,998 buildings commenced. This represents an inspection rate of 14.1% which is above the 12% target.

BUILDING CONTROL (INITIAL) INSPECTIONS 2023 WITH 12-15% TARGETS



NOTE: TARGETS ARE ESTIMATED FOR FUTURE MONTHS BASED ON PREVIOUS YEARS CN SUBMISSIONS

THE BUILDING ENERGY RATING (BER)

The BER compliance campaign continued to be rolled out across the county targeting auctioneers to ensure compliance with the requirements for BER advertising. 678 advertisements of buildings being offered for sale or rent were checked and compliance continues to improve.

MAJOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Cork County Councils' Major Emergency Management function (MEM) is managed by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer and is coordinated through the A/Chief Fire Officer. The workload in this area is substantial and detailed in separate reports for Cork County Council's Major Emergency Management Committee and the MEM Region South Regional Working Group.

The Health and Safety Authority notified Cork County Council in April 2023 of a new Upper Tier COMAH establishment located in Little Island, bringing the total number of Upper Tier sites in Cork County Council's functional area to 13. There are currently 11 Lower Tier COMAH sites in the county. Under the 2015 COMAH Regulations, inter-agency external emergency plans for these sites must be tested every three years.

Inter-Agency exercises were completed for the following Upper Tier COMAH sites within Cork County in 2023:

Exercise Type	Facility	Exercise Date	Exercise Type
External Emergency Plan	PepsiCo, Carrigaline	21 February 2023	Live roll out
External Emergency Plan	Irish Distillers, Dungourney	15 March 2023	Live roll out
External Emergency Plan	Calor Gas, Whitegate	26 May 2023	Table top
External Emergency Plan	BASF, Little Island	14 June 2023	Table top
External Emergency Plan	Zenith Energy, Whiddy Island	03 October 2023	Table top



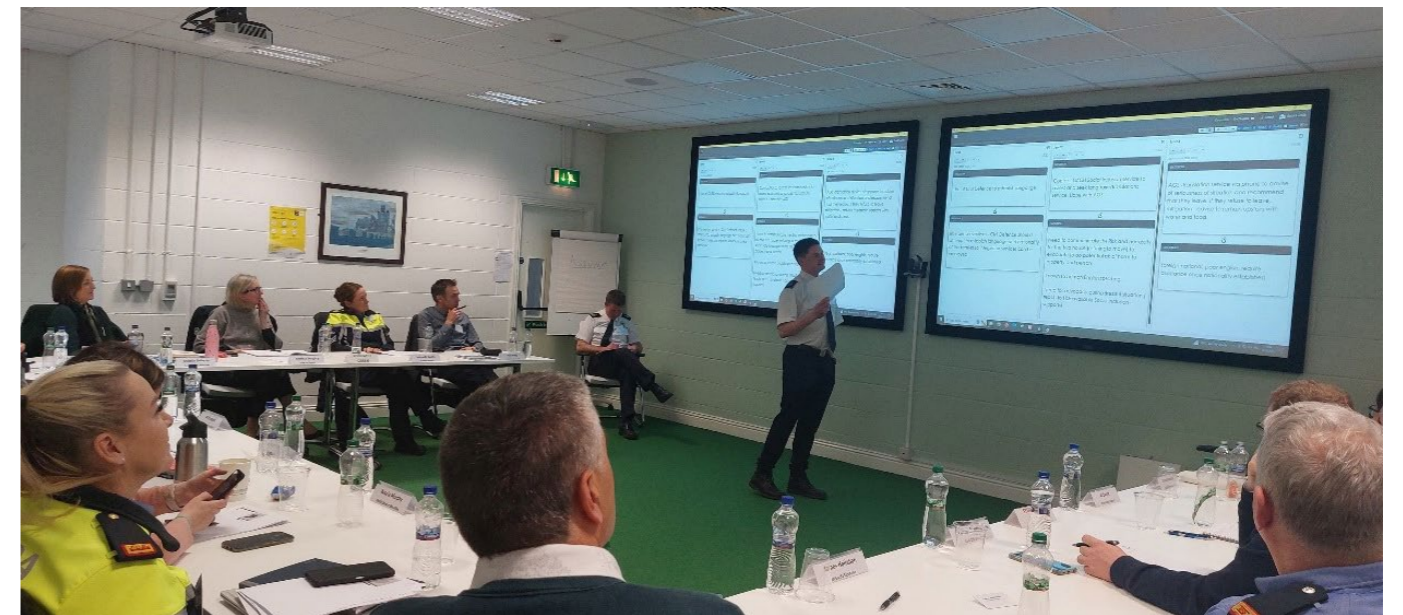
Irish Distillers External Emergency Plan exercise, Dungourney 15 March 2023

Members of Cork County Council participated in exercises for following critical infrastructure sites within the Region:

Exercise Type	Facility	Exercise Date	Exercise Type
Interagency Emergency Plan	Jack Lynch Tunnel, Cork City	26 September 2023	Live roll out
Interagency Emergency Plan	Cork Airport, Cork City	28 November 2023	Table Top

Members of Cork County Council instructed/attended at the following Webinars/Workshops/Courses

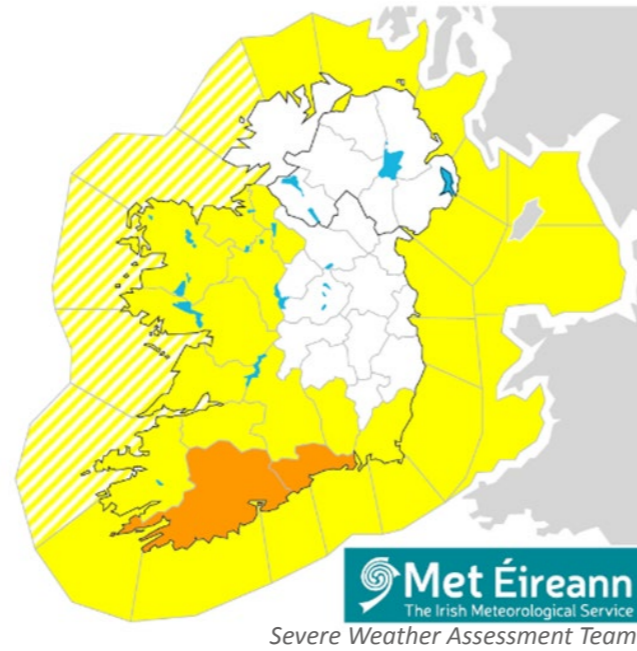
MEM Training/Workshops/Conferences / 2023	Location	Duration	Dates
Information Management and On-Site Controller training	Co Hall	1 Day	26 Jan 2023
Information Management and On-Site Controller training	Killarney	1 Day	31 Jan 2023
Introduction to MEM for Municipal District Officers	MS Teams	2 Hrs	24 Feb 2023
Electronic Information Management Board Training	Midleton Fire Station	½ Day	28 Feb 2023
Electronic Information Management Board Training	Bandon Fire Station	½ Day	28 Feb 2023
Effective Decision Making for CMT during Severe Weather Event	Hydra Facility, Clonmel	2 x 1-day courses	13 and 14 March 2023
CCC Oil Spill training. Beach Deployment/ Clean up	Knockadoon Pier	½ Day	04 October 2023
MEM Conference	Knightsbrook Hotel, Trim, Co. Meath	1 Day	05 October 2023



Effective Decision Making for Crisis Management Teams, Clonmel 13 March 2023

SEVERE WEATHER ASSESSMENT TEAM (SWAT)

2023 saw severe weather throughout the year, the most notable being Storm Babet in October, which was a significant flooding event affecting East Cork. Midleton Fire Station was used as an onsite coordination location which allowed hybrid attendance both in person and remotely via MS Teams. Cork County Council's Severe Weather Assessment Team (SWAT) and Crisis Management Team (CMT) also convened in person and via MS Teams to manage the Council's response.



Flooding on the Main Street in Midleton, during Storm Babet, October 2023

Cork County Council's SWAT convened on 14 occasions in total during 2023 in response to a range of Severe Weather warnings and events including the following named storms: Antoni, Betty, Agnes, Babet, Ciaran, and Debbie.

OIL SPILL ASSESSMENT TEAM (OSAT)

The County Pollution Officer on behalf of the County Engineer, arranged and completed an oil pollution training exercise by mobilising and deploying personnel, equipment and completing a desktop exercise for a Tier 1 incident at Knockadoon in East Cork on 4 October 2023. The Fire Department Incident Command Unit Vehicle was mobilised to site and used to convene an OSAT Meeting which was linked via a "starlink" satellite WIFI system to members offsite in County Hall allowing immediate decisions and agreed actions to be taken. The Inter-Agency control van, tent and an Information Management Team were also deployed to the site on the day.



On-site oil pollution training exercise Knockadoon, October 2023

CIVIL DEFENCE

The primary role of Civil Defence is to provide second line emergency response to the Principal Response Agencies (PRAs) in the areas of: severe weather and flood response; missing person searches; communications; and voluntary emergency ambulance service. Volunteers are professionally trained in a wide variety of skills. Training exercises are regularly undertaken with the PRAs and other voluntary emergency services to maintain a high level of readiness and to streamline procedures.

CORK WEST CIVIL DEFENCE

2023 was a busy year for Cork West Civil Defence. Individual volunteer participation and commitment in the support of operational tasks and engagement in training throughout the year was excellent.

Cork West Volunteers assisted in 4 Missing Person Search Operations in 2023. The response to these searches was outstanding, bringing help to those that needed it. Volunteers used both their professional and technical skills, along with a structured approach to some very difficult situation.

Cork West welcomed 1 new Missing Person Search Instructor, 1 new Cardiac First Responder Instructor, and 7 new Emergency First Responders in 2023.

Cork West Civil Defence Volunteers completed 2,625 volunteer hours throughout 2023.

These hours included:

- Assistance to Missing Person Searches
- Driver duties for Severe Weather Response
- Ambulance Cover for Horse Racing events
- Ambulance Cover for Rally events
- Ambulance Cover for Water Based Events
- Safety Boat for Water Based Events
- Participation in Community Parades
- Medical Cover for Charity Running events
- Medical Cover for Beach Guard Testing
- Medical Cover for Community Parades
- Medical Cover for Agricultural Shows
- Medical Cover for Charity Cycles
- Medical Cover for Commemorations and Community Celebrations



Cork West Civil Defence meeting. An Tánaiste, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence, Micheál Martin



Cork West Civil Defence volunteers on a Missing Person Search in Glengarriff



Cork County Civil Defence at the Chicago St. Patrick's Day Parade



Cork West Civil Defence Annual Training Camp on Bere Island



Civil Defence, Irish Red Cross and Defence Forces Medical Training



Cork West Civil Defence assisting with Meals-On-Wheels during Severe Weather

CORK NORTH AND EAST CIVIL DEFENCE

Cork North and East Volunteers had a busy year in 2023. We spent a lot of manpower hours assisting in one emergency rest centre in Kilshannig for 50 Ukrainian refugees. This involved transporting for social welfare appointments, hospital appointments, welcoming new arrivals, and medical checks on site to reduce calling for unnecessary ambulances. We were also involved in community and frontline events. Cork North and East Volunteers completed 195 days involving 474 volunteers for 2597 volunteers' hours which included the following:

IBTS Clinics

- St Patrick Day parades including medical cover
- Medical cover at point-to-point races
- Medical cover Mallow Autograss racing
- Medical cover for several cycle races
- Medical cover for several road races
- Medical cover for Live at The Marquee
- Medical cover Darkness into Light walk
- Safety Boat and Medical cover for Ocean to City Boat Race
- Medical cover for Cork City Marathon
- Medical cover for concerts in Mallow Castle
- Display at Charleville Agricultural Show
- Medical West Cork Rally
- Medical cover at local sports days
- Medical and Safety Boat at triathlons

- Medical cover for OPW events in Doneraile Park
- Shoe box collection from National Schools in the Cork North area for Team Hope charity organization
- Medical Cover Glanfest Concert
- Midelton Flooding
- Transporting Dialysis patients during Midelton Flooding
- Missing Person search Doneraile
- Assisted Cork West with Missing Person search
- Medical Cover Listowel horse racing
- Cork Summer Show display
- Charleville Show display



Cork Summer Show 2023



Cork Summer Show June 2023



Charleville Show June 2023



Charleville Cycle Race September 2023 -Two Ambulance crews



Shoe Box Collection 2023



Midelton Flooding 2023



Cork County and Cork City Civil Defence with the Tánaiste 2023

Planning and Development



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

PLANNING AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

The Planning SPC met on 4 occasions in 2023. As well as discussions on the completion of the County Development Plan, other items discussed during the year included:

- Land Use Planning and Climate Action Plan 2023
- Sustainable and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities-Proposed Policy Approach
- Implementation of the Residential Zoned Land Tax
- Land Value Sharing and Urban Development Zones
- Traffic and Transport - Update
- Local Authority Climate Action Plan – Preparation of Plan
- Census 2022 Summary of Results
- Local Housing Infrastructure Implementation
- Draft Sustainable and Compact Settlement Guidelines
- National Planning Framework Review - Update

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

The number of planning applications received by Cork County Council in 2023 was 3,398. Of this figure 758 were received by the West Cork Office, located in Skibbereen, with the remaining 2,640 being received in County Hall.

The number of valid planning applications received was 2,815.

Invalid applications represented 17.16% of the total applications received.

The number of planning applications granted planning permission in 2023 was 2,418.

The number of planning applications refused was 227.

The number of planning applications received by Cork County Council with an EIAR (Environmental Impact Assessment Report) was 43.

SECTION 5S

Number of Section 5s received in 2023: 167.

PRE-PLANNING

Total number of pre-planning meetings held in 2022 was 1,032. Pre-planning meetings deal with residential small (one off dwellings/extensions), policy, site selection, zoning, house design and in some cases Further Information Requests. Any information submitted at pre-planning is linked to the application and made available publicly online and at the Planning Authority Office as part of the planning file when a planning application is made.

LARGE-SCALE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS (LRD)

During 2023, 4 Section 247 meetings (905 residential units) and 6 Section 32 meetings (1,335 residential units) were held. 3 LRD planning applications were granted conditional permission for over 400 residential units.

ENFORCEMENT

It is the policy of Cork County Council to secure compliance with planning permission and to prevent unauthorised development in accordance with the statutory requirements as set out in the Planning and Development Act and the Planning and Development Regulations.

Total Number of Cases Closed	191
Number of Procedures Taken Through Warning Letters	536
Number of Procedures Taken Through Enforcement Notices	43
Number of Prosecutions	1
Total Number of Cases Investigated	303

During 2023 Cork County also was successful in securing an injunction under Section 160 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in the newly established Planning and Environment Division of the High Court.

ESTATES AND CONTRIBUTIONS

In 2023, 143 claims for the Temporary Development Contribution Waiver Scheme were submitted to the department in respect of 563 residential units with a total payment of €1,815,830.48 (€1,195,116.48 General and €620,714 Special) being honoured by the department. This scheme has been extended by the department to include development works on qualifying housing units that commence not later than 31 December 2024 with the date of completion of such development works extended to 31 December 2026.

Works were completed in 2023 to bring a bundle of 8 estates to a taking in charge standard. 1 of the 8 estates has been taken in charge while we await sign off by our legal department in respect of the other 7 estates before they are presented to the relevant municipal district to finalise the statutory process. A total of 15 estates with 797 residential units were taken in charge in 2023.

By the end of 2023 works were well underway on 3 projects to bring a total of 14 estates to a taking in charge standard with an estimated completion date of 30 June 2024.

PLANNING POLICY UNIT (PPU)

The Planning Policy Unit is responsible for the preparation of strategic land use planning policies across County Cork and supporting their subsequent implementation. The staff of the Planning Policy Unit is involved in undertaking research and data analysis on a range of planning and socioeconomic issues to inform the implementation of the Cork County Development Plan (CDP), the next CDP review, other plans, and in response to new national and regional policy initiatives and guidelines. The PPU also monitor CDP implementation, provide ecological services, and provide data/data analysis for use by other sections of the Planning Department and the wider Council.

CORK COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028

The plan was adopted on 25 April 2022 and came into effect on 6 June 2022. The plan sets out the planning strategy showing how Cork County intends to accommodate a population growth of 59,000, requiring the delivery of up to 22,611 houses and the delivery of 36,000 additional jobs up to Q2 2028, as the first of three plans to deliver the 105,000-population target set for 2040 and deliver the National Planning Framework and Southern Region Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy targets. Full details of the CDP 2022-2028 are available at: <https://www.corkcoco.ie/en/resident/planning-and-development/cork-county-development-plan-2022-2028>

CORK COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The PPU also commenced work on the following projects related to Development Plan Implementation:

- Employment Land Availability Study (ELAS) Phase 1
- Current Land Use Study (CLUS) for 32 Main Settlements in the County
- Preparation of a Rainwater Management Plan for Carrigtwohill
- Preparation of a new Recreation and Amenity Policy (RAP)
- Preparation of a Draft Landscape/Seascape Strategy for County Cork
- Support the Climate Action Team in the preparation of the Local Authority Climate Action Plan
- Support the Review of the Local Economic and Community Plan
- Prepare guidance on new County Development Plan Floods Policy
- Provide guidance of Surface Water Management and Nature Based Solutions
- Provide design advice to Development Management on key projects
- Prepare submissions to various Government/Others Policy and Guidelines consultations including NPF Review, Marine Spatial Planning, Biomethane Strategy, Guidance on Solar Farms, Ports Policy, Offshore Renewable Energy
- Carried out detailed analysis of data from Census 2022

ACTIVE LAND MANAGEMENT (ALM)

The Planning Policy Unit (PPU) continues to undertake Active Land Management on residentially zoned land supply through several initiatives set out as:

- Data Collection
- Vacant Sites Register and Residential Zoned Land Tax
- Residential Zoned Land Tax
- Monitoring and Engagement

DATA COLLECTION - DRAFT HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY STUDY / CDP RESIDENTIAL LANDS TIERING

Based on the council's Draft Housing Land Availability Study (HLAS) and using the methodology set out in the National Planning Framework Plan Appendix 3, the zoned land supply set out in the County Development Plan review process has been classified as Tier 1 (serviced) or Tier 2 (not fully serviced). 81 Tier 1 residential zoned sites are identified, representing a total of circa 300 hectares of serviced development land. This Tier 1 land bank, coupled with regeneration lands identified in the current CDP review, forms the basis of the council's ALM engagement with landowners.

Since the adoption of the County Development Plan 2022-2028, Cork County Council has also focused on providing and facilitating the provision of supporting infrastructure to transition Tier 2 lands to Tier 1 lands during the lifetime of its current County Development Plan.

VACANT SITES REGISTER - URBAN REGENERATION AND HOUSING ACT, 2015, AS AMENDED

The Vacant Sites Register and Levy applies to certain residentially zoned sites and regeneration areas identified in statutory development plans. The register is constantly evolving and has a direct impact on the sites on the register, as well as an indirect impact on additional 'candidate' sites – where it is observed that the Vacant Sites Levy impacts on landowner considerations. The register commenced with 26 entries, with the number of entries fluctuating since then due to a range of factors including activation of lands, transfer of operations as part of the local authority boundary change in 2019 and review of County Development Plan zoning objectives.

A review of the council's Vacant Sites Register was undertaken following adoption in Q2 2022 of the council's new County Development Plan 2022-2028 – to remove activated sites, to remove sites where zoning objectives had changed during the CDP review process and to add additional serviced zoned residential / regeneration lands identified in current CDP review process. 12 were removed from the

register – 5 of these sites were removed as they were activated for housing use.

One additional site was entered on the council's Vacant Sites Register in 2022 and was removed in 2023 as housing development commenced on the site. Currently there are 3 entries confirmed on the register, circa €7.5 million total valuation. Where the Vacant Site Levy remains unpaid, the amount remains a charge on the land concerned. The Vacant Site Levy is due to be replaced by the Residential Zoned Land Tax in 2024.

RESIDENTIAL ZONED LAND TAX (RZLT)

In addition to the Vacant Sites Levy process, commencing in 2022 and continuing in 2023 the council undertook a significant review of vacant lands within its 32 main settlements that meet the requirements of the government's planned Residential Zoned Land Tax initiative – to replace the Vacant Sites Levy process and stimulate the provision of land for new housing. This review informed the preparation of the RZLT Annual Draft Map that was placed on public display/consultation on 1 November 2022 up to 1 January 2023.

This first public consultation exercise under the RZLT generated more than 6,000 visits to the council's RZLT webpage and a total of 134 submissions. These submissions were processed, redacted, and made available to view online before being referred as appropriate to infrastructure providers, particularly Uisce Éireann for comment. 84% of total submissions received related to infrastructure matters (60% related to water services and 24% related to other infrastructure). Arising from submissions received, 17 sites were removed from the Council's RZLT Map, and 10 mapping alterations were made.

Determinations on submissions were issued to landowners before 1 April 2023 and 71 appeals were lodged with An Bord Pleanála (ABP). The Council issued the relevant appeal documents to ABP as well as observations on the appeals themselves. ABP confirmed 51 determinations and removed 20 sites from the Council's RZLT map due primarily to infrastructure capacity considerations.

The RZLT Annual Final Map was finalised on 1 December 2023.

The RZLT is required to be collected by the Revenue Commissioners. It was due to come into effect on 1 February 2024 (based on the Annual Final Map finalised on 1 December 2023), however government postponed the liability date until 2025 to allow for an additional period of engagement by landowners.

The RZLT process covers all urban locations in Cork County that meet with the criteria for entry and is to be reviewed annually, commencing in 2024.

MONITORING AND ENGAGEMENT

The council continues to actively monitor planning decisions to identify residential scheme consents, as well as non-residential consents. The council also continually updates its infrastructure analysis that was undertaken as part of the County Development Plan 2022-2028 process. Furthermore, the council actively engages with landowners through the Vacant Site Levy and Residential Zoned Land Tax processes.

The settlement and site-specific data generated by the council allows it to actively engage with landowners of sites identified for scheme housing delivery – with particular focus on those sites capable of delivering housing in the short term.

In addition to the above data driven landowner engagement, the council generated several learnings from its housing report completed in 2021 entitled Understanding Cork County NPF Housing Delivery Challenges - From Strategy Formulation to Activation. This report set out several findings and recommendations regarding barriers to scheme housing activation within a Cork County context. Several findings were reflected in the subsequent Housing for All strategy issued by government later in 2021. The council's monitoring of planning consents during 2022 and 2023 has identified trends that reinforce the findings of its report – specifically, that a considerable proportion of housing consents are not being activated, indicating that significant post-consent barriers to housing delivery exist.

The council's Active Land Management Team continues to undertake examinations of these issues with a view to identifying solutions or process improvements that may assist in overcoming these barriers.

ECOLOGY UNIT

The Ecology Office continued to provide support to colleagues across the organisation and to the wider public on matters relating to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in 2023.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

The core work of the Ecology Team continued to be our work supporting the development management system and to that end the Ecology Office dealt with:

- 329 new planning applications
- 38 Pre-planning Consultations
- 8 Largescale Residential Development applications
- 30 planning enforcement files; and
- 103 planning compliance applications including the Celtic Interconnector

COUNCIL LED DEVELOPMENT

The Ecology Office continued to work closely with colleagues on Active Travel, Public Housing, Public Realm, Flood Protection, and other Local Authority projects to provide ecological advice and reporting services. Projects which we inputted to include for example, the Carrigtwohill – Midelton Greenway, various proposed housing schemes and Phase 2 of the Carrigaline Traffic and Public Realm Enhancement Project.

COUNTY BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN PROJECTS

Funded through the Local Biodiversity Action Plan scheme, the team oversaw the management and implementation of four projects including:

BRIDE VALLEY – INVASIVE SPECIES (GIANT HOGWEED) ERADICATION

This is a multiannual project involving landowners in the catchment of the Bride Valley in Northeast Cork. The Ecology Office are working with our partners to treat the invasive alien species Giant Hogweed along the Bride River, with the objective of removing this invasive species from the catchment.

COUNTY WIDE BARN OWL SURVEY

The Ecology Office funded a county wide survey carried out by Birdwatch Ireland to establish the status and health of the population of Barn Owl. In total 114 Barn Owl nest sites were found in the county, the largest number found in any county, representing an increase in recorded breeding range of 132% for this species over the past 10 years – see the Cork County Council website for more information: <https://www.corkcoco.ie/en/news/county-cork-barn-owl-population-on-the-up-after-decades-of-decline>

HARPERS ISLAND WETLAND CREATION PROJECT

As part of our ongoing commitment to the development of a nature reserve at Harpers Island, Glounthaune, we oversaw a major project to extend and enhance wetland habitat at the site in conjunction with our local community partners including volunteers from Glounthaune Development Association and the Cork branch of Birdwatch Ireland.

CAPE CLEAR BIODIVERSITY WORKSHOPS

In conjunction with the Cape Clear Observatory, The Ecology Office funded the delivery of a series of Biodiversity Workshops and an Invasive Alien Species Survey of the Island. All stands of the invasive species Japanese Knotweed on the island were identified. Follow up work to treat this invasive species is planned for 2024.

HARPERS ISLAND WETLANDS RESERVE – ONGOING MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

The Ecology Office continued to support ongoing management of Harpers Island. In 2023, we embarked on a new collaboration with partners in UCC through the EU AA-AGORA project to develop a case study of best practise for community engagement in biodiversity related projects using our experience at Harpers Island. The Ecology Office supported the volunteers on the island to plan for the ongoing management, maintenance, and development of the site, including the potential redevelopment of the farm buildings as an education centre and the development of an additional viewing hide overlooking the wetland zone. We also supported the development of a second artificial Sand Martin nest bank. The project at Harpers Island was shortlisted for an award at the All-Ireland Community and Council Awards.

NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS

The Ecology Office contributed to consultation responses for national proposals for the development of marine area plans for areas designated for development of offshore renewable energy and industry developed solar energy guidelines.

COUNTY POLICY

The Ecology Office provided technical advice and support to the County Climate Action Plan and the Local Economic and Community Plan teams, and we reviewed and advised on draft documents.

TRAINING

The Ecology Office delivered several training sessions to colleagues relating to ecological requirements for local authority projects with colleagues from Roads and Active Travel. We also developed a guidance note to assist colleagues with the management of ecological issues for local authority development.



Volunteers Building artificial Sand Martin Nest Bank at Harpers Island Wetlands



Sand Martin Nest Banks Constructed at Harpers Island (2022 and 2023)



Sand Martins taking up residence in new Nest Bank at Harpers Island (Credit Jim Wilson)

HERITAGE

Investment in the county's heritage continued to grow in 2023 through an increase in Cork County Council's own heritage budget and through increased supports at the national level across the Heritage Council, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) and the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media (DTCAGSM). A summary of key projects and work areas delivered on in 2023 is now provided.

BUILT HERITAGE INVESTMENT SCHEME (BHIS) AND HISTORIC STRUCTURES FUND (HSF)

The county of Cork, through its Conservation Office, was allocated funding for 22 projects under the 2023 BHIS and HSF Schemes. This required oversight of both schemes and correspondence with applicants, consultants and the DHLGH, which saw important conservation works at a variety of protected structures including churches, thatched houses, country houses and retail premises.

(Photo to right: the bells of St. Mary's Church, Doneraile were restored with funding received under the 2023 BHIS).

COMMUNITY MONUMENTS FUND (CMF)

The CMF – a national fund that supports projects and plans relating to archaeological sites - saw the support of 7 different undertakings in County Cork (including 4 council owned properties). Areas successful under the scheme, which is run by the council's Heritage Unit and funded by the National Monuments Service, included Baltimore, Bandon, Clonakilty, Cloyne, Kilcorney, Mitchelstown and Youghal.



The bells of St. Mary's Church, Doneraile were restored with funding received under the 2023 BHIS



Castlevew Mills, near Clonakilty, received funding under the 2023 Community Monuments Fund

HERITAGE COUNCIL HERITAGE OFFICER SCHEME

In 2023, the Heritage Unit received direct funding from the Heritage Council for three significant projects: a publication on the Natural Heritage of County Cork; Phase III of a geological survey of County Cork (West Cork) and the County Cork Heritage Grant Scheme 2023, a scheme that saw supports provided to 29 different groups for a range of heritage projects throughout the year.



An information board was unveiled on the roadside near Togher Castle during Heritage Week 2023, supported by the County Cork Heritage Grant Scheme

FURTHER SOURCES OF INVESTMENT IN THE COUNTY'S HERITAGE

It should be noted that heritage in the county of Cork benefits through the work of many sections of Cork County Council, from many tourism initiatives to Creative Ireland projects, as well as further benefits under an increasing variety of national grant scheme initiatives run by government departments, state bodies and NGOs. In relation to these, and many further grant schemes operated by Cork County Council, such as the Community Fund Scheme and the Community Enhancement Scheme, the Heritage Unit gets numerous requests from groups seeking advice and letters of support, in the making of such applications.

Here is a sample of some externally operated grant schemes that saw success for groups in the county of Cork during 2023, the majority of which, saw Heritage Unit involvement by way of advice and/or subsequent promotion of various successful undertakings.

HERITAGE COUNCIL COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME AND HERITAGE STEWARDSHIP FUND

Under the Heritage Stewardship Scheme 2023, Cork County Council was awarded funding for a project to foster an interest in Cork's heritage through the promotion of greater public engagement with the Local Studies Library's collections.

Under the 2023 Heritage Council Community Heritage Grant Scheme the county saw 6 successful applications including projects in Baltimore, Harper's Island, and Fota House, and supports for Cork Craft and Design, Creative Bandon and the West Cork Oral Heritage Project.

Under the Heritage Capacity Fund, Bere Island received funding for implementation of the Bere Island Conservation Plan.

IRISH WALLED TOWN NETWORK GRANT SCHEMES

Under the Heritage Council's Irish Walled Town Network (IWTN) 2023 Grant Schemes, the county saw the support of 4 different projects across the county's Irish Walled Town Network member towns, Bandon, Buttevant and Youghal. These included festivals, a Biodiversity Heritage Day and conservation works.



Funding was received for the excellent Bandon Walled Town Festival in 2023

ANNUAL HERITAGE UNIT WORK PROGRAMME

As evidenced by just this small sample of externally run funding schemes, their value for support of heritage initiatives and undertakings in the county of Cork cannot be understated, and as previously highlighted, the Heritage Unit is annually engaged with numerous heritage and community groups seeking advice and support in relation to these schemes. This advice and support are just one aspect of the work of the Heritage Unit and annually a variety of different projects and work agendas are undertaken and rolled out. The following is a selection (not exhaustive) of Heritage Unit 2023 undertakings delivered on:

ALL-IRELAND POLLINATOR PLAN

Cork County Council's Heritage Unit support the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, encouraging groups around the county to get involved in implementing actions in their local areas for the benefit of everyone's natural heritage. For the past number of years, Cork County Council has been contributing to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan Award – a special award in the annual TidyTowns Competition. The 2022 Regional Awards were held in Clonakilty during 2023 with Cobh having won the overall national award.



Cobh were the National Winner of the TidyTowns Pollinator Award

ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE GUIDE MAPS

In 2023, the Heritage Unit, through an initiative of the County Archaeologist, produced 2 leaflets documenting the archaeological heritage of North and East Cork and the archaeological heritage of West Cork.



The Launch of 101 Archaeological Heritage Sites of North and East Cork took place in Bridgetown Abbey

CELEBRATING CORK PAST HERITAGE EXHIBITION

The Celebrating Cork Past Heritage Exhibition Day, supported by Cork City Council, Cork County Council and the Cork Lyons Club, took place on Saturday 30 September and had over 30 participating groups from throughout city and county.

CORK SCHOOLS GARDEN COMPETITION

The Heritage Unit, together with the Council's Environment Awareness Office, has supported this initiative since its inception. Run by Muintir na Tíre, it is an excellent project that promotes cultural and natural heritage in the school setting, factoring in links with local heritage, pollinator projects, and much more. The 2023 Awards Ceremony took place in County Hall in June 2023.

DISSEMINATION OF PUBLICATIONS

Promoting awareness of heritage is a key priority of the Heritage Unit. The Heritage Unit has undertaken many guidance documents for dissemination and promotes other useful documents. In the case of the latter, 2023 saw the distribution of many publications including 'Gardening for Biodiversity'; the 'Colourful Heritage of County Cork' publications and the national 'Pledge Your Garden for Pollinators' leaflet.

HERITAGE MAP VIEWER

The Heritage Unit provides an annual contribution to the National Heritage Map Viewer and systematically provides heritage relevant datasets on completion.

HERITAGE OF COUNTY CORK PUBLICATION SERIES

The Heritage Unit produces a new book in the series each year and manages all project aspects including distribution and sales. Since the series' inception, over 8,000 copies have been sold.

HISTORIC MONUMENTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Cork County Council's Historic Monuments Advisory Committee continued to meet in 2023 undertaking work on a variety of different projects. One of the highlights of 2023 was the undertaking of two video productions: one on the Care and Cleaning of Headstones and the other on Care of Historic Ruins. These were uploaded to the Council's YouTube channel and have had close to 400 views to date. The HMAAC also supported the hosting of an online grants workshop, delivered by the Heritage Unit.

HISTORIC TOWN MAPS

2023 saw continuation in the production of Historic Town Maps for towns in the county, led by the County Archaeologist in conjunction with the local municipal district offices. These are a significant asset to Cork County's tourism product and copies of the maps are available to download for free online at www.purecork.ie.



The County Cork Irish Community Archive Digital Portal was launched in August 2023

IRISH COMMUNITY ARCHIVE NETWORK (ICAN)

2022 saw the County of Cork join the national network and in 2023, following training and website development, the County Cork iCAN online portal was launched. This is a fantastic initiative that captures, and ensures the longevity, of local heritage collections that have been digitised. County Cork is represented in the network by four groups that work closely with the council's Heritage Unit: Bere Island Projects Group, Kilmurry Historical and Archaeological Association, Kilshannig Heritage Group and Youghal Community Archives.

LOCAL AUTHORITY HERITAGE OFFICER NETWORK

In June 2023, Cork County Council welcomed the Local Authority Heritage Officer Network and staff of the Heritage Council to Cork. Day 1 was spent in Cork City and day 2 saw a visit to County Hall and important heritage sites in the mid-Cork area, including the Gaeltacht settlement of Béal Átha n'Ghaorthaidh (as pictured).



Béal Átha n'Ghaorthaidh

NAMING OF NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

Regarding the implementation of Cork County Council's procedure for the naming of housing developments, over 40 new names were established by the Placenames Team in 2023, both in respect of compliance with planning conditions and in respect of new council housing developments.

NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY WEEK

The Heritage Unit promoted a wide variety of events for National Biodiversity Week, which took place from 19 - 28 May 2023.

NATIONAL HERITAGE WEEK

Heritage Week (12 - 20 August) was a great success and saw a return to the number of events typical of the week, prior to the impact of COVID-19. In 2023, 163 registered events took place in County Cork, a 20% increase on the number of events held in the county during Heritage Week 2022. The Heritage Unit widely promoted events and also undertook a few projects of its own.

NATIONAL TREE WEEK AND NATIONAL TREE DAY

The Heritage Unit coordinates National Tree Week in county Cork, tying in with Action 50 of Cork County Council's Climate Adaptation Strategy. Year after year, the Heritage Unit has obtained increasing numbers of trees from the Tree Council. In 2023, the Heritage Unit distributed close to 1,200 trees to over 50 different groups, schools and organisations. National Tree Day, which takes place in October is also promoted annually by the Heritage Unit.

OTHER CORK COUNTY COUNCIL HERITAGE RELATED/FOCUSED PROJECTS

2023 saw the continued involvement and input of the Heritage Unit in a variety of undertakings by many different Cork County Council directorates including Environment, Corporate Services, Roads, Tourism and Economic Development, and Municipal District Operations and Rural Development. Examples include support and promotion of Seachtain na Gaeilge, which is run through the council's Irish Office in Corporate Services and extensive work on proposed wayfinding and heritage signage for Bandon, working with Cork County Council's Capital Projects Unit.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

An important part of the Heritage Unit's role is advising at both preplanning and planning stages in respect of the impact that development proposals may have on the county's heritage. Considerable time is spent on planning applications; Part 8s, Section 57s and the devising of placenames for new housing developments.

WEBSITE, MEDIA AND UPDATES

2022 saw the introduction of a new method for disseminating heritage updates via the Gov Delivery Platform, which by the end of 2023, had over 1,000 subscribers to the Heritage and Conservation service update. Communicating on heritage is a key undertaking of the Heritage Unit, working regularly with the council's Communications Office. In 2023, over a dozen heritage press releases were issued, covering many aspects of the Heritage Unit's core work.

WORKSHOPS AND GUIDANCE

The Heritage Unit regularly undertakes guidance documents and supports a range of different workshops and training events. A very successful workshop held in 2023 related to Dragonflies and Damselflies. This was organised by the National Biodiversity Data Centre and supported by Cork County Council's Heritage Unit.

COMMEMORATIONS

Overall, 2023 was a busy year for commemorative activity in the county of Cork, with the holding of a number of centenary commemorations, marking the events of the Civil War one hundred years ago as well as a number of further commemorative undertakings, supported by Cork County Council's Commemorations Committee and the Department of Tourism, Arts, Culture, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media (DTCAGSM).

The following is a list of the key centenary commemorative undertakings/key supports provided by the Commemorations Committee in 2023.

2023 CENTENARY COMMEMORATIONS WORK PROGRAMME

CENTENARY COMMEMORATION OF LIAM LYNCH

The centenary commemoration of Liam Lynch took place on Easter Sunday 9 April 2023 and had thousands of people in attendance including pipe bands from Ireland, America and Argentina. The event, excellently organised by the local Liam Lynch Committee, was supported by Cork County Council's Commemorations Committee and by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.



The Liam Lynch Centenary Commemoration in Feroym

COUNTY CORK COMMEMORATIONS GRANT SCHEME:

One of the key commemorative undertakings of 2023 was the running of the very successful County Cork Commemorations Grant Scheme, which provided support to 13 groups for a variety of commemorative undertakings.



The centenary commemoration of a local Civil War occurrence in Newcestown was supported by the 2023 County Cork Commemorations Grant Scheme. Over 200 people were in attendance.

MICHAEL COLLINS HOUSE PROGRAMME

As part of the Council's 2023 Commemorations Programme, a number of events and initiatives by Michael Collins House were supported, including a digitisation project, talks, podcasts, murals and a video documentary.

CONFERENCE: 'AFTER THE REVOLUTION, THE CIVIL WAR AND ITS AFTERMATH'

Supported by Cork County Council's Commemorations Committee and DTCAGSM, an excellent conference was held in Saint George's Arts and Heritage Centre in Mitchelstown, looking at the aftermath of the Irish Revolution. It was addressed by the Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Frank O'Flynn and featured a range of excellent speakers. This was the second, and consecutive, North of Cork focused commemoration conference held in Saint George's Arts and Heritage Centre, Mitchelstown.

STORIES OF THE REVOLUTION PROJECT

The Stories of the Revolution Project, led by Terri Kearney of Skibbereen Heritage Centre, has been supported from the onset by Cork County Council's Commemorations Committee. The project documents collected stories from over 800 school children throughout West Cork, following interviews with their grandparents and great-grandparents and a selection of these were included in a bespoke exhibition, which toured extensively throughout 2023. Pictured (opposite) is the holding of the exhibition in Bandon Library during Heritage Week 2023.

RESTORATION OF GRAVES FUND

- The cleaning and restoration of 4 separate headstones in Glanworth Old Graveyard, 2 relating to the War of Independence and 2 relating to World War One.
- Support provided to Carraig na bhFear History and Heritage Group for the cleaning and restoration of headstones in Dun Bolg Graveyard relating to historical poets interred.

WAR OF INDEPENDENCE AND CIVIL WAR EXHIBITION

A joint project by the Council's Heritage Unit and the Local Studies Section, this exhibition, constituting over 20 exhibition boards, was completed in 2021 and has toured many locations since. The exhibition featured prominently in both Mitchelstown and Fermoy in regard to the centenary commemoration of Liam Lynch in 2023. As part of the exhibition an accompanying booklet was also produced and given the demand for same a reprint was undertaken.



Bandon Library Exhibition, Heritage Week 2023

2023 WIDER COMMEMORATIONS WORK PROGRAMME

While much of the commemorative focus in the county in recent years has been on War of Independence and Civil War centenaries, the council's commemorative remit is much wider and 2023 saw the support of many other commemorative projects, including, but not limited to:

- An Coiste um Thionscaint Ghaeilscoil de hÍde: A publication to commemorate 40 years of Gaeilscoil de hÍde in Fermoy.
- Ballinhassig Parish: Support of the bicentenary of Ballyheada Church (Sacred Heart), which included the erecting of a commemorative plaque, restoration of the church bell and site enhancement works that included the original mass path to the mass rock in Farlistown.
- Charleville Heritage Society – Commemoration of three significant historical personalities connected with Charleville: poet and translator John Anster, born in Charleville in 1793; Eliza Lynch born in Charleville in 1833 and Archbishop Thomas W. Croke born in 1823.
- Cumann Léirithe Bhéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh: support provided towards a commemorative play titled Tuairín Dubh.
- Dermot Harrington: a publication remarking on 50 years of Bantry Library, also supported by the council's Library and Arts Service.
- Dúchas Clonakilty Heritage – support of the 225th commemoration of the Battle of the Big Cross, Clonakilty, which included a number of events and a bespoke publication.
- Kevin O'Farrell – support towards the publication of a book to mark the centenary of the first Irishman to sail around the world on a small wooden vessel (Saoirse) in June 1923.
- Lemur Tale Media: a video documentary to commemorate Kinsale Pirate Anne Bonny, who disappeared 300 years ago.
- Mary Keane: A feature-length video documentary looking at the Irish Preparatory Language Colleges, Coláiste Íosagáin in Baile Bhuirne in particular (centenary in 2026), and how the Irish language is faring with comparisons to Maori in New Zealand.
- Seán P. Keating Commemoration: The commemoration of a famous son of Kanturk Seán P. Keating was held in Kanturk in August 2023, supported by the Commemorations Committee and the Council's Library and Arts Service.
- Tullylease Historical Society: The Bicentenary of the White Boys saw the erection of a monument, the undertaking of a publication and the erection of an information board – supported by Cork County Council's Commemorations Committee.



Bicentenary of the White Boys in Tullylease, supported by the Council's Commemorations Committee



The 225th year commemoration of the 1798 Battle of the Big Cross, Clonakilty

Hegarty's Boatyard



Building Conor O'Brien's

SAOIRSE

Photographs by Kevin O'Farrell with introductory essay by Cormac Levis

'Saoirse' supported by the Commemorations Committee: a publication that marked the centenary of the first Irishman to sail around the world on a small wooden vessel in June 1923.



Seán P. Keating, a famous son of Kanturk, was commemorated in August 2023

Economic Development, Enterprise and Tourism



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENTERPRISE AND TOURISM

COMMUNITY SECTION

SOCIAL INCLUSION COMMUNITY ACTIVITY PROGRAMME (SICAP)

SICAP 2018-2023 delivered in partnership with 6 local development companies, new programme 2024-2028 tendered and awarded in December 2023:

- SICAP 2018-2023 €12.376m
- SICAP 2024-2028 €13.035m

LEADER PROGRAMME

LEADER Programme 2014-2022 is delivered by three LCDC/LAG committees (North/South/West Cork) in co-operation with 6 Local Development Companies, namely Avondhu Blackwater Partnership, Comhar na nOileán, IRD Duhallow, Ballyhoura Development, and Udarás na Gaeltachta. The initiative is to support rural development projects at the local level to revitalise rural areas and create jobs.

LEADER PROGRAMME 2014-2022 DELIVERED:

Programme	Funding	Projects
LEADER Main Programme 2014-2020	€14.439m	Total of 254 Projects
LEADER Transitional Programme 2021-2022	€3.446m	Total of 86 Projects to date
LEADER Food and Cooperation Projects	€3.414m	Total of 35 Food Projects and 25 Cooperation Projects

Total LEADER Programme 2014-2023 €21.299 million awarded to 400 community groups across Cork County.

HEALTHY IRELAND

Healthy Ireland Strategy for Cork County 2021-2024 adopted in 2021.

Currently on Round 4 – 2023-2025 – 2 outcome factor areas selected: Lifestyle and Behaviour Risks and Wellbeing Factors

- Outcome 1 – Breastfeeding Rates
- Outcome 2 – Positive Mental Health

DRCD/LCDC COMMUNITY SUPPORT FUND

DRCD/LCDC Community Support Fund completed.

Total Allocation: €362,678, covered capital, current and Women's Sheds.

Total of 186 successful groups throughout the county.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE.

Councillor Gearóid Murphy was chairman of the committee having replaced Councillor Frank O'Flynn in June 2023 when the latter was elected Mayor of the County of Cork.

Presentations at Economic Development and Enterprise Meetings in 2023

Meetings	Date	Presentations
Q4 2023	13 December	"Local Economic and Community Plan: Overview of the Draft LECP Implementation Plan and Draft. <i>Presented by Sharon O'Connell, SEP."</i>
Q3 2023	20 September	"Local Economic and Community Plan: Update on the Public Consultation Process and Proposed Amendments to the Draft Plan. <i>Presented by Sharon O'Connell, SEP."</i>
Q2 2023	19 April	"Future Enterprise Land Needs Study. <i>Presented by Paul Sutton, SEO."</i>
Q1 2023	1 April	"Employment Land Supply Study. <i>Presented by Patricia Griffin, SEP."</i>

NOTE: ALL MEETINGS ARE BLENDED, I.E. COMMITTEE MEMBERS WERE ABLE TO JOIN ON-LINE OR ATTEND IN PERSON.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PROJECTS

This table summarises the allocations from the EDF to the following events and initiatives during 2023.

Year / Ref. No.	Priority of Funding	Division	EDF Code	Name of Initiative	Total Allocation
Recurring Funding 2023.01	Partnerships with Local and Regional Stakeholders	South	47 / 2023	Cork Smart Gateways: (Trinity College Dublin 2023 - 2025)	18,700
2023.02	Partnerships with Local and Regional Stakeholders	South	52 / 2023	Ireland China Science and Technology Association	4,000
2023.03	Partnerships with Local and Regional Stakeholders	South	29 / 2023	LECP	100,000
2023.04	Partnerships with Local and Regional Stakeholders	South	30 / 2023	Confucius Institute, UCC.	5,000
2023.05	Partnerships with Local and Regional Stakeholders	South	46 / 2023	STEM SW: Fees, Admin Support, Events.	35,000
2023.06	Partnerships with Local and Regional Stakeholders	South	75 / 2023	Mallow Maths and Science Fair	4,000
2023.07	/	/	/	Cancelled	-
2023.08	/	/	/	Cancelled	-
2023.09	Partnerships with Local and Regional Stakeholders	South	86 / 2023	Visit Cork (Promoting Cork Ltd)	100,000
2023.10	Partnerships with Local and Regional Stakeholders	South	/	Asia Matters	/
2023.11	Strategic Marketing and Tourism	South	/	Cork International Choral Festival	10,000

Year / Ref. No.	Priority of Funding	Division	EDF Code	Name of Initiative	Total Allocation
2023.12	Partnerships with Local and Regional Stakeholders	South	147 / 2023	SFI CONNECT Event	5,000
2023.13	Strategic Marketing and Tourism	South	149 / 2023	Meihua & Shamrock Cups	35,000
2023.14	Strategic Marketing and Tourism	South	150 / 2023	Annual Visit to Jiangsu	35,000
2023.15	Strategic Marketing and Tourism	West	143 / 2023	Arts Office - Film Funding	1,667
2023.16	Partnerships with Local and Regional Stakeholders	South	141 / 2023	Tech Industry Alliance	16,000
2023.17	Strategic Marketing and Tourism	West	147 / 2023	Ballydehob Jazz Festival	6,000
2023.18	Strategic Marketing and Tourism	West	147 / 2023	Fastnet Film Festival	5,000

NOTE THAT THE SOUTHERN DIVISION IS ALSO USED AS A PROXY FOR REPRESENTING ALLOCATIONS TO COUNTY WIDE EVENTS AND INITIATIVES.

SUMMARY OF INITIATIVES WITH LOCAL AND REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

CORKBIC GROWTH PATHWAY PROGRAMME

CorkBIC supports the identification and growth of innovative, knowledge intensive companies based on promising technology. It helps entrepreneurs to navigate the challenges of raising finance, developing business propositions, making agreements with shareholders and investors, and finding customers.

Cork County Council was a founding partner of the Growth Pathway Programme in 2016. This programme, involving SMEs, start-ups, and business leaders, is focused on building the next generation of high-performance companies. Refer to <https://www.corkbic.com/about-cork-bic> for more information.

CORK SMART GATEWAY

66% of the world's population will live in urban areas by 2050. A challenge then will be to supply these urban areas with safe food, clean water and sufficient energy in an economic, social and environmentally sustainable manner. One EU response to this challenge is to promote the development of smart cities and communities where integrated energy, transport, and ICT technologies are employed to reduce environmental impact and promote the development of efficient, sustainable, and safe communities particularly within the context of an aging population.

The County Council, City Council, MTU, UCC, the Nimbus Research Centre, and the Tyndall National Institute established Cork Smart Gateway to promote Cork as a smart region and raise awareness about the availability of our local research facilities to help the small and medium enterprises develop ICT, IoT and energy solutions in response to these challenges. Refer to <http://www.corksmartgateway.ie/about/> for more information.

ENERGY-CORK

Energy Cork is an economic cluster seeking to secure a competitive advantage for the energy sector in Cork by pursuing coordinated actions to strengthen enterprise, create employment, and capitalise on Cork's position at the forefront of the energy sector in a sustainable manner. Refer to <http://www.energycork.ie/index.php/about/> for more information.

IGNITE

Cork County Council has supported this initiative since it was launched in 2011. IGNITE is a joint initiative with the City Council and the local enterprise offices to encourage entrepreneurship and enterprise creation.

It is an international award-winning business incubation programme supporting recent graduate entrepreneurs turn good ideas into great businesses. Based at University College Cork, the 12-month programme is open to all recent graduates from all Irish third level institutions who have the passion and ambition to work full-time on a scalable start-up idea with potential for commercial or social impact.

Since then, it has worked with approximately 120 start-ups and raised the capacity of more than 140 founders who have launched companies such as UrAbility, AnaBio Technologies, ApisProtect, Eurocomply, LegitFit, OnTheQt, PunditArena, Supply.ie, Talivest, TrustAp and Vconnecta. Refer to <https://www.ucc.ie/en/ignite/aboutus/for-more-information>.

STEM SOUTH WEST

This cluster promotes and nurtures STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths) throughout the South West region of Ireland. The cluster comprises industry stakeholders (SMEs and MNCs), higher education institutes - Munster Technological University (MTU) and University College Cork (UCC), local government (Cork County Council), not-for-profit (KerrySciTech) and the Southern Regional Skills Forum, who are working together to maximise the capacity of the STEM sector in the South West and to create and develop opportunities for members and the communities within which they operate.

The initiative has an industry led board with representatives from multi-national operations and SMEs in the region, the HEI sector, and the state and Cork County Council. Refer to <https://www.stemsouthwest.ie/> for more information on STEM South West activities and updates.

CORK ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DATA MONITOR

The monitor is a custom designed software solution containing relevant datasets and indicators from authoritative sources to provide insight into the economic and community performance of Cork County at a variety of spatial scales. The monitor can be applied to meet the increased demand for data and evidence-based decision making across the many functions within the Council.

The monitor incorporates key indicators for Cork County across 15 themes and is available to view in an easy-to-use analytical dashboard providing users with the ability to easily compare and contrast data and indicators. The 15 themes are population, housing, economy and employment, education, crime and safety, health, households and families, social deprivation, property market, live register, jobs and commuting, environment, agriculture, council finances and income and living standards. The link to the Monitor is here: <https://www.corkcoco.ie/en/business/economic-community-data>. The monitor is updated on a quarterly basis.

CO-FUNDING INITIATIVES

EI REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND

Enterprise Ireland invited proposals for support from the Regional Economic Development Fund (REDF). Using a competitive call process, the REDF supports regions to build on their unique strengths and create sustainable jobs. Projects were selected following a rigorous evaluation process based on criteria which includes impacts and value for money, collaboration and participation, viability and sustainability, building regional strengths and significance for innovation.

Cork County Council will provide the co-funding requirement for two applications to the Regional Economic Development Fund which have been approved by Enterprise Ireland. The two projects are;

SYNBIOHUB

This initiative will seek to attract early-stage life science start-up companies to Cork, help them to accelerate their development towards mature growth stage companies and ultimately seek to anchor them in Ireland for the long term. SynBioHub which is led by University College Cork (UCC) and Cork County Council (CCC) will trade as CorkBioHub and provide a “one stop shop” growth and development system enabling life science start-up companies to thrive in a unique supportive environment custom designed to suit bio-based businesses.

A DIGITAL HUB

An tÚdarás na Gaeltachta will undertake an extensive redevelopment of an existing regional facility in Baile Bhúirne in the Muskerry Gaeltacht to provide a regional digital hub offering the full range of business training and development supports. The digital hub will offer a flexible, connected, innovation space providing a range of critical supports targeting the relatively disadvantaged and isolated rural districts in the Muskerry area of County Cork and its broader regional catchment area.

An tÚdarás will provide facilities and services to generate an entrepreneurial ecosystem which will attract and support the establishment of innovative start-ups and also support existing enterprises by providing a range of focused services such as technological supports and fibre connectivity; financial infrastructural and other skills and capability building measures.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

CHINA

The table below contains the schedule of the engagements, events and initiatives undertaken with stakeholders in 2023. To consolidate this relationship, the County Council also introduced local organisations to peers in Jiangsu. To date, UCC, Cork Education and Training Board, Energy-Cork and the Tech Industry Alliance have engaged with peer organisations in the region.

China based representatives of the Irish Embassy, UCC, Enterprise Ireland, and IDA Ireland have accompanied the Council during visits to Jiangsu in order to expand their networks in the region.

Programmes	Timeline	Notes
Confucius Institute - Chinese-Bridge Competition	Apr.	County Mayor invited to attend this event.
Nanjing Literary Centre	Apr.	County Council hosted a meeting with a delegation from the Centre.
Asia Matters:	May.	Co-funded the annual Cork Business Summit with MTU and the City Council.
Nanjing Bureau of Education.	May.	The County Council and Cork ETB hosted meetings and school visits for the delegation.
Chinese Embassy event, Dublin.	June.	County Mayor attended.
Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries.	June.	County Council hosted a meeting with the President and his delegation from the CPAFFC.
DFA sponsored Senior Chinese Officials Training Programme.	Aug.	County Council met with the delegation during their visit to Cork..
Shamrock Cup English Language Competition Winners Visit.	Oct.	The winning team visited Cork and Dublin during their 8 Day study tour.
MeiHua Cup Chinese Language Competition Winners Visit.	Oct.	The winning teams travelled to Nanjing and Shanghai for an 8-Day study tour.
Ireland Cork Chinese Business Association (ICCBA)	Sept.	County Mayor attended their annual event.

Programmes	Timeline	Notes
Ireland China Science and Technology Association (ICSATA):	Oct.	County Mayor attended their Annual Conference, held in County Hall.
Cork County Mayor and delegation's annual visit to China.	Nov. / Dec.	Annual Cork County Council visit to China incorporating meetings with the provincial and Municipal leaders in Jiangsu, the Irish Consul General and E.I., Bord Bia and IDA Ireland representatives in Shanghai.

EU CO-FUNDED PROJECTS

In 2023 County Council participated in the following EU Co-Funded projects.

CURRENT PROJECTS

Project Acronym: A-AAGORA:

Programme: HORIZON Europe - EU Mission Oceans and Waters

Theme: Climate Adaptation: Coastal Zone Management and Citizen Engagement/Science

Project Summary: This project will address the effects that climate change has on our coasts and the subsequent issues faced by coastal managers, local authorities and coastal communities. The Cork proposal will focus on demonstration activities for the restoration of marine and coastal ecosystems through nature-based solutions that improve coastal resilience. The proposal will involve coastal communities particularly vulnerable to the risks of extreme weather events and sea level rise that urgently need restoration measures to adapt to climate change. The project involves local actors and communities who are active in marine ecosystem restoration and protection including Cork County Council, DHLGH, UCC (MaREI) and coastal communities such as Clean Coast (citizens science).

Project Partners: Ireland: Cork County Council, UCC, Dept of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. In addition, there are 27 other partners from Portugal, Norway, Germany, Romania, France, Finland and UK

Start Date	End Date	Budget	Grant Funding	Match Funding
Q4 2022	Q4 2026	€364,625.00	€364,625.00	€0.00

Project Acronym: HYBES: Approved Q4 2022, Commencement date Q1 2023

Programme: INTERREG NPA

Theme: Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy - Decarbonisation

Project Summary: HYBES will use the Quadruple Helix approach and the Living Lab concept to develop and implement innovative actions that facilitate decarbonisation and advance carbon neutrality goals in each partner region. The project will develop policies and solutions that enable this shift to decarbonisation within defined districts, as well as proactively encouraging and facilitating behaviour change with stakeholders and local communities to further climate change adaptation and promote energy efficiency.

Project Partners: Ireland: Cork County Council, UCC, NCE Insulations. In addition, there are partners from Norway Sweden, Iceland and the Faroe Islands

Start Date	End Date	Budget	Grant Funding	Match Funding
Q1 2023	Q2 2027	€210,000.00	€136,500.01	€73,500.00

Project Acronym: CDREUROPE Approved Q4 2022, Commencement date Q1 2023

Programme: INTERREG EUROPE

Theme: Corporate Digitalisation for Public Authorities, SMEs and Micro Business

Project Summary: Uptake of Corporate Digital Responsibility (CDR) among enterprises, particularly small and medium enterprises (SMEs), is not automatic. It requires awareness, skills and opportunities. Public policy should be positioned to support this.

The overall objective of the project is to improve implementation of regional development policies supporting the uptake of CDR in SMEs, by promoting interregional exchange of experiences, innovative approaches, and capacity building among regional policy actors.

This project will consider how public policy can be improved to support enterprises to become more digitally responsible. It will promote interregional learning and capacity building on the types of support schemes that can help to make CDR a reality, for example:

- Public communication campaigns on aspects of CDR.
- Training schemes for IT professionals, researchers, and other enterprise employees.
- Consultancy schemes to design, develop and implement CDR policies in enterprises.
- Funding schemes to support responsible production and application of digital technologies.
- Networking and cooperation support in aspects related to CDR.

Start Date	End Date	Budget	Grant Funding	Match Funding
Q1 2023 – Q1 2027	Q1 2027	€270,881.00	€216,708.80	€54,176.20

Project Acronym: BioSensei

Programme: Horizon Europe

Theme: Clean Environment and Zero Pollution

Project Summary: BIOSENSEI develops a real-time, multiplexed, end-to-end, tailored and reliable biosensor platform, using cellular responses, for detection of abiotic pollutants. The project will use biosensors and user-friendly diagnostic tools for environmental services and will allow cellular biosensors to be deployed outside laboratory settings for the first time and has the potential to considerably contribute to fulfil EU vision on zero-pollution. BIOSENSEI is a dedicated interdisciplinary and intersectoral consortium of nine partners from five European countries.

Start Date	End Date	Budget	Grant Funding	Match Funding
Q1 2024	Q4 2026	€50,125.00	€50,125.00	€0.00

Project Acronym: Bauhaus Goes North (BGN)

Programme: INTERREG NPA

Theme: Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

Project Summary: The New European Bauhaus (NEB) has been identified as a game-changing approach in creating awareness and practice around the European New Green Deal, and to facilitate an integrated approach to design. NEB does not attempt to develop new technologies or services (e.g. renewable energy, circular economy, or smart technology), but aims instead to integrate these aspects into a unified, holistic approach - while promoting social, cultural and aesthetic benefits and community engagement through co-design practices. This relationship can be seen as 'circular', with different agents creating, collaborating, and enacting upon the earth. In this process, human culture and nature become indistinguishable. It is our view that seeing each design as a part of nature in a wider sense - a new type of 'Green Imaginary' or set of systems of the earth - the idea of 'circularity' permeates every aspect of design - physical, societal, environmental and economic.

The Bauhaus Goes North project is focused on the Northern Peripheries and Arctic (NPA) context - which is made up of three regions: the North Atlantic Islands, Scandinavia and Nordic, and Ireland. The BGN Project will review the state of the art in respect to the NEB in the NPA Region, using the Living Lab methodology and other tools, to identify best practices, and key principles and to demonstrate the application of its approaches. A series of Living Labs will be implemented to brainstorm the stage of development of NEB in each region and we will organise a yearly call for best practices, which will identify and select cutting-edge NEB projects in the region.

Start Date	End Date	Budget	Grant Funding	Match Funding
Q4 2024	Q4 2027	€264,500.00	€171,925.00	€92,757.00

Project Acronym: Clean energy for EU Islands (CE4EUI)

Programme: Clean energy for EU islands – EU Commission

Theme: Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency

Project Summary: Clean energy for EU islands is an initiative of the European Commission, and is the central platform for the clean energy transition of the more than 2,200 inhabited European islands. Despite having access to renewable sources of energy, such as wind and wave energy, many of them depend on expensive fossil fuel imports for their energy supply.

Cork County Council is a stakeholder in this EU Energy Islands Initiative. CCC will assist where appropriate on this project with the West Cork Islands and specifically Cape Clear. This EU funded initiative will provide technical assistance and knowledge transfer to assist island communities with their energy transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources (RES).

European islands vary widely in terms of their geography (climate, resources, size, distance from the mainland), and their energy systems and needs (electrical interconnections, transport needs, as well as heating and cooling needs, industries on the island). However, all islands can aim to be carbon neutral and at the same time maintain and even improve their local economy and habitability conditions. Given that the European Union aims to become carbon neutral, the islands can be guiding examples of how this can be done, considering local challenges and needs.

The “100% RES island by 2030” is a vision of an island where all energy locally produced (electricity, heat or fuel) comes from renewable energy sources and all energy consumed (electricity, heating/cooling or fuel for transport) on the island also originates from renewable energy sources. To achieve such ambitious goals, switching to renewables must be combined with measures to produce, transport and use energy in an efficient manner. It will also be crucial to involve island stakeholders to make sure that local priorities, challenges and needs are addressed. The main aim of this project is to assist with this transition.

Start Date	End Date	Project Budget
Q1 2024	Q4 2026/Q1 2027	No Monetary Budget – Mentored workshops provided and funded by the European Union

PROJECT PROPOSALS SUBMITTED FOR EVALUATION

Project Acronym: WaterWise

Programme: Horizon Europe

Theme: Zero Pollution – Water Quality

Project Summary: The overarching objective of WaterWise is to deliver a Decision Support System (DSS) to monitor in real-time urban water quality in a holistic way and to provide prediction and early warnings about pollution, considering various cost-effective in situ innovative sensors associated with Earth observations. WaterWise is built on 5 keystones - Measure, Analyse, Predict, Support decision making, Benchmark and recommendations to policy makers - and its potential will be demonstrated in 3 operational environments to cover different scenarios; climatic conditions, pollutant types, and water bodies.

WaterWise will develop low cost, high sensitivity, multimodal sensing solutions, deployed in the field to measure in-situ and in realtime a wide range of emerging pollutants (PFAS, pesticides, nutrients, pharmaceuticals), using various technological approaches. The in-situ measurements will be fused with Earth observations to benefit from multiscale information for the decentralised water quality measurement system using Artificial Intelligence beyond Machine Learning standard methods.

Start Date	End Date	Project Budget
Q4 2024	Q2 2025	To be confirmed

OTHER INITIATIVES

Initiative: ERRIN (European Regional Research and Innovation Network)

Timeframe: Ongoing (Cork County Council is a member)

Theme: ERRIN operates across multiple thematic areas, aligned with European programmes. The network is committed to delivering projects linked to the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

Brief Description: Based in Brussels, ERRIN represents approximately 120 regional organisations from more than 20 European countries. Established in 2001, ERRIN supports members to enhance their regional and local research and innovation capacities and further develop their research and innovation ecosystems. The network maintains, close, long-standing relationships with the EU institutions and other organisations to strengthen the regional and local dimension in EU research and innovation policy and programmes.

Work Programme:

- Development of EU project funding proposals.
- Virtual attendance at seminars and workshops



Meihua Cup Chinese Language Competition for Transition Year Students in CETB Schools.



LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN

The Cork County Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) is a statutory plan that takes into account national and regional plans and sets out high level goals, objectives, and actions required to promote and support local economic and community development within the county. This is a 2-phase process, the first of which is the development of a Framework LECP. This is due to be adopted by March 2024.

Phase 2 will commence in March 2024, and this involves producing the implementation plan(s) and monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the plan. Work to be undertaken in 2024 includes:

- Revision of LECP Framework following full publication of the 2022 Census Data.
- Drafting implementation plans for the LECP including:
 - Determination of specific time bound actions under each LECP objective.
 - Determination of outputs and indicators to support the ongoing monitoring of the implementation plan that also contribute to the realisation of the overall LECP goals and objectives.
 - These indicative indicators can be used to inform specific KPI choices to be included to support the implementation of actions in the implementation plans. These will undergo ongoing monitoring based on the prioritisation of actions and the determination of outputs and indicators for each implementation plan.
- Consideration of the resources available to underpin the implementation of these actions. Establishing working groups to ensure implementation of the high-level goals and objectives.
- Working with and facilitating stakeholders (Including LCDCs, SPCs, and advisory and steering groups) to ensure ongoing buy-in and commitment to the development and implementation of the plan.
- Monitoring and reporting of implementation on an ongoing basis. This will require implementation arrangements to be drawn up to suit the content of the LECP and the local circumstances.
- The development of case studies will also form part of the monitoring and reporting process for the LECPs.

ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Cork County Council provides a range of property options, including land, sites, units and hot desking, across the county to support economic development initiatives for existing and emerging enterprises. 2023 saw a further increase in interest in these options following the economic crisis of the previous 10 years with a good number of sales completed and construction completed or underway. Units for rent have also seen close to full occupancy.

CORK INCUBATION KITCHENS (CIK)

CIK, in Carrigaline, is a fully equipped food grade commercial kitchen space which can be rented by the hour continues to provide a cheap and state of the art facility for food enterprises wishing to expand. While usage suffered in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions, 2021 saw a massive growth in usage which continued in 2022 and was sustained in 2023. A huge number of new food business availed of the facility for the first time.



Cork Incubation Kitchens

HOT DESKING

Cork County Council provides hot desking facilities, own door offices, and training/meeting rooms in our E-Centres throughout the county. The council supports the E Centre project both through direct provision in Bantry, Fermoy, Youghal, and Macroom, and in conjunction with community organisations and the private sector in other centres across the county.



Hot Desking Facilities

RURAL DIGITAL INNOVATION HUBS

Cork County Council recognises significant possibilities for the strengthening of its rural economy through the development of rural digital innovation hubs in line with the ambitions detailed in the National Remote Work Strategy. They can function as vehicles to rejuvenate towns and villages, reusing existing buildings and infrastructure, providing footfall and demand for local services and quality workspace for remote workers.

In 2020 and 2021 Cork County Council produced a Hubs Development Strategy providing an evidence-based roadmap for the development of a hub network across the county. This strategy provides the basis for the identification of suitable locations and available buildings for the development of co-working spaces, second sites, fast landing space and smart working facilities. It also identifies suitable broadband connection points (BCPs) for community and enterprise hubs.

With the changes in attitudes to and practice of remote working in the private sector and public sector policy in the move towards a blended model, there will be a continued demand for hub space.

In July 2021, funding was awarded to Cork County Council for the upgrade of 2 facilities at Bantry and Fermoy. The maximum Grant aid of €150,000 (€75,000/location) was awarded following application to the Connected Hubs Call for funding programme from DRCD. Both Upgrades completed in 2022 provide an improved level of energy efficiency at the facilities as well as providing additional remote working places.

Applications for funding were also made in 2021 under the Urban and Village Renewal Scheme for proposals for hubs in Mitchelstown and Cobh Library buildings and a community developed hub in Kiskeam. All were successful, with grants of €500,000, €250,000, and €45,000 offered. Design work was progressed during 2022 on all locations. Kiskeam was completed in late 2023, due to the significant work undertaken by the local development group overseen by Cork County Council as the sponsoring body. Design and tendering were completed for the larger projects in 2023 with commencement dates for Mitchelstown in early 2024 and Cobh, which is more complex due to its historic nature and listed building status, commencing mid-2024. These will make use of unused council owned space in the centre of the towns bringing quality workspace and increased footfall and economic activity. Early work was also undertaken on the development of two community managed hubs in Newmarket and Castletownbere and it is hoped that significant progress can be made on these in 2024.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICES (SOUTH CORK AND CORK NORTH AND WEST)

Small business is at the heart of every town and community in Ireland and accounts for 43% of all people employed in our business economy. Recognised as the first stop shop for every business in the country, Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) have a key role in offering a wide range of mentoring and training supports, advice and consultancy at times vital to businesses in their key stages of development.

LEOs now focus on a range of competitiveness supports which are designed to help business focus on many of their most challenging issues of saving time, money and energy. Entrepreneurs are a cornerstone of government policy focus and LEOs make a very considerable contribution in supporting this vital and vibrant aspect of our country's business engine.

In 2023 Cork County Council's LEOs sought to deliver on key government policies as set out in a range of strategic reports including Project Ireland 2040, Future Jobs Ireland, Enterprise 2025 Renewed, and the most recent OECD report on Ireland. In doing this the LEOs took local needs into account, and both the Corporate Plan and the Cork County Development Plan.

During 2023, LEOs continued to promote inclusion and accessibility in its entrepreneurial offerings and continued to work with the wide spectrum of stakeholders engaged in promoting business within our county.

Key within this is for the LEOs to continue to promote entrepreneurship, foster sustainable business start-ups and develop existing micro and small businesses to drive job creation and to provide accessible high-quality supports for business ideas.

Throughout 2023 LEOs did this with a focus on the following strategic priorities:

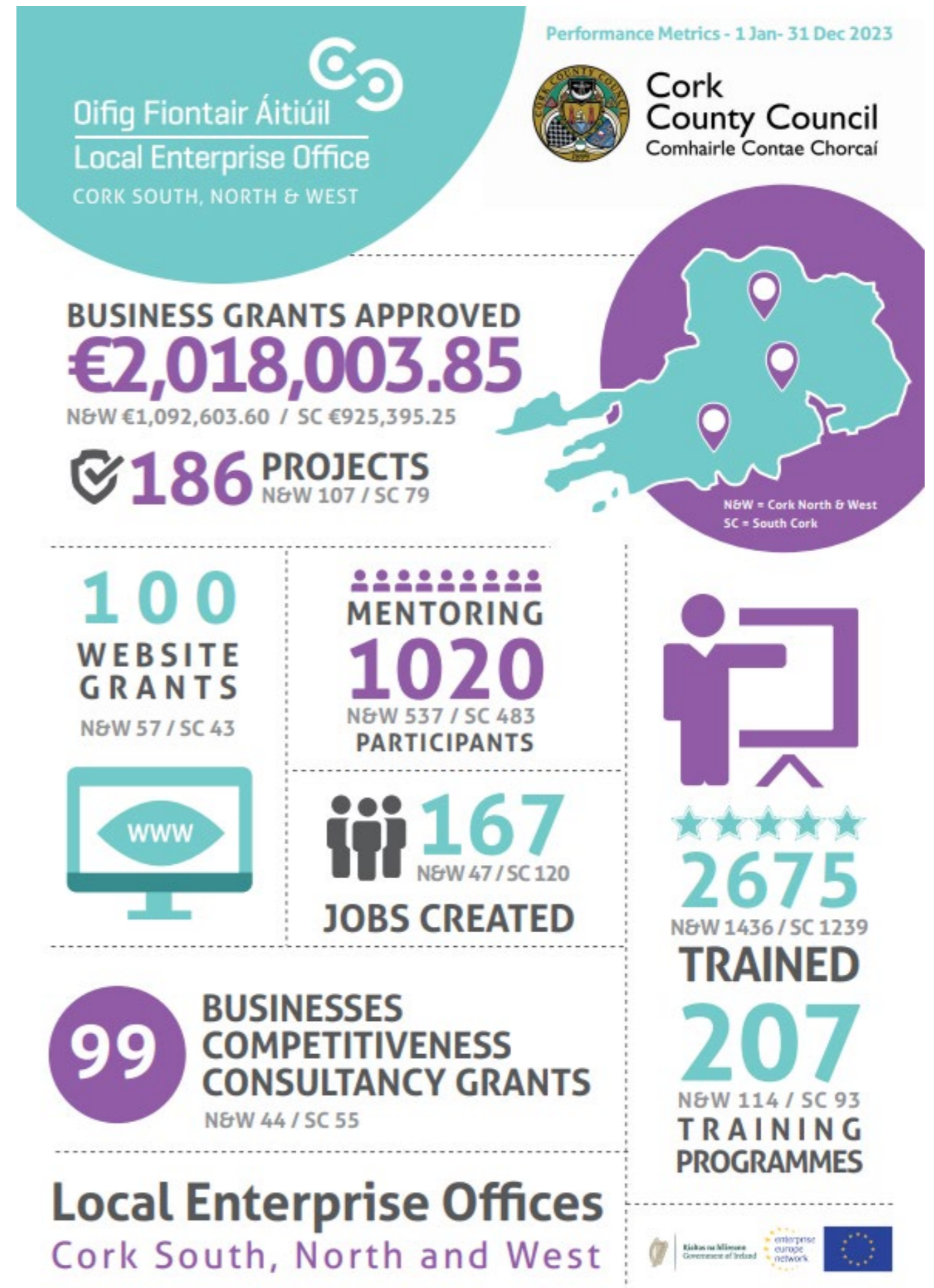
1. Entrepreneurship
2. Competitiveness and Digitalisation
3. Green/Sustainability
4. Innovation
5. Exporting/Internationalisation
6. Networks and Clustering

Under each of these priorities the LEOs continued to deliver on staple supports and programmes such as Start Your Own Business, and LEAN for Micro and Mentoring. However, in delivering on these the LEOs also undertook a range of new initiatives including Green for Business, Digital for Business, Lean for Business, Understanding your Sustainability Journey, and a selection of management development programmes.

Success in exports markets is crucial to the long-term growth of Irish businesses and the Irish economy. The local enterprise officers recognise that support for companies focused on growth through international sales is a priority. We are committed to working with our Enterprise Ireland partners to facilitate the development of a strong exporting sector through active engagement of the LEO portfolio in offering flexible exporting solution to client needs.

In 2023 Cork County Council's LEOs supported 186 businesses directly with Measure 1 Financial Supports and these were approved grant assistance of €2,018,003 which were projected to result in significant new jobs over subsequent years. There was strong demand from the micro enterprises of Cork County for training courses in 2023 with 207 programmes being delivered with 2,675 owner/managers and staff participating. A further 1,020 mentoring assignments took place in the period. There remained a continued demand for supports to help business trade online and 100 Trading Online Vouchers were approved. Many other business supports including sector-specific management development programmes, trade shows and business missions, events and stakeholder partnerships, were provided during the period.

Since their establishment in 2014, LEOs have nurtured and developed small businesses across the county. Embedded within the local authority, LEOs will continue to seek to play a key role in developing and sustaining a positive enterprise ecosystem to the benefit of our wider local economies.



TOURISM/TOURISM CAPITAL PROJECTS

Continued to lead Cork County Council's role in supporting the operation of Visit Cork in conjunction with Cork City Council in the promotion of the Cork proposition.

FÁILTE IRELAND

Cork County Council has continued to work with Fáilte Ireland in the development of Destination Experience Development Plans (DEDPs) including:

- West Cork and Kenmare (Wild Atlantic Way)
- The Cork DEDP (Ireland's Ancient East)
- Ireland's Hidden Heartlands DEDP.

CAPITAL PROJECT UPDATES

TOURISM DESTINATION TOWNS INITIATIVE, BANTRY

This Fáilte Ireland funded initiative, launched in 2019, has a total budget of €670,000, with 25% matching funding from CCC on top of the €500,000 grant funding from Fáilte Ireland.

The project includes the provision of gateway signs on Wolfe Tone plinth, the replacement and updating of the existing Heritage Trail Signage and general signage de-cluttering in the town centre.

Projected project completion by mid Q3 2024.

PLATFORMS FOR GROWTH – WATER FACILITY ACTIVITY CENTRE, CLAYCASTLE, YOUGHAL

This building to be located in Claycastle carpark will, when completed, provide high quality facilities for persons/groups involved in water sports/activities. These facilities with access for all will include changing spaces, storage lockers, toilets, internal and external showers, meeting areas etc.

A Maritime Area Consent (formerly a foreshore lease) application has been submitted to MARA for development on the foreshore. On receipt of this consent a Part 8 planning application will be made. Assuming a successful planning application it is projected that construction on the facility will start in Q1 2025 with substantial completion by Q3 2025.

DURSEY ISLAND CABLE CAR AND VISITOR CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

Reopened on 9 June 2023 following €1.6 million upgrade works. Upgrade works included full replacement of the support tower structures, island anchor frame, and track and haul ropes, as well as full refurbishment of the cable car. CPO process in place for approach road improvements



Dursey Island cable car and visitor centre development

OLD STEAM MILL, SKIBBEREEN

Consultants have been appointed to complete, in collaboration with West Cork Municipal District and the EDET Directorate, the Future Usage Report for the Old Steam Mill.

The first draft of the report was received in September 2023 and consultations are currently taking place to inform the final draft. The report will provide a conservation management plan for the building and a complementary visitor attraction/experience report, themed on the Great Famine.

The final report, which will provide a possible pathway for future redevelopment, was completed at the end of 2023.

TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE

DUNGARVAN TO MALLOW GREENWAY FEASIBILITY STUDY

A Transport Infrastructure Ireland peer review was recently undertaken on the Phase 2 Dungarvan to Mallow Option Selection Process.

MIDLETON TO YOUGHAL GREENWAY

Full funding was secured from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport by Cork County Council for the construction of the Middleton to Youghal Greenway. Construction works on the development of the greenway are progressing well and the current aim is to open the Middleton-Mogeely section of the Greenway in Q1 2024, and the Mogeely-Youghal section later in 2024.

CORK TO KINSALE GREENWAY

ARUP appointed to take the project through TII Phase 1-4 (end of statutory process – subject to TII approval and funding).

Phase 1 – Concept and Feasibility underway – Public consultation on study expected to be completed in February 2024 and Cork County Council is progressing through Phase 1 and is in the process of developing route corridor options. Project Information can be found on the website Cork to Kinsale Greenway Home: <https://corkkinsalegreenway.ie/>.

WEST CORK GREENWAY

SKIBBEREEN SECTIONS

AECOM/ROD Alliance appointed to take the project through TII Phase 1-4 (end of statutory process – subject to TII approval and funding).

Phase 1 – Concept and Feasibility underway – Public consultation on study area expected to be completed in January 2024 and Cork County Council is progressing through Phase 1 and is in the process of developing route corridor options. Project Information can be found on the website West Cork Greenways - Skibbereen Sections: <https://wcgskibbereen.ie/>.

BANDON SECTIONS

Consultants will be appointed in Q1 2024 to deliver TII Phase 1-4 (end of statutory process – subject to TII approval and funding). Project Information can be found on the website: <https://www.wcqbandon.ie/>

COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

‘FOUR POINTS OF THE ISLAND’ SHARED ISLAND INITIATIVE:

Funding of €100,000 awarded under the Shared Island Local Authority Development Fund to progress feasibility study.

The ‘Four Points’ project examines potential to create sustainable tourism experiences to link and cross promote the four extreme geographic points on the island of Ireland.

Feasibility study conducted by Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland (ORNI). Final report presented by consultants in November 2023.



‘Four Points of the Island’ shared island initiative

MARKETING SUPPORTS

MUNSTER VALES

Munster Vales is a vibrant tourism destination linking the counties of Cork, Waterford, Tipperary, and Limerick and incorporating the Comeraghs, Knockmealdowns, Galtees, Ballyhouras, and Nagles mountain ranges. Cork County Council continues to provide annual financial support to market this brand.

CORK COUNTY COUNCIL HAS ALSO PROVIDED MARKETING SUPPORT TO

Visit Cork, Living Youghal, Bantry Tourist Office, Beara Tourism, Gaeltacht Mhúscraí, Crosshaven Community Tourism Kiosk, the West Cork Islands, Ballydehob Jazz Festival, Fastnet Film Festive, Bere Islands Arts Festival, the Sovereigns Cup, the National Rowing Championships, and the Fort2Fort Charity Cycle.

FESTIVALS/EVENTS

The Tourism Section of the Economic Development, Enterprise and Tourism Directorate managed the applications received under the following funding streams:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND

Financial support of 3 large scale festivals/events amounting to a total of €77,500. West Cork Music Festival (comprising of the West Cork Chamber Music Festival, Masters of Tradition and West Cork Literary Festival), Cork Harbour Festival, Cork International Choral Festival.

LOCAL FESTIVAL FUND

25 festivals were approved funding amounting to a total of €65,000.

GREEN YOUR FESTIVAL

“Green Your Festival” grant scheme introduced in 2023 with funding from Environmental Awareness Office to support implementation of waste reduction measures for 8 festivals.

‘EXPLORE CORK’ TOURISM APP

Launched in May 2021 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ‘Explore Cork’ app is a one-stop-shop tourism app, featuring over 850 places to see and things to do in Cork.

The free app is now available in 4 languages (English, Irish, French and German) and can be downloaded from the Apple and Google Play app stores as well as being available to view via web browser on the Cork County Council website: <https://www.corkcoco.ie/en/visitor/explore-cork-app>

‘EXPLORE CORK’ MARKETING OVERVIEW 2023

The tourism unit has continued to develop and market the app throughout 2023 as follows to maximise promotion of the Cork tourism product:

Advertising campaign targeting inbound visitors to Cork Airport continued in 2023, to encourage international visitors to use the app.

Presence at trade shows including Cork Summer Show, Bloom and Holiday World Show.

Print advertising in staycation publications and billboard campaign.

Promotion of app at festivals and events financially supported by Cork County Council.

Tent cards distributed to attractions, tourist offices and accommodation providers with QR codes to encourage sustainable marketing.

Infographic guide video and promo videos developed.

Digital marketing 2023 – new dedicated social media channels in development for launch in 2024.

Engagement of micro-influencers and digital advertising campaigns.



Explore Cork App

SUCCESS OF EXPLORE CORK APP:

- 26,000 currently installed apps at end of Q4 2023
- Winner of 'Best Tourism Initiative' award at LAMA Awards 2023
- Selected to be presented as an example of an exemplary Local Government project at NOAC Best Practice Event 2023



Explore Cork App, LAMA Awards 2023

SPC NO. 4 – TOURISM

The Tourism SPC met on 4 occasions in 2023, on 23 January, 24 April, 24 July, and 27 November. The SPC received presentations on the following in 2023:

- **Ballyhoura Fáilte – North Cork Update and 2023 Priorities**
Jana Mannion, Tourism and Marketing Officer, Ballyhoura Development.
- **Wild Atlantic Way priorities 2023**
Josephine O’Driscoll, Manager Wild Atlantic Way, Fáilte Ireland.
- **Update on Cork County Council’s Ongoing Tourism Initiatives**
Rose Carroll, Tourism Development Officer.
- **Gaeltacht Múscraí Tourism Development**
Strategies for Sustainable Growth and Cultural preservation- Iarlaith Ó Tuama, Tourism Officer, Múscraí Development Cooperative.
- **Visit Cork Recent Activity with emphasis on Sustainable Tourism Activity**
Seamus Heaney, Head of Visit Cork.
- **Update on Cork County Council’s Ongoing Tourism Initiatives**
Rose Carroll, Tourism Development Officer and Liam Lynch, A/Senior Engineer.
- **Response to the Full Council Notice of Motion from Councillor Marcia Dalton dated 26 June 2023 referred to the Tourism SPC, Sharon Corcoran, Director of Service**
“That Cork County Council would provide a report summarising the achievements of the Marine Leisure Infrastructure Strategy 2010 – 2020 and updating in particular on: 1. Progress towards achieving each of the 52 identified actions; 2. Progress towards branding and developing a Quality Mark for marketing of marine leisure in Cork County.”
- **Update on Cork County Council’s Ongoing Tourism Initiatives**
Rose Carroll, Tourism Development Officer.
- **Consideration of Future Policy Areas to be developed by the SPC: Update on Screen Tourism Initiatives Undertaken by Cork County Council to date**
Rose Carroll, Tourism Development Officer.

POLICY REVIEW

CORK COUNTY MOTORHOME POLICY

A draft version of the Cork County Council Motorhome Policy 2023 was adopted by the Tourism SPC on 27 November 2023. The draft policy is expected to be presented to a meeting of full council in 2024.

The Tourism Unit has developed a Motorhome Supports page on the Cork County Council website:

<https://www.corkcoco.ie/en/visitor/motorhome-supports>

This includes a code of conduct for motorhome users, a service map of known designated parking locations in Cork County.

SOUTHWEST REGIONAL ENTERPRISE PLAN

The Southwest Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024 follows on from the Southwest Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020. The new plan was launched in April 2022. To ensure oversight and implementation, a new steering committee chaired by a private sector representative was appointed by government. The current Chair is Ms Patricia Quane, retired VP and general manager of Astellas, Killorglin. The steering committee meets twice yearly.

The steering committee includes key stakeholders, including representatives from Enterprise Ireland, IDA, ETB, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Third Level Institutions, Enterprise Champions, Local Authorities, LEOs, SRA, Regional Skills Forum, and Chambers of Commerce.

Although the plans themselves are focused and timebound, the steering committee mechanism also maintains a live agenda at regional level, responsive to emerging opportunities and challenges, for example: remote working opportunity for regions, climate action/just transition, and regional shocks requiring joined up responses.

The delivery of the 48 actions in the plan is driven by 6 working groups chaired by the 3 Directors of Economic Development in Cork County, Cork City, and Kerry County Councils and consists of a wide range of stakeholders from both the public and private sector, as well as private sector members with key expertise in the relevant strategic areas of interest. These 6 working groups meet on a quarterly basis.

The plan deliberately places strong emphasis on the economic opportunities and potential of climate action and digitalisation, which are the heart of the region's economic growth, competitiveness and future sustainability. The plan takes into account both national and EU policy and the core themes of Resilience and Recovery, Transition (Climate/Digital), Enterprise Innovation and Regional Competitiveness are embedded in the Strategic Objectives.

To help drive delivery of the REPs to 2024, drive best practice across regions, and encourage cross-regional collaboration on areas of common interest and opportunity, DETE has established a National Oversight Group (NOG) for the REPs, chaired by the Minister. This grouping includes the chairpersons and the programme managers of the regional steering committees, national level representatives of the enterprise agencies, and other relevant bodies, as well as relevant Government Departments. The group will meet over the lifetime of the Regional Enterprise Plans to 2024.

This Regional Enterprise Plan for the South-West has 48 actions under six Strategic Objectives as follows:

Strategic Objective	Description
Objective 1	Enhance the enterprise eco-system across the region through innovation, entrepreneurship, and digitalisation
Objective 2	Maximise the potential of digital enterprise and innovation hubs to support digitalisation, business growth, climate action, and smart working
Objective 3	Support cluster organisations in driving the development and growth of enterprises
Objective 4	Bolster the South-West as a leader in sustainable food production and agri-tech through education, technology, and innovation
Objective 5	Embrace the opportunities of climate action in the marine, circular bioeconomy, tourism, and energy sectors
Objective 6	Ensure a strong pipeline of talent in the region, focusing on sustainable high-quality jobs

The steering committee met in April with Minister Simon Coveney in attendance and again in October. The steering committee signed off on the Mid Term Progress Report in Q3 2023 and following assessment by DETE this was made available on the department website. The report details progress on each of the actions contained in the plan and highlights some key initiatives which are underway in the region.

The mid term review is available here: <https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/publications/south-west-regional-enterprise-plan-to-2024.html>

The SouthWest Regional Enterprise Plan, along with Enterprise Ireland and the local enterprise offices supported and promoted the Department of Enterprise event, Building Better Business South West in November 2023, which was a great success with over 170 attendees from businesses across the region.

In October 2023 Minister Coveney announced details of a new scheme of ERDF funding of €145 million over the period 2023 – 2027 to support the implementation of the plans at regional level. The scheme is called the Smart Regions Enterprise Innovation Scheme and is an open call administered through Enterprise Ireland.

The Smart Regions Enterprise Innovation Scheme

The Smart Regions Enterprise Innovation Scheme is aimed at accelerating economic growth in all regions of the country, by working with stakeholders to deliver on their potential regional enterprise strengths, taking an entrepreneurial ecosystem approach aligned with Ireland's new Smart Specialisation Strategy.

The Smart Regions Enterprise Innovation Scheme will support the development of innovative services through local infrastructure, innovation clusters, services to SMEs and early stage feasibility and priming research.

The overall objective of this scheme is to drive job creation/retention and enterprise development in each region throughout Ireland. In addition, Smart Regions funding is targeted at strategic locations regionally where an identifiable deficit exists in key infrastructure, which is necessary to support the micro and SME client base.

These projects shall be:

- Collaborative in nature
- Innovative
- Financially viable (must be profitable business propositions in the case of Infrastructure projects)
- Sustainable
- Focused on delivering metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) which provide additionality to the existing regional infrastructure

The scheme, with a total value of €145.3 million has four support streams:

- Local Infrastructure projects
- Innovation clusters and consortia
- Services to SMEs to drive innovation solutions
- Feasibility and Priming Grants

Smart Regions Enterprise Innovation Fund:

<https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/supports/smart-regions-enterprise-innovation-fund>



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

Finance



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

FINANCE

The Finance Department is responsible for the overall fiscal management of the council's resources. Its duties include the making of all payments including creditors, payroll, loan repayments, and insurance premiums. The department is responsible for maintaining financial records, ensuring compliance with statutory financial reports and returns, and income management oversight including government grants and subsidies. Its duties include the levying and collection of commercial rates, insurance, housing loans debt management, and procurement advice and oversight.

The department is also responsible for:

- Work on the preparation and presentation of the Annual Budget (€403 million, 2023)
- Three Year Capital Programme (€1.27 billion, 2023-2025)
- Annual Financial Statement

In the course of its work, the Finance Department interacts with elected members and liaises with other directorates and offices on a regular basis. It develops and implements financial policies and structures for Cork County Council and provides support services to the organisation. The main units within Finance include:

- Housing Loans
- Payroll
- Payments
- Insurance
- Procurement
- Financial Accounting
- Management Accounting
- Motor Tax
- Non-Principal Private Residence charge (NPPR)
- Rates and Collection
- Treasury Management

COMMERCIAL RATES

A total of €117.4 million was collected in Commercial Rates in 2023 in respect of the circa 12,500 hereditaments across Cork County.

In 2023 Cork County Council introduced the Rates Incentive Grant Scheme. Under this scheme qualifying rate payers received a grant of 3.5% on the first €7,000 of their 2023 rate bill. Overall, a total of €684,000 was paid to circa 6,500 rate payers in December 2023.

MOTOR TAX

The council's Motor Tax section provided postal services for Cork County and City during 2023 as well as providing counter services by appointment, with the added option of an on-site post-box for next day issuing of urgent applications.

In 2023, approximately €13 million was collected in motor tax fees and this income was transferred to central government. There were 93,000 transactions completed during 2023 by the Motor Tax Office and a total of 60,125 tax discs were issued.

In addition to motor tax renewals, the Motor Tax Office also dealt with related motor taxation issues that cannot currently be transacted online, including trade plates, refunds, exempt vehicles, Garda and solicitors' enquiries, and trailer registrations.

INSURANCE

The Insurance Section maintains and manages the various insurance policies that are in place to ensure that there is sufficient cover for risks arising from the council's wide range of operations. There are also policies in place for the protection of the assets of Cork County Council. This section also receives all public liability and employers' liability claims and works with the council's insurer, Irish Public Bodies (IPB), in dealing with these claims.

HOUSING LOANS

The Housing Loan Collection Unit (HCLU) oversees the collection of housing loan payments on a range of loan types and works with borrowers who are in difficulty with their mortgage repayments, to bring down their arrears and provide long term sustainable solutions through the Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process (MARP).

Challenges continue to be significant in collecting mortgage arrears. The impact of the cost-of-living crisis and increased interest rate volatility are the key challenges facing a large number of borrowers. Local authority variable housing loan rates have risen from 2.8% in 2022 to 4% in 2023 with three interest rate increases (0.5% in December 2022, 0.20% in October 2023, 1% in April 2023).

Despite a continued challenging external environment, the HCLU delivered several long-term solutions to unsustainable mortgages during 2023. 10 shared ownership loans with a total value of €1,180,207.12 were restructured allowing existing borrowers in financial difficulty to pursue 100% ownership of their homes, acquiring the rental equity on their property, and setting up repayments at affordable levels. 2023 also saw the completion of two Local Authority Mortgage to Rent (LAMTR) cases total value €217,091.30, which enabled homeowners in significant financial difficulty to stay in their homes by voluntarily transferring ownership to the local authority and becoming social housing tenants. The HCLU completed 32 full mortgage account redemptions in 2023 and attained 2 repossession orders total value €264,453.80 in the District Court. 2023 saw progress on 7 personal insolvency cases with agreements in place for a final sustainable solution. The combined impact of the resolution of these long-standing, high arrears accounts, the continuous attrition of arrears on a larger number of low-arrears accounts and the implementation of short-term MARP agreements to provide borrowers with breathing space to improve their financial situation saw the overall arrears figure fall by 15.18% to the value of €456,161 in 2023.

FOI REQUESTS AND OMBUDSMAN QUERIES

During 2023, the Finance Directorate received and responded to twelve Freedom of Information requests and one Ombudsman request.

PROCUREMENT

The Procurement Section assists buyers to develop their procurement skills and provides tools to deliver best value when purchasing goods, services and works on behalf of the council. The section remains the conduit between national procurement bodies and the council, interpreting and disseminating legislation and guidance to council staff.

The procurement portal, a central repository of template and guidance documentation for the benefit of staff, went live at the start of 2022. Interest in the portal continues to grow with 12,000 visits in 2023 and 1,296 internal viewers.

Staff in the Procurement Section attended several procurement officer forums, webinars, and workshops updating their own knowledge and skills. Directorate staff also participated in number of these fora with a particular relevance to their own roles and work areas.

In 2023, 140 contract notices were advertised via the eTenders platform whilst 592 tenders and quotations were advertised via the [Supplygov.ie](https://www.supply.gov.ie) platform. A new eTenders platform was introduced in May 2023 and the Procurement Section continues to assist staff using this new system. The Procurement Section manages and administers low value purchase (LVP) cards and a new service provider for the LVP cards was appointed by the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) in April 2023.

Green Public Procurement (GPP) continues to be a major focus and the section will work in conjunction with directorate staff to ensure that the council continues to meet its climate action objectives through continuous green procurement upskilling and awareness.

EXTRACT OF DRAFT ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2023:

Revenue Account	2023	2022
Total Expenditure	€403,404,493	393,162,546
Total Income	€444,161,661	419,121,830
Surplus of Year before Transfers	€40,757,168	25,959,284
Transfer to Reserves	€40,664,529	25,897,657
Overall Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year	€92,638	61,626
Opening Reserve @ 01 January 2023	€7,656,878	7,595,252
Closing Reserve @ 31 December 2023	€7,749,517	7,656,878

Statement of Financial Position	2023	2022
Fixed Assets	€7,559,201,870	7,468,134,117
Work in Progress and Preliminary Expenses	570,710,195	490,106,439
Long-term Debtors	€161,641,030	160,763,974

Current Assets	2023	2022
Stock	€883,612	€876,563
Trade Debtors and Prepayments	€129,604,433	107,024,244
Bank Investments	€212,613,849	284,516,307
Cash at Bank	€82,054,364	47,527,014
Cash in Transit	€38,025	41,878
Total Current Assets	€425,194,283	439,986,546

Current Liabilities	2023	2022
Bank Overdraft	€0	€0
Creditors and Accruals	€198,059,594	€227,344,546

	2023	2022
Net Current Assets	€227,134,689	€227,344,546

Creditors (Amounts Falling Due After More Than One Year)	2023	2022
Loans Payable	€281,767,422	€298,390,670
Refundable Deposits	€26,506,640	24,391,921
Other	€49,204,344	€43,360,442
Total Creditors (Long-term)	€357,478,406	€366,143,034

	2023	2022
Net Assets	€8,161,209,379	7,965,502,956



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

Municipal District Operations and Rural Development



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OPERATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Municipal District Operations and Rural Development Directorate was established in 2014 to reinforce the role that municipal districts would play in serving the citizens of Cork County.

RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Municipal Districts – operation, maintenance and development of parks, playgrounds, open spaces, burial grounds, car parking, street cleaning, control of litter, monitoring of derelict sites, dangerous buildings, licensing of caravan and camping parks, school wardens, beaches, swimming pools, museums, heritage centres, progress climate action initiatives and biodiversity interventions.
- Tidy Towns, town approaches, Community Fund Scheme, Amenity Grant Scheme, capital and community contracts, Village Enhancement Scheme, islands grants, Outdoor Recreation Scheme, promotion of tourism initiatives, and licensing for festivals and events at a local level, supports to the islands, development of walking and cycling trails, blueways and greenways, casual trading.
- Management of projects funded under Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, and Town and Village Renewal Grant Programs.
- Age Friendly – Implementation of the Age Friendly Strategy. Improving the quality of life of older people by involving older people in decision making on issues that affect their lives, providing opportunities and supports which enable older people to live full and active lives and providing a framework to coordinate services and stakeholders to meet the needs of older people.
- Marine Section – management of marine operations, piers and harbours, infrastructure and development, cruise tourism.
- County Architect’s Department – Provision of a dedicated architectural service. Strives for excellence in architecture in the delivery of high-quality sustainable development. Supports the conservation and restoration of our natural and built heritage. Protects the historic fabric of the towns and villages that conserve and enhance the ‘well-being’ of residents and the experience of visitors.
- Library Service – Network of 25 physical libraries providing lending, events, study spaces, Wi-Fi, printing and scanning services, 24/7 e-resources and digital services, local studies and family history, 4 mobile libraries visiting 307 stops fortnightly including schools, preschools, nursing homes, residential centres and villages, schools and young people services, annual calendar of national and local programming.
- Arts Service – Provision of services supporting public engagement in the arts and creative practices including:
 - Programming and marketing of countywide events including Culture Night and Cruinniú na nÓg;
 - Arts activity promoting inclusion, integration, diversity, and equality;
 - Local Arts Funding;
 - Advice, information, and training and services supporting the creative artist;
 - Administration of the council’s Creative Ireland programme
- Town Regeneration Office – Management and implementation of Town Centre First Policy across the county including the development of Town Centre First Regeneration Plans, Co-ordination of Town Teams, management of the Derelict Sites Register, Property Activation Programme, Urban Regeneration and Development Fund Call 3, and compulsory acquisition programme.
- Community Integration Department – Management and implementation of community integration and liaison with Local Government Management Agency, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, and Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in this regard.

The key municipal district discretionary funds include the General Municipal Allocation, the Town Development Fund, and the Village Enhancement Scheme.

	General Municipal Allocation (€)	Town Development Fund (€)	Village Enhancement Scheme (€)
Bandon-Kinsale MD	€208,100	115,000	68,750
Carrigaline MD	€188,598	120,000	68,750
Cobh MD	183,394	120,000	68,750
East Cork MD	241,218	120,000	68,750
Fermoy MD	€198,250	€110,000	68,750
Kanturk-Mallow MD	€284,913	€139,000	68,750
Macroom MD	€197,253	€98,000	68,750
West Cork MD	314,000	130,000	68,750

In 2023 the General Municipal Allocation was €1.81 million, with €1.61 million allocated to the Community Fund. The Community Fund Scheme provided support for 581 groups which saw many projects supported under Amenity Grants, Capital Grants and Community Contract Schemes.

AMENITY FUND SCHEME

Total funding of €647,969 was allocated to 378 groups.

Projects included the purchase of equipment for clubs/groups and upgrade of community facilities.

CAPITAL FUND SCHEME

A total of €511,808 was distributed across 50 organisations.

Projects included development of playgrounds and development of community facilities.

COMMUNITY CONTRACTS

153 organisations received total funding of €456,373. These contracts allowed Tidy Towns and community groups to undertake works and small-scale projects which enhanced many areas.

COMMUNITY RECOGNITION FUND 2023

83 projects were successfully allocated total funding of €2,207,035 throughout County Cork under the Community Recognition Fund.

The Community Recognition Fund aims to support the development of community infrastructure and facilities for the entire community in recognition of the contribution being made by communities across the country in welcoming and hosting significant numbers of arrivals from Ukraine and other countries.

BANDON-KINSALE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND SPORTS CLUBS SMALL GRANT SCHEME

23 Projects were supported to a value of €10,000.

PAINT SCHEME

Bandon MD members allocated €15,000 towards the scheme. 20 buildings were successful in gaining the grant.

NATIONAL STREETScape SCHEME 2022

Bandon was the County Cork town chosen by the Department of Community and Rural Development in 2022 to receive this grant. Works totalling €39,000 were undertaken and paid to applicants in 2023. This assisted property owners in improving their properties thus making the town a more attractive place to visit.

BANDON PLAYGROUND



Bandon Playground

A vibrant new family-oriented space for the community, Bandon Play Park includes embankment slides, a wheelchair accessible roundabout and sensory play panels. It is within walking distance of the town centre via the Graham Norton Bandon River Walkway and is adjacent to the existing skate park.

The project was brought to fruition thanks to the dedicated efforts of the Bandon Playground Group CLG, along with support from Cork County Council's West Cork LCDC/LAG and Avondhu Blackwater Partnership CLG.

With a total cost of €264,985 including LEADER funding of €105,869, support from the council's Bandon-Kinsale Municipal District, as well as securing philanthropic support of €100,000 from the Tomar Trust, the new community playground had widespread community backing. This site was generously donated by Cork Marts to the Bandon Playground Group CLG and the people of Bandon and its surrounding hinterland.

BLUE FLAG BEACHES

Bandon-Kinsale Municipal District retained its two Blue Flags for its impressive beaches at Garrylucas and Garretstown. The beaches continue to be very busy with a very effective lifeguard service at both locations during the summer months.

PORT OF KINSALE

The routine work of the harbour continued as normal in 2023. International yacht/visitor arrivals and local leisure and domestic yacht arrivals saw an increase again this year as more people than ever were out on the water enjoying water activities. The 17th Sovereigns Cup was held in Kinsale in June 2023.

- Brexit Adjustment: Local Authority Marine Infrastructure (BALAMI) Improvement Project - Kinsale Harbour - Fisherman's Pontoon Upgrade - installation commenced in August 2023.
- Commercial Cargo Shipping 2023: 7 Cargo Ships, 5 Cruise Ships and 3 super yachts have called to Kinsale Harbour in 2023.

TWINNING WITH BANDON OREGON

Councillors agreed and finalised a twinning arrangement with Bandon, Oregon. When completed this relationship will formally open opportunities for trade, art, cultural, educational and athletics exchanges between the towns.

BANDON TPREP

16 June 2023 saw another big step in the enhancement of Bandon's public realm with the appointment of a contractor for Phase 3 of the Bandon "Transport Public Realm Enhancement Plan" (TPREP). The upgrade works will include the introduction of cycle lanes, upgraded footpaths, universally accessible bus stops, carriageway resurfacing, landscaping, and more, all aimed at transforming the town centre into a vibrant and pedestrian-friendly space with improved active travel connectivity between the town centre and the newly opened community-led playground and the recently upgraded N71 eastern approach, extending to the proposed upgraded Clare O'Leary Walkway.



Bandon Transport Public Realm Enhancement Plan

CARRIGALINE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

In 2023, Carrigaline Municipal District elected members agreed to commit €3,600 towards the members' discretionary fund to support community groups, individuals, and local organizations in the Carrigaline Municipal District.

TOWN DEVELOPMENT FUND

- Carrigaline elected members allocated the €120,000 fund towards the following projects:
- Christmas Festival Provision (2023 Festival Lights Carrigaline, Passage West, Crosshaven)
- St Patrick's Day Festival Carrigaline
- St Patrick's Day Festival Crosshaven
- St. Patrick's Day Festival Passage West
- Streetscape Paint Scheme
- Floral Displays Passage West
- General Festival Provision Passage West
- General Festival Carrigaline
- General Festival Crosshaven
- Power-washing Carrigaline, Crosshaven, Passage West, Ringaskiddy
- Newport News, Virginia, US Twinning
- Urban Forestry
- Playground Equipment/Amenity Carrigaline
- Passage West Library

MINANE BRIDGE 2022 VILLAGE ENHANCEMENT SCHEME

The Village Enhancement Scheme was awarded to Minane Bridge in 2022. The scheme was completed in June 2023. Works included the provision of new kerbing, landscape including ornamental planting and hedging and dressing of gravel.



Minane Bridge Village Enhancement Scheme

BALLYGARVAN 2023 VILLAGE ENHANCEMENT SCHEME

The Pavilion Garden Centre was awarded the Village Enhancement Funding of €68,750 for 2023. Works commenced in September 2023 which will see the clean-up of the existing green areas located near the bus stop, kerbing to be put in place and planted beds to create an abstract biodiversity. Works will also be completed in the green areas across from the church.

PASSAGE WEST OUTDOOR GYM (MARMULLANE PARK)

The new outdoor gym in Marmullane Park, Passage West opened on 22 March 2023. This outdoor gym facility is the first of its kind in the area and is designed to be universally accessible. Carrigaline Municipal District worked with SECAD, local voluntary group 'Positive Passage People' and our South Cork LCDC to bring this €50,000 project to completion.

BALLINHASSIG FITNESS TRAIL

Installation of the playground in Ballinhassig was officially opened on 11 April 2023. The nature-inspired playground incorporates natural play spaces that are designed to adapt to their setting. Located in the heart of the village on a two-acre community park, the project was managed by Cork County Council with input from Ballinhassig Village Association. Since 2019, the council has provided community grants of €41,500 for the enhancement of this valued public space, €9,000 of which had recently been awarded under the 2023 Carrigaline Municipal District Community Fund Scheme. This is in addition to €120,000 funding for the new playground.



Ballinhassig Fitness Trail

NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA TWINNING

A twinning agreement between Carrigaline Municipal District and the city of Newport News, Virginia, US was signed on 19 March 2023. The signing ceremony was attended by 12 delegates from Newport News. The twinning agreement formalises a strong bond of friendship between the two regions, building bridges of understanding and fostering mutual development.

STREETScape PAINTING, SIGNAGE AND IMPROVEMENT SCHEME 2023

Carrigaline Municipal District launched the Streetscape Painting, Signage and Improvement Scheme 2023 for the main thoroughfares within Carrigaline town and Passage West/ Glenbrook/ Monkstown. The scheme provides direct financial assistance to property owners in the designated towns to rejuvenate town and village centres and in doing so, enhance the public realm thereby attracting and retaining footfall.

OUTDOOR RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME 2021 – FOUNTAINSTOWN MEASURE 1

€30,000 was awarded for works at Fountainstown under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) 2021. These were completed in December 2023 and involved clearance and trail work, a shelter for swimming groups and a new bike repair station unit. Under the 2022 scheme Fountainstown was awarded funding of €200,000. This will be used for information boards on biodiversity, provisions of pathway/looped walk, seating on beach wall and landscaping.



Swimming/Rest Shelter at Fountainstown (Mural by local artist Garreth Joyce)

CAMDEN FORT MEAGHER UPDATE

In 2023 works began on the comprehensive revitalisation and enhancement programme of Camden Fort Meagher. The fort will be re-opened to the public in April 2024.



Camden Fort Meagher

COBH MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

COMMUNITY FUND

The Cobh Municipal District continued to support community groups across the municipal district through the Community Fund Scheme, which consisted of the Amenity Fund, Community Contract, and Capital Fund.

Carrignavar Community Council received a grant of €7,440 towards the running of the outdoor swimming pool in the village.

Among the groups supported by Capital Fund in 2023 were Carrigtwohill, Erins Own and Watergrasshill GAA Clubs, Cobh Wanderers AFC, and the Cobh Great Island Community Centre who received an allocation of €10,000.

Presentations were made to a number of groups who completed their capital projects in 2023:

- Springfield Ramblers awarded €10,000 towards the upgrade of toilet and club facilities
- Leaside AFC awarded €10,000 towards upgrade of the astro pitch at Little Island.
- Cobh Golf Club awarded €10,000 towards a new fairway mower.

TOWN DEVELOPMENT FUND

A total allocation of €120,000 across Cobh and Carrigtwohill, supporting various festivals and Christmas markets events. Funding of €13,000 for the Heritage Signage/Shop Front scheme.

PAY PARKING DIVIDEND

Monies from the Pay Parking Dividend were awarded to Cobh Ramblers FC in respect of the installation of flood lighting in their park to ensure they can meet the standards needed to allow games continue into the winter months.

DISABILITY PARTICIPATION AND AWARENESS FUND

Disability Participation and Awareness funding was sought and granted. The fund was used towards the installation of a sensory garden adjacent to the existing playground and amenity park in Glounthaune. This project was undertaken by Cork County Council staff and was officially opened by Minister of State, Anne Rabbitte and Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Danny Collins in June 2023.

COBH HISTORIC TOWN MAP

The Historic Town Map of Cobh, coordinated by the County Archaeologist and the Heritage Unit, was launched in Summer 2023. The map provides a brief history of the development of Cobh and provides the visitor with an authentic heritage experience, highlighting the architectural and archaeological heritage of the town.

PUBLIC REALM

Project funding is awaited for the proposed Cobh Public Realm Enhancement Plan and the Carrigtwohill URDF Initiative, Urban Expansion Area Infrastructure Bundle.

VILLAGE ENHANCEMENT SCHEME/OUTDOOR RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME FUNDING

Works on the Carrigrenan, Little Island facilities were completed during 2023 and are now open to families from outlying areas. This new 2.2 kilometre walkway and playground provide a high quality recreational amenity resource which encourages greater participation in a healthy lifestyle, increased awareness and appreciation of our biodiversity resources, and the promotion of green tourism opportunities.



Carrigrenan Playground

The Village Enhancement Scheme 2023 was awarded to Whitechurch Community for the upgrade/development of pathway surrounding their playing fields, together with the provision of planters and seating in the village.

HARPER'S ISLAND WETLANDS

Cork County Council is the landowner and works in conjunction with Birdwatch Ireland (Cork Branch) and the community of Glounthaune in developing this wetlands reserve. It has provided significant support funding for the development of Harper's Island Wetlands and the reserve previously received ORIS funding for enhancement works to the amenity. Habitat enhancement works within the reserve are ongoing.



Harper's Island Wetlands

DEMONSTRATOR RAINGARDEN SCHEME

The Demonstrator Raingarden scheme was coordinated with the members of CIPU urban design team and is placed at East Beach in Cobh. The aim of this temporary planter educational project is to build community awareness of sustainable drainage solutions. The planters are monitored closely wherein water samples from rainfall are taken before and after it enters the planters and testing the results with the assistance of UCC. The aim of the scientific project is that the planters will clean the toxic runoff surface water from the road before it goes into the sea.



Demonstrator Raingarden Scheme, Cobh

EAST CORK MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

As in previous years the allocation of the General Municipal Allocation of €240,000 for the East Cork Municipal District for 2023 has assisted almost 100 community groups and organisations throughout the municipal district. Residents' associations, community councils, community voluntary groups, tidy towns groups, sporting organisations, and community associations all benefited from grants. The great work carried out by community groups and individuals supported by Community Contracts Grants is acknowledged and much appreciated.

The Town Development Fund of €120,000 is directed to and shared by the two primary towns of Youghal and Midleton, supporting businesses, commercial activity, and festivals in these towns. Other towns and villages throughout the municipal district are supported through the Town and Village Enhancement Fund of €68,500 and under the government funded Town and Village Renewal Scheme as announced by the Department of Rural and Community Development each year and under the Rural Regeneration Fund also provided by that department, resulting in the availability of significant funding each year.

TOWN DEVELOPMENT FUND 2023: €120,000

The Town Development Fund for 2023 was €120,000. The distribution of the Town Development Fund for 2023 was allocated 50% to Youghal and 50% to Midleton.

MIDLETON

- St. Patrick's Day Parade
- Painting Scheme – Midleton
- Midleton Chamber
- Roxborough Park
- Bridge at The Lodge Park
- FEAST (formerly Midleton Food and Drinks Festival)
- Midleton Lodge Park – planting of fruit bushes

YOUGHAL

- St. Patrick's Day Parade
- Painting Scheme – Youghal
- Festivals – Youghal4All – 3 Festivals
- Christmas Festival - Youghal Chamber
- Clock Gate – Marketing and Promotion
- Yew Wood – Marketing and Promotion
- Rebranding and Marketing Strategy
- Youghal Chamber of Tourism and Development
- Dolphin Square – Removal of lights and overhead wires in car park and installation of new lights

Examples of projects grant-aided in various locations in the East Cork Municipal District are:

IRONMAN 2023

On 18 – 20 August 2023 a series of Ironman Events were held in Youghal. These consisted of Iron Kids, Ironman 70.3 and the full Ironman.



Ironman 2023

YOUGHAL MEDIEVAL FESTIVAL

The award-winning festival took place on 6 August 2023. The one-day event is worth in the region of at least €750,000 to the local economy.



Youghal Medieval Festival



Pontoon Bridge, Midleton



Roxborough Park, Midleton

FERMOY MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Cork County Council's Community Fund Scheme contributes financial support to many community and voluntary organisations within the Fermoy Municipal District. In recent years, the Community Fund has supported a diverse range of projects and community initiatives, including infrastructure, sports and leisure facilities and tidy towns.



Kilworth Active Retirement in receipt of their newly purchased Kurling equipment

TOWN DEVELOPMENT FUND 2023

- Mitchelstown St Patrick's Day Parade
- Fermoy St Patrick's Day Parade
- Seasonal Planting in Fermoy and Mitchelstown
- Financial support towards Fermoy and Mitchelstown Christmas Lights
- Fermoy Concert Band in support of centenary year celebrations
- Fermoy Street Art Festival
- Fermoy Town Park upgrade (upgrade of band stand)
- Upgrade of Clancy Street Playground, Fermoy
- Upgrade of Church Hill Playground, Mitchelstown
- Streetscape Scheme for Fermoy and Mitchelstown



Fermoy MD Civic Reception for Fermoy Concert Band Centenary Year Celebrations in 2023

VILLAGE ENHANCEMENT 2023

Draft designs were prepared under the Village Enhancement Scheme for Glanworth, Killavullen and Glenville. It is intended to progress to construction of these projects on a phased basis in 2024 and 2025.

RURAL REGENERATION DEVELOPMENT FUND 2023

In Mitchelstown, Cork County Council will lead the delivery of a project on the development of the Mitchelstown Georgian Cultural/Heritage Quarter. The project will help facilitate the ongoing development of interpretative signage, information points and landscaping along George Street and King Square. The project was progressed to Part VIII stage in 2023.

In Fermoy the Category 2 RRDF project was progressed with the purchase of the vacant building known as “Annie’s Café” on main street being finalized. The renovation and upgrade of this property will form the basis of a future Category 1 RRDF application. Design works on the public realm upgrade also commenced and it is intended to progress this aspect of the project to Part VIII in 2024.a

FERMOY SWIMMING POOL

Works commenced on a €1.2m upgrade of Fermoy Swimming Pool. The works include a range of energy upgrades to assist in reducing energy consumption and improve the operations of the pool. The works consisted of the addition of insulated panels to the existing roof and the upgrade of the mechanical, electrical, and heating systems. Works are expected to be completed in Q2 2024.

FERMOY WEIR REMEDIATION AND FISH BYPASS CHANNEL

High level design drawings and planning documentation were prepared, including a Natura Impact Statement. Consultation was undertaken with local stakeholders in early 2022. Following submission of the planning application in April 2022, An Bord Pleanála’s report is anticipated.

STREETSCAPE PAINTING, SIGNAGE AND IMPROVEMENT SCHEME 2023

14 applications were approved in 2023, with 10 applications completed at year end.

CLANCY STREET PLAYGROUND REFURBISHMENT

Upgrade works to Clancy Street Playground including installation of new play equipment and replacement surfacing completed in 2023.



Opening of newly refurbished Clancy Street Playground, Fermoy

KANTURK-MALLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

TOWN DEVELOPMENT FUND 2023: €139,000

- Painting Scheme for Mallow, Charleville, Kanturk, Newmarket and Buttevant
- Christmas Lights for Mallow, Charleville, Buttevant and Newmarket
- Financial support for Community Centre in Kanturk
- Buttevant Irish Walled Town Subscription
- New Reindeer in Roundabout approaching Mallow
- New Christmas Tree in Buttevant Main Street
- New Christmas Wall lights in Charleville
- Financial support for erection of lights in Kanturk
- New lights in Newmarket

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR EVENTS:

- Ocana Festival
- St Patrick's Day Parade
- Jazz on the garden
- Songs from the Blackwater June 2023
- Haunted Halloween Walk
- Charleville Xmas Lights
- Light up Mallow Xmas Lights
- Christmas illumination Walk
- Christmas Markets

PROJECTS COMPLETED IN 2023:

MALLOW SKATE PARK

A new skate park in Mallow town opened 11 October 2023. This will be a much-needed recreational facility for the area. The project cost €300,000 consisting of €150,000 from a Sports Capital Grant and €150,000 in Cork County Council funds.

MALLOW TOWN PARK

A €250,000 ORIS funded project was completed in the Town Park. This has allowed for the development of the new western pathway and reinforced grass pathways via the recently planted lime trees. The river side path has been improved along with installation of new benches, map boards and stone repair works. Further works to be completed include upgrades to the access points and new signage.

BALLYDESMOND POCKET PARK RRDF CAT 1 PROJECT

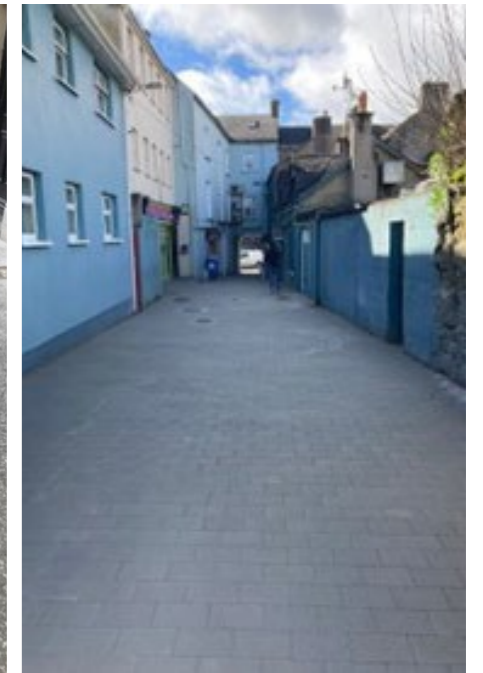
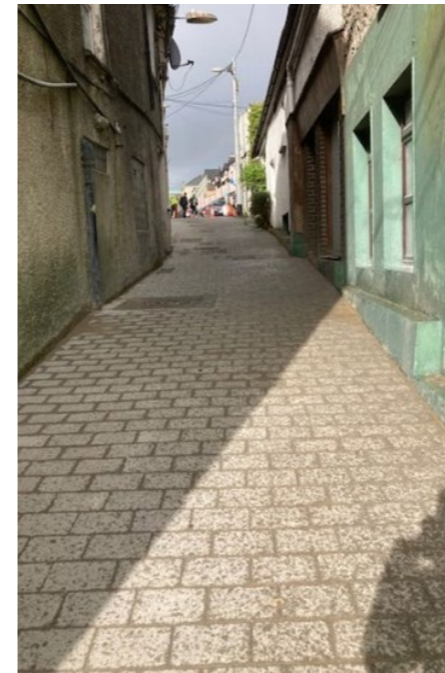
A new public 'Pocket Park' in the village of Ballydesmond. The project has been made possible through grant funding of €868,950 from the Department of Rural and Community Development under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) to enhance Ballydesmond Village through improvements to streetscapes, walkways and park areas. The park was officially opened on 30 November by Minister for Social Protection and Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD.



Ballydesmond Pocket Park

LANE IMPROVEMENTS WORKS

Active Travel Fund at €120,000 - Lane improvement works were completed on a number of public laneways off Thomas Davis Street in Mallow. Works included surface improvements, painting, street furniture and signage.



Lane Improvements Works

MALLOW CASTLE PLAYGROUND, CARPARK AND PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

The final stages of works on the new Mallow Castle Playground, carpark and pedestrian crossing were finalised. This project was funded by URDF grant funding through The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

MALLOW CASTLE – LOWER CASTLE PARK

Works on new pathways, trail to Lovers Leap, new pedestrian bridge and signage which commenced in 2023 were fully completed.

SPA HOUSE GROUNDS

New Public Realm undertaken, car park resurfaced, and house renovated.

KILBRIN CEMETERY EXTENSION

Kilbrin Cemetery was significantly extended to increase capacity with new beams, footpaths, drainage works installed. Further improvement works were carried out to the boundary walls and landscaping was upgraded.

SIGNAGE IN MALLOW TOWN

New MALA gateway entrance signs were erected at St James Avenue and Spa House Grounds. Two further MALA entrances signs were purchased for entry to Mallow at Dromahane turn and Beechers Street and these will be erected in 2024.



New MALA Gateway Signs

PROJECTS CURRENTLY UNDER CONSTRUCTION OR AT DESIGN STAGE

MALLOW CASTLE GRANARY BUILDING

Cost €320,000. Cork County Council has secured a Heritage Grant of €80,000 for 2 years (€160,000 in total) for the repairs and conservation works at the Granary Buildings. A contractor was appointed for the first phase with works to commence in Q3 2023. Works to be undertaken in 2024 include roof repairs, rainwater goods repairs and window repairs.

MALLOW CASTLE ROOF PROJECT

Cost €1.7 million. The contractor commenced works on the restoration of the roof and the project is expected to be completed within a 47-week schedule.

CIVIC/CAPITAL PROJECTS

Location	Project Type	Stage 2023	Stage 2024
Rockchapel	Extension to Burial Ground	Planning granted – currently with law for acquisition of land	Construction
Ext to Dromina	Extension to Burial Ground	Planning granted – currently with law for acquisition of land	Construction
Mallow Pool Building Upgrade	Pool Upgrade	Consultant appointed to undertake detailed design and prepare tender documents	Process to Tender Stage subject to approval and funding
Mallow Running Track	Running Track	Detailed Design Stage	Tender
Mallow Public Realm	Consultant Fees and Construction Works	Awaiting Department approval to proceed to the next stage	Awaiting Department approval to proceed to the next stage
Annabella Building	Refurbishment/ Roof Replacement		
Charleville Plaza	Consultant Fees for Detail Design	RRDF funding granted but on hold awaiting department letter of offer	
Town Hall Theatre, Mallow	Development of Theatre	At Design Stage	

MACROOM MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

2023 was another particularly busy year in Macroom Municipal District with numerous capital projects commenced, underway, and completed during the year as follows:

RURAL REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT FUNDING

In late 2022 Heather Humphreys, Minister for Rural and Community Development, announced the Macroom Development Project as one of the successful Category 1 applications under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.

This Macroom Development Project will see a number of interventions in the centre of Macroom, including the refurbishment of the vacant St. Colman's Church as an arts, community, cultural and heritage facility. The project will conserve and re-establish Macroom town centre as the economic, cultural and community hub of the town.



Macroom Public Realm

2023 HISTORIC TOWNS INITIATIVE – STREAM 2 APPLICATION FOR MACROOM

Under the 2023 Historic Towns Initiative Stream 2 Macroom Municipal District was successful in securing funding of €40,000 towards a Heritage Led Regeneration Plan for New Street and Castle Street in Macroom. A final plan is nearing completion with final amendments underway.

MACROOM MUSIC FESTIVAL

The Lee Valley Enterprise Board (LVEB) sponsored by Cork County Council held its first Macroom Music Festival 24 – 25 June 2023, with the culmination of the festivities being the concert on Saturday headlined by The Frank and Walters. This event was a great community effort and success for the town.



Macroom Music Festival

BÉAL NA BLÁTH - RIAI AWARDS

The “Béal na Bláth Centenary” project scooped 2 major awards at the 2023 RIAI Awards ceremony:

- Category – Public Space and Urban Design (Winner)
- Category - Public Choice – 2nd Place

A fantastic result for a great project of historical significance and well done to all involved including the Cork County Council team and partners.

2023 TOWN AND VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEME – MACROOM MD APPLICATION

Under the 2023 TVR Scheme, Macroom Municipal District has submitted an application by Millstreet Community Council, supported by Cork County Council to purchase a vacant unused town centre building and convert it into a community gym and community space.

OUTDOOR RECREATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME (ORIS)

The Macroom River Sullane Crossing Project has been successful under the ORIS Project Development Measure and has received a grant of €50,000 to develop this project. The proposal is to design a pedestrian bridge to link the North of River Sullane section of Town Park to the South section of the park.

2023 PAINT SCHEME IN MACROOM MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

A total of 72 applications were submitted for the 2023 Paint Scheme for Macroom Municipal District, with letters of offers issued to 69 successful applications.

2023 COMMUNITY FUND

The elected members allocated this funding to various local groups and organizations. The municipal district is working with all groups that have encountered difficulties in completing projects and extensions of time to complete the projects are being considered on a case-by-case basis.

Some of the completed projects assisted by this fund are shown below.



Macroom Tidy Towns Project – New Information Boards installed into the Fairy Garden

2023 VILLAGE ENHANCEMENT FUND - €68,750

The elected members agreed to divide the 2023 Scheme into 2 separate projects, as follows:

- Installation of speed safety measures at a number of locations - €18,000
- Village enhancement works to Coachford Village - €50,750

2023 TOWN DEVELOPMENT FUND

The 2023 Town Development Fund was also maintained at the 2022 rate of €98,000. It was agreed that this fund would go towards the projects for both Macroom and Millstreet.

- Christmas Lights Funding, Macroom and Millstreet
- General Festival Provision, Macroom
- St Patrick’s Day Festival, Macroom
- Floral Displays, Macroom
- Macroom Castle Demesne Project
- Macroom Twinning / Friendship
- Macroom Painting Scheme
- Tourism Promotion, Macroom
- Improvements to Old Fire Station, Millstreet/Pavement Upgrade and Improvements at Minor Row
- Millstreet Painting Scheme

CLÁR FUND

Under CLÁR 2022, 4 successful projects were awarded total funding of €207,505:

COMPLETED:

Crann na n Óg project by Scoil Abán Naofa Baile Mhic Íre Project
 Millstreet Old Fire Station renovation by Millstreet Men’s Shed

ONGOING:

Ballingeary Public Toilets refurbishment project
 Millstreet Community Council for the purchase of community gym equipment



Crann na nÓg project by Scoil Abán Naofa in Baile Mhic Íre

CLÁR FUND 2023

Three applications have been approved for Macroom MD as announced by the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) under Clár 2023 Measure 1:

- | | |
|--|---------|
| • Millstreet Community Hall roof refurbishments and upgrades | €48,112 |
| • Inchigeelagh Community Island Park upgrade project with Croi an Laoi Group | €43,200 |
| • Muinefliuch National School Natural Trail – development of trail | €14,097 |

2023 MACROOM CHRISTMAS MARKET

Macroom Municipal District held its traditional Christmas Market in Macroom Town Square on Tuesday, 12 December 2023. The road at the public toilets was closed for the day to facilitate the erection of a marquee in the square to accommodate additional stalls and to allow for the safe passage of visitors through the market.

PUBLIC TOILETS AT GOUGÁN BARRA

The public toilets at Gougán Barra have been given a facelift with them being newly painted inside and out.

WEST CORK MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Community groups across the municipal district continued to be supported in 2023 by the Community Fund, consisting of Community Contract, Capital and Amenity Funds.

Further projects funded under the General Municipal Allocation include the Hedge Cutting Scheme, Music on the Streets Scheme, costs associated with hire of stage/equipment to community groups for events, burial ground improvements, twinning.

VILLAGE ENHANCEMENT SCHEME 2023 - €68,750

In 2023, the two villages selected for allocation were Goleen €34,375 and Ballineen €34,375.

TOWN DEVELOPMENT FUND 2023 – €130,000

Further projects specific to towns in West Cork receive allocations annually under Town Development Scheme. For example, in 2023;

- Installation of pathway from Gortnaclohy, Skibbereen to the existing path linking the secondary school to the primary schools. €60,000 Town Development Funding allocated.
- Chateaulin Orchards, Town Park Clonakilty – Rejuvenation of Town Park. Town Development Funding of €24,000, plus €30,000 from Community Recognition Fund Scheme.

WEST CORK ISLANDS

WEST CORK ISLANDS INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE

West Cork Islands Interagency Committee chaired by Cork County Council, met on four occasions during 2023. The group's focus is on integrative actions aimed at a more joined up approach to local service delivery and the development of a socio-economic strategy for the future development of the 7 West Cork Islands.

WEST CORK ISLAND COUNCIL GRANTS

8 projects nearing completion at Bere Island, Heir Island, Cape Clear, Sherkin Island, and Dursey Island, ranging from; festivals, purchase of 8-seater electric bus, energy management plan, purchase of picnic tables and benches, planting and trail signage, consultant design solution for lifting boats, and BAVA 4 Year Programme funding. Total Council Grant contribution amount: €43,000. Total cost of 8 projects €169,155.14.

WEST CORK ISLAND MINOR CAPITAL WORKS GRANTS

- Sherkin Island L-8201-0 Phase III Grant allocation €12,004.24. Total cost €13,338.06.
- Bere Island L-48227-0 Grant allocation € 94,500. Total cost €105,000.
- Bere Island L-49227-1 –Grant allocation to date €150,990. Seeking further 2024 grant assistance of €81,783. Total cost of project is €241,860.
- Bere Island Department of Defence Road adjacent to L-8959-0 Grant allocation €122,000 100% funded.
- Dock Pier, Sherkin Grant allocation €22,986. Total cost of project is €25,540.

CLAR SCHEMES

COMPLETED 2023 / ONGOING CLAR PROJECTS:

Completed:

- Glengarriff Tourism and Development Association in conjunction with Cork County Council – Installation of Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)
- Scoil an Chroi Ro Naofa, Castletownbere – Replacement of tarmac ballcourt with an all-weather playing facility.
- Dunmanway Community Sports Hall CLG – re-roofing of half of the Community Sports Hall to make safe and weatherproof.

Ongoing:

- Schull and Mizen Head Tennis Club – upgrade to MUGA.
- Dunmanway Refurbishment of MUGA
- Tragumna - refurbishment of public toilets

2023 RECENTLY APPROVED CLAR SCHEMES:

Location	Project Description	Grant Amount
Durrus	Installation of All Weather Playing Pitch within an existing Community facility. CLAR grant recently approved by DRCD	€50,000
Ballydehob	Upgrade of existing tennis courts and improvement of basketball facilities at MUGA	€50,000
Ballineen/Enniskeane	Renewal of playground equipment to bring it up to spec at BEDA MUGA facilities.	€28,800
Baltimore	Gym refurbishment / improvement of equipment.	€29,835
Castletownbere	Tar and chip 2000 square metres of car park at Droum, Castletownbere GAA Club grounds to improve accessibility	€27,000
Drinagh	Upgrade ground to left of entrance of Drinagh Rangers FC facilities, landscaping to create picnic area with biodiversity planting	€32,670
Dunmanway	Provision of spectator stand at Dunmanway GAA Club grounds	€50,000

TOWN AND VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEMES

ONGOING 2022 TOWN AND VILLAGE SCHEMES:

- Bantry Peace Park Playground – The following funding was secured for this project; Town and Village Renewal Scheme allocation of €216,000, Community Recognition Funding €60,000, and Cork County Council Town Development funds of €46,000.
- The Rock Heritage and Nature Park, Skibbereen – The majority of groundworks is complete, surfacing and amphitheatre paving expected to be complete end of February 2024. €243,000 Town and Village Renewal DRCD funding allocated towards this project.

OUTDOOR RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME

COMPLETED ORIS SCHEMES IN 2023:

- Blue Pool, Glengarriff: Funding for the upgrading of the existing trails in the Blue Pool Amenity area over an approximate length of 1,600 metres. The project was carried out by Cork County Council with the support of the Glengarriff Development Association and Glengarriff Tidy Towns. DRCD funding allocated €500,000. Glengarriff's Blue Pool trails is an award winner at the LAMA national awards.
- Clonakilty Bird Watching Enhancement Project: This project was carried out by Cork County Council with the support of Inchydoney Dunes Conservation Group. DRCD funding of €20,000, with matching funding from Cork County Council in excess of €10,000.



Clonakilty Bird Watching Enhancement Project

ONGOING ORIS SCHEME:

Tragumna – Demolition of existing steps, removal of handrail, and installation of new access steps on western side of beach, and coastal protection works. ORIS allocation of €30,000, and total cost is €34,000.

TOWN CENTRE FIRST

As part of the national Town Centre First Policy initiative, Skibbereen in West Cork has been identified as a 'pathfinder' town and funding has been granted to Cork County Council for the development of a Town Regeneration Plan. Cork County Council are currently progressing the Town Regeneration Plan for Skibbereen. Department funding of €100,000 has been allocated towards the production of this plan, which is nearing completion. Once the plan is approved, funding is to be sourced for proposed projects arising from same.

BEACHES

West Cork Municipal District were delighted to retain 5 Blue Flag Awards and 8 Green Coast Awards in 2023.

West Cork Municipal District managed several projects in this area in 2023, including:

- Improving the access at Tragumna Beach with the ongoing installation of new access steps on the Western side of the beach
- Replacement works ongoing of Barleycove Lifeguard Station

WEST CORK GREENWAY

Cork County Council appointed consultant AECOM-ROD Alliance as technical advisors to progress with the first phase of development of the West Cork Greenways Project. The project is being developed as part of an ongoing commitment to developing greenways across the county, aligning with the government's National Development Plan 2021 - 2030.

SKIBBEREEN TOWN HALL THEATRE

Skibbereen Town Hall was upgraded and extended in 2023. The Town Hall reopened its doors on Tuesday, 28 June 2023, with the local theatre society presenting the play "Spirit Level".

DURSEY CABLE CAR

Durseley Cable Car was reopened to islanders and the public on 9 June 2023 following a €1.6 million upgrade. The works involved full replacement of the 24 metre tower structures and the island anchor frame. Replacement of the track and haul ropes was also necessary.

MICHAEL COLLINS HOUSE MUSEUM

In 2023 Michael Collins House welcomed over 20,000 visitors to the museum. This is a significant increase on any other 'non-centenary event' year. To meet demand Michael Collins House has extended its winter opening hours, now opening 5 days a week all year.

SKIBBEREEN HERITAGE CENTRE

Skibbereen Heritage Centre had a highly successful year in 2023 with visitor numbers at 14,800 and over 3,250 genealogy queries handled via email and in-person consultations. The centre featured on local, national, and international media throughout 2023. The centre also hosted a series of events and supported US colleges to come and stay in Skibbereen.

PIERS AND HARBOURS - CRUISES

2023 was the first full year of a return to operational and promotional activity, post COVID-19, of West Cork as a destination for cruise tourism. West Cork's offering of small harbours, inhabited islands and unique experiences make a compelling proposition for the rapidly growing expedition and small ship cruise sector and a further increase in calls is anticipated for the coming seasons.

WEST CORK REGIONAL LEISURE CENTRE, DUNMANWAY

West Cork Leisure Centre - Dunmanway is open to the public 80.5 hours each week (gym and pool) with more than 57,000 admissions to the pool in 2023. In addition to this we had more than 2,000 visits through schools and children's private lessons. The gym use continues to grow with more than 4,000 entries throughout the year.



Dunmanway Swimming Pool

ARCHITECTS' DEPARTMENT

The Architects' Department plays a pivotal role in the promotion of good design and architectural awareness within Cork County. They continued to provide invaluable input into the design of many projects in 2023. Their key projects include:

KINSALE LIBRARY

Designed by Cork County Council's Architects' Department and shortlisted for the RIAI Architecture Awards 2024, the new Kinsale Library involved the complete refurbishment of this 3-storey, 8-bay, 19th century former granary and protected structure at Church Square, Kinsale. Key to the intervention was the design and installation of a new glue laminated timber structure suspended from the existing rubblestone walls, accommodating thousands of new books and 500+ visitors per day since opening in August 2023.



View of completed project from newly resurfaced adjacent carpark.

BANTRY LIBRARY

Cork County Council's Architects' Department led an emergency conservation works package to safeguard the building from falling into further disrepair in 2023 with support from the Heritage Council's, Historic Towns Initiative. Works included specialist repair of leaded curved window, replacing all external windows and doors, repairs to upper and lower roofs and replacement of existing rooflights.

MALLOW TOWN HALL THEATRE

The Mallow Town Hall project involves the complete remaking of an assembly of protected structures located on Main Street in the heart of Mallow. The brief includes a 200-seater auditorium, tourist office, café/bar, function room, community meeting space. The design team completed detailed design in 2023.



Mallow Town Hall Theatre - Computer Generated Image

MACROOM LIBRARY AND BRIERY GAP THEATRE

The Macroom Library and Briery Gap Theatre project is in Macroom's town centre and will deliver a unique, high-class mixed-use amenity building, boasting a new fully accessible municipal library and 217 seat theatre together with break-out bar space and ancillary support spaces. Designed and led by Cork County Council's Architects' Department, the project commenced works in January 2022 with works to be completed in Q2 2024.

MITCHELSTOWN PUBLIC REALM

In collaboration with REDscape Landscape and Urbanism, Cork County Council Architects' Department have developed a design for proposed public realm enhancement at the core of Mitchelstown and successfully obtained Part VIII planning in 2023. The proposed public realm development will produce social, economic, and environmental / physical benefits with the potential to attract visitors, create a strong sense of place and facilitate enhanced pedestrian permeability, making Mitchelstown a more attractive place to work, live, visit, and invest. The scope of Mitchelstown Georgian Quarter Public Realm consists of the following areas: King St., George St. and Kingston College/Kings Square.



King Street



George Street

CLONAKILTY FIRE STATION

Construction of a new fire station located on Park Road in Clonakilty commenced in August 2023. Using a collaborative and cross departmental holistic approach, working closely with the Fire Service and other stakeholders, the project is designed by Cork County Council Architects' Department in collaboration with DJF engineers and contractor Cahalane Brothers. This fire station is modern and designed to enable Cork's fire fighters to carry out their essential work. The new building has a total floor area of approximately 340 square metres over one floor and is composed of two main formal elements, an appliance bay where the fire engines are parked and a domestic bay to house the watch room, muster bay, kitchenette, lecture/training room, and ancillary spaces. Works to be completed in Q3 2024.



3D Image of Clonakilty Fire Station

LIBRARY SERVICES

2023 was an excellent year for the Library Service with all indicators showing strong growth. Our membership increased from 50,059 in 2022 to 54,143 in 2023. Over 149,000 people attended more than 5,000 events and activities and we filled over 70,000 borrower requests. Remote printing is now available at all our library branches and mobile libraries.

Following the introduction of MY OPEN LIBRARY services at Fermoy and Bandon Libraries in late 2022, the first year of this offering was very well received at both locations. This service allows registered members to access the library from 8:00am to 10:00pm 365 days a year and is especially in demand by students.

NEW KINSALE LIBRARY

Kinsale Library opened to the public on Wednesday, 9 August 2023. The new library is 674 square metres over 3 floors with approximately 25,000 books, a 5-fold increase from the old Kinsale Library total of 5,000. In the first 3 months staff welcomed over 30,000 visits to the library, issued over 14,000 items and facilitated 2,277 new members.



New Kinsale Library Study Area

LIBRARY DIGITAL AND ONLINE SERVICES

2023 marked a year of growth for Cork County Library in the expansion of digital services and technology throughout our branch network. Over €21,000 in funding was received from the Department of Rural and Community Development for upgrading our public internet PCs and procuring devices to further promote our digital services. Usage of our online resources continued to grow which saw an increase of 20.6% in 2023. The combined E-Book and E-Audiobook issues were up by 25.87% on the previous year. Digital screens were also introduced in several branches promoting our suite of services to users as they enter our buildings, with plans to install more in the coming year.

CLIMATE ACTION

During 2023, the Library and Arts Service, teamed up with the Energy and Climate Change Department and took part in their campaign "Make one change – Cork Cuts Carbon". In which the Library Service held 65 events during November. Events included a talk by marine environmentalist, Rory Jackson,

in Skibbreen Library and a fast fashion talk in Mallow. An art competition was also held, to design a new adult library card. The winning entry was designed by Stephanie Abresch, a member of Charleville Library.



Charleville Library staff presenting prize.



Bantry Library Conservation Grant

AWARDS, SUCCESSFUL GRANTS AND FUNDINGS

Through the Dormant Account Funding in 2023, Cork County Council Library and Arts Service added to its range of sensory toys and equipment in library branches. The funding of €4,478 was used to acquire sensory aids including fine motor boards, mood cubes, chunky puzzles, ear defenders and weighted shoulder snakes. These were also used to create a welcoming space in the newly opened Kinsale Library.

In 2023, Cork County Library successfully applied for funding under the Historic Towns Initiative from the Heritage Council for Bantry Library. The

funding of €259,920 was towards the external conservation works including the replacement of the unique window structure which will improve the energy efficiency and light of the building and make it more comfortable for library users and staff.

HEALTHY IRELAND AT YOUR LIBRARY

The Healthy Ireland at Your Library programme celebrated Cork Bike Week in May 2023. Several talks took place in library branches from speakers who cycle for leisure, to those who saw the world using cycling as their mode of transport. Through a colouring competition, we encouraged younger members to design a cycling t-shirt. The 2 winning applicants were chosen out of 770 applicants.

COMIC FESTIVAL

With the increasing popularity of graphic novels and to launch the Comics Plus app and a new print collection of graphic novels for all ages, Cork County Library held its first Comic Book Festival in November. Costume Designer, Gwen McGuirk, brought her creative expertise to Mallow and Skibbereen libraries to help adult cosplayers design their own costumes.

Comic Book writer and editor, Colin O'Mahoney, brought his knowledge and passion for all things comic book related to 3 creative writing and comic book making workshops at Fermoy, Midleton, and Schull Libraries. Attendees learned how to map out their ideas in images and words and how to create their own story boards.



Grainne as The Riddler in Bandon Library

ONE COUNTY, ONE BOOK AND TEEN LITERATURE FESTIVAL 2023

In its third year, award-winning Irish author Jane Mitchell and her novel Run for Your Life was nominated as the 2023 One County, One Book title. 650 copies of Jane's novel were gifted to schools and Youthreach centers to allow them to read together in advance of meeting the author, to discuss the topics and themes raised in the book and ask questions of the author. 15 schools and 2 Youthreach groups participating in this year's programme.



One County One Book 2023

Graffiti Theatre and Fighting Words author Kel Menton also presented two creative writing workshops for 50 students of Youthreach Bandon and Fermoy which they greatly enjoyed.

In total, almost 3,500 young people attended both One County, One Book and Teen Literature events in November 2023 which is a significant increase in the numbers of young people engaging with Cork County Libraries.

MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE

2023 afforded the Mobile Library Service the opportunity to interact with many different sections and departments in addition to its core services. Books issued through the mobile library service account for almost 14% of all issues, highlighting the importance of the service to the rural communities.

Mobile East represented Cork County Library and Arts Service at the National Ploughing Championships in Co. Laois. There were over 1,000 visitors to the mobile library area per day. Overall, it proved a great opportunity to link in with the other departments such as Rural and Community Development and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.



Minister O'Gorman visits mobile library at the Ploughing Championships

LIBRARY INCLUSION PROGRAMMING

In keeping with our commitment to delivering an inclusive service our network of inclusion working groups helps us to develop and deliver meaningful programmes to those marginalised or at risk of marginalisation. Senior Occupational Therapist, Jess Kennedy, gave a series of talks on the sensory equipment available in Dunmanway, Youghal, Cobh, Mallow, Skibbereen, Newmarket, Bandon, Clonakilty, Ballyvourney libraries in early 2023. All libraries are stocked with a sensory comfort kit. In addition, Bandon Library has a sensory nook and Mallow Library a sensory pod available for use.

LGBTQIA+

To mark International Transgender Day of Visibility, Cork County Council Library and Art Service offered a change of library account details service for any transgender or gender diverse person over 18 years, across Cork County. A dedicated phone line was available throughout the day and was answered by library staff who had received gender identity awareness training to ensure that callers were treated with sensitivity.

A Space for Everyone campaign was also launched. The theme of this Library campaign is A Space for Everyone which we hope will communicate that libraries are a safe space for all communities and will act as a visible endorsement of our commitment to inclusion.



Laoise and Oonagh at Clonakilty Brod Festival

ARTS SERVICE

Cork County Council's role in arts provision is based on a strategic approach to:

- Delivering arts and cultural services that contribute to a high quality of life and environment
- Supporting the work and career development of the creative artist
- Improving access to and participation in the arts by all sectors of our community
- Supporting the economic vitality of the county through the development of festivals, the creative industries, and audio-visual production

ARTS GRANT SCHEME

The Arts Grant Scheme is Cork County Council's primary mechanism for providing support to the county's arts sector. The 2023 Arts Grants Scheme was approved by Council on 13 February with a budget of €126,000. Additional funding of €4,500 was provided for Irish language arts by the Irish Office budget and a sum of €13,400 was provided by the council's annual revenue grant from the Arts Council for artist bursary support.

228 applications were received, representing a 33% increase in applications when compared to 2022.

CREATIVE PLACES WEST CORK ISLANDS

2023 was the first full year of Creative Places, an Arts Council funded art engagement and development programme for the West Cork Islands and mainland coastal communities. The programme provides for investment in a range of art initiatives in island communities with an aim to develop and sustain community-led cultural resilience. One of the programmes delivered was "A Green Rope for Sherkin": in which, artist William Bock delivered a rope-making workshop made from wild plants growing on Sherkin Island.



Image courtesy of the artist, Creative Places West Cork Islands and Sherkin Island Development Society.

ARTS TRAINING

Access All Areas: A training programme devised by the Arts Office to support cultural organisations in County Cork took place in 2023. With an aim to increase access, inclusion and participation for artists, arts workers, and audiences with disabilities. This programme was free for participants and limited to 10 organisations. Participating organisations were allocated seed funding to implement a small programme to increase inclusion and participation in their organisation. They also received one-to-one mentoring to develop their idea.



First day of training in Cope Foundation with Pete Duncan

CULTURE NIGHT

Cork County Council Arts Office provides a local coordinating and management role for Culture Night, the national celebration of the Arts, which took place on Friday, 22 September. 17 key towns in the county's 8 municipal districts were designated as Culture Night Hubs this allowed for a more developmental approach in terms of bringing various voluntary organisations together to work for a common purpose. There were over 252 events organised throughout 191 venues with the involvement of over 894 artists and creative practitioners.

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS:

- Open-air Film screening at Mallow Castle
- Car park Craic and Parade in Carrigaline
- Unusual Art in unexpected places in Bandon, Cobh, Skibbereen



Car Park Craic and Parade in Carrigaline.

CULTURAL COMPANIONS

The Cultural Companions programme is an initiative of Age and Opportunity. It aims to combat isolation for older people by providing increased opportunities for older people to go to or take part in cultural and creative activity. Membership in 2023 has grown to over 500 members creating an additional audience of approximately 180+ at Arts and cultural events in County Cork. Hub groups were established in Bantry - serving West Cork - Mallow, serving North Cork – and Midleton, serving East Cork.



Deputy Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr John Healy with chair of Cultural Companions Finbarr Motherway at the launch of the East Cork Cultural Companions Hub

BEAG EARLY YEARS ARTS

The Arts Office in conjunction with Cork City Council Arts Office and the Health Promotion Unit of HSE South continues to work with Graffiti Theatre Company on BEAG, a research and action based arts programme that is directed towards the development and delivery of suitable creative arts activity programmes for the very young (0-3 years). This project is supported by childcare providers in local areas.

PERFORMING ARTS

West Cork Fit-up Festival This annual festival provides a platform for contemporary Irish writing for the theatre. In 2023 it featured performances by Cork actors including Olivier Award winning actor Pat Kinnevene and actor Michael Patric who played Da in the Oscar nominated *An Cailín Ciúin*. The locations for the 2023 Festival were Ballydehob, Kilcrohane, Glengarriff, Whiddy Island, Bere Island, Heir Island, Sherkin Island and Timoleague.

PUBLIC REALM BALLYDESMOND RRDF PUBLIC ART COMMISSIONS

Two new artworks were commissioned as part of the village enhancement programme supported through the RRDF programme. Commission 1 is for a large sculptural installation at the entrance to the newly constructed village park area. The second commission is located on the village's main street and combines a sculptural figure with a functional seating area.



Ballydesmond RRDF Public Art Commission

HOUSING DIRECTORATE PER CENT FOR ART

Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Danny Collins officially launched the Eastát Garrán Feá / Beechgrove, Clonakilty Per Cent for Art Scheme artwork on 1 June, in a family-centred afternoon of fun, games and refreshments. County council staff from Arts, Housing and the local municipal district office were also present. The artists were Anne Kiely and Carmel Creaner.



Eastát Garrán Feá / Beechgrove, Clonakilty Per Cent for Art Scheme artwork

CORK AGE FRIENDLY COUNTY PROGRAMME

The Cork Age Friendly County Programme is led by the Cork County Age Friendly Alliance. The Alliance brings together senior leaders from An Garda Síochána, HSE, transport providers, voluntary organisations, third level institutions, individual leaders, and members of Cork County Older People's Council. All of these stakeholders share the vision of improving the quality of life for older people in County Cork.

Cork County Older People's Council AGM Celebrates Remarkable Achievements and Welcomes New Leadership

Cork County Older People's Council (OPC) hosted their Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Wednesday, 13 September 2023, at the Kingsley Hotel. This event, welcomed over 100 attendees, including distinguished representatives from Age Friendly Ireland, Irish Hospice, Local Link, HSE Community Workers, Cultural Companions, Vodafone Hi Digital, ALONE, and Cork County Libraries.

Following the AGM, a new executive committee was elected to lead the Cork County Older People's Council. Liz Downes from Mitchelstown assumes the role of Chair, while Eleanor Coughlan from Clonakilty takes on the responsibilities of Vice-Chair, and Christy Roche from Fermoy assumes the role of PRO. Their combined experience and enthusiasm are set to guide the council towards even greater success in the years to come.



Members of the Cork County Older People Council Executive with the Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Frank O'Flynn

Membership is open to all County Cork residents aged 55 and above. For additional information, inquiries can be directed to agefriendly@corkcoco.ie.

CORK COUNTY COUNCIL RECOGNISES WINNERS OF AGE FRIENDLY HOUSING COMPETITION

The Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Frank O'Flynn, had the pleasure of presenting the awards to the exceptional talents behind the winning entries in the Cork County Council Age Friendly Housing Competition. This competition, proudly supported by Cork County Council and the Cork Centre of Architectural Education (comprising UCC and MTU), provides a platform for second-year architecture

students to showcase their ingenuity in designing age-friendly housing solutions. This year's challenge focused on the creation of community-based, age-friendly designs, with a special emphasis on disability-aware design. Amy Cotter emerged as the recipient of the prestigious first-place award for her outstanding project, while Kamil Labuda secured the second-place position, and Ellie O'Connell was placed third.



L-R Amy Cotter, The Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Frank O'Flynn, Ellie O'Connell and Kamil Labuda

BANTRY AGE FRIENDLY DIRECTORY OF LOCAL SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE

The Mayor of Cork County, Cllr. Danny Collins officially launched the Bantry Age Friendly Directory of Local Services for Older People on Wednesday, 22 March. The first edition was compiled, printed, and distributed in 2021. The guide proved extremely popular and required a reprint and update to meet demand.



Bantry Age Friendly Directory of Local Services

COUNTY COUNCIL AGE FRIENDLY STRATEGY 2023 – 2028.

The Cork County Age Friendly Team are currently researching and developing the Cork County Council Age Friendly Strategy 2023 – 2028. To date there have been 8 in person focus groups around the county to review the previous strategy. The publication is due for release at the beginning of 2024.



Focus Group in Castlemartyr

HEALTHY AGE FRIENDLY HOMES

Cork County Council rolled out a new initiative, Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme to help allow older people to be cared for in their homes and communities for as long as possible. The programme aims to enable older people to continue living in their homes or in a home more suited to their needs, to live with a sense of independence and autonomy, to be a part of their community, and to avoid early or premature admission to long term residential care. Referrals can be made to the programme by phoning 046 909 7417 or by emailing info@agefriendlyhomes.ie.



NATIONAL AGE FRIENDLY RECOGNITION AND ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Cork County Council was delighted to be shortlisted for the Age Friendly Recognition and Achievement Awards held on 30 November 2023. The project shortlisted was 'The Art of Living: Documentary' by Cormac O'Connor. This is a short film about creativity in older people which showcases and celebrates a selected group of our older citizens who are highly active in the community and the arts. This project coordinated by the Cork County Arts Office was funded under the Creative Ireland Positive Ageing and Creative Wellbeing Challenge Fund.



National Age Friendly Recognition and Achievement Awards

CORK COUNTY AGE FRIENDLY ALLIANCE

The Cork County Age Friendly Alliance met 4 times in 2023. The Cork County Age Friendly Alliance is a strategic partnership for the county that brings together the statutory, private, voluntary and community sectors to create new initiatives and services and enhance those that already exist for older people in their communities. The Alliance brings together senior leaders from the An Garda Síochána, HSE, transport providers, voluntary organisations, third level institutions, individual leaders and members of Cork County Older People's Council. All these stakeholders share the vision of improving the quality of life for older people in County Cork. For further information on the Cork County Council's Age Friendly Programme, please contact agefriendly@corkcoco.ie

TOWN REGENERATION OFFICE

The Town Regeneration Office (TRO) was established in April 2023 to support town regeneration across the County in line with the objectives of the Town Centre First Policy. The TRO works closely with the National Town Centre First Office and with the Department of Rural and Community Development to advance these objectives. The primary focus of the Town Regeneration Office is on implementing the Town Centre First Policy across County Cork, with a particular focus on vacancy and dereliction, which are among the most visible of town centre issues. The TRO works closely with a number of Cork County Council directorates and engages with a wide range of external stakeholders to support the activation of vacant and derelict properties, and the advancement of plans to promote the regeneration of town centres.

SKIBBEREEN TOWN CENTRE FIRST REGENERATION PLAN

Skibbereen was identified as a 'pathfinder' town as part of the national Town Centre First Policy initiative: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/473d3-town-centre-first-policy/>, with funding granted to Cork County Council for the development of a regeneration plan for the town.

The launch of the initial consultation survey in August of 2023 yielded 930 submissions from the general public and following the initial information meeting in September 2023, a focus group or 'town team' of 8 community representatives was formed.

The Skibbereen Town Centre First Regeneration Plan was finalised in December 2023 at a public community display event in Skibbereen Town Hall and includes 36 specific objectives, principles, and projects. The Town Centre First Regeneration Plan for Skibbereen is intended as a resource for all stakeholders and as a support for Cork County Council in leveraging funding for regeneration projects.



Launch of Skibbereen Town Plan

VACANCY SURVEY

The Town Regeneration Office worked closely with the Department of Heritage, Housing and Local Government in 2023 as part of a pilot vacancy survey programme. Over the course of 2023, 2,713 properties were surveyed countywide for assessment of vacancy. Properties confirmed to be vacant through the survey are currently being progressed by dedicated staff who are responsible for identifying owners and either promoting activation schemes (Croí Cónaithe, Repair and Lease, Buy and Renew) or taking action under the Derelict Sites Act.

DERELICT SITES

In 2023, a comprehensive review of Cork County Council's Derelict Sites Register was undertaken including a review of the market valuations of derelict sites and of changes in the ownership of properties on the Derelict Sites Register. 50 derelict site inspection reports were completed, with 41 notices issued to property owners under the Derelict Sites Act 1990. 20 properties were added to the Derelict Sites Register in 2023. 8 properties were removed from the register during the year, with a total of 71 properties remaining on the register at 31 December 2023.

In addition to this, 10 confirmed owners of derelict sites were issued with Section 22 notices notifying them of the council's determination of the current market value of their derelict site. This facilitates the issue of levy demands to the value of €87,500, subject to appeal, in 2024.



Lár Bailte ar dTús Town Centre First

OWNER ENGAGEMENT

Engagement was initiated with the owners of 69 vacant and derelict properties in 2023 by the Town Regeneration Office. The purpose of this engagement is to understand the reasons for vacancy and dereliction and to work with owners to support activation of these properties. Successful owner engagement outcomes in 2023 include prompting owners to bring properties to the market for sale, encouraging owners to engage with the planning authority to activate properties and supporting owners to apply for financial aid to refurbish properties.

ACTIVATION PROGRAMME

Under the URDF Call 3 – Vacancy and Dereliction Fund, Cork County Council secured a €5 million allocation for the acquisition of derelict and vacant properties for the purpose of re-sale on the open market to aid residential development. A total of 28 properties approved under this scheme are being advanced by the Town Regeneration Office for activation.

VACANT PROPERTY REFURBISHMENT GRANT / CROÍ CÓNAITHE

The Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant was launched in July 2022 to support the activation of derelict and vacant properties for use as principal private residence. In 2023, this support was extended to properties for use as rental accommodation and a total of 460 applications were processed by the Town Regeneration Office over the course of 2023.

In 2023, Cork County Council inspected and approved grants for 306 properties to the value of €16.5 million. A significant number of these approvals will mature over the course of 2024 resulting in a substantial number of previously vacant and derelict properties refurbished across the county.

COMPULSORY ACQUISITION

Where collaborative efforts to engage with owners fail, the Town Regeneration Office can utilise the powers granted to local authorities under the Derelict Sites Act 1990 to instigate compulsory acquisition proceedings. In 2023, the Town Regeneration Office was successful in compulsorily acquiring 2 derelict properties under the Derelict Sites Act with a third property being successfully acquired by the Property Section under the Housing Act.

Compulsory acquisition proceedings commenced on a further 3 properties in 2023 and as these have been appealed by the owners to An Bord Pleanála, a decision on these acquisitions is awaited.



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

Information and Communications Technology



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

The role of the Digital and ICT Directorate is to ensure the reliable, secure delivery of IT services to support the work of the council. Modern ways of working are more reliant on digital technologies and functionality to deliver council services. This section outlines the role of the directorate during 2023 to support, maintain and improve these services.

The core ICT objectives are to ensure:

- Availability of systems and access to information.
- Optimised resources to ensure good quality application and infrastructure performance.
- Protection of our systems from malicious threats.

The Digital and ICT Directorate manages the IT infrastructure including the networks, information systems and applications that are required to support the operation of the council's services across housing, planning, roads, tourism, libraries, economic development, MDs etc. The directorate consists of two sections one dealing with Application, Service Design and Data Management and the second with Infrastructure, Security and Service Management. The directorate is located in Cork County Hall.

Making sure our systems and applications are efficient, reliable and meeting the needs of our customers is a key focus for the directorate. Maintaining and upgrading our systems to ensure we can avail of the latest functionality and remain on supported applications is a priority objective. In 2023, we completed several tech refresh and upgrade projects. This included work to migrate system and databases to new servers running on the latest Operating Systems and database platforms.

We are committed to improving IT services, operational optimisation, and improving information management. Projects to deliver these objectives via the delivery of online services and automated workflows were progressed throughout the year. In 2023, over 86,000 cases were logged via our online services portal. Starlink, a satellite internet connection, has been used as a solution to provide internet access for major emergency exercises/events at remote sites that previously would have no network access.

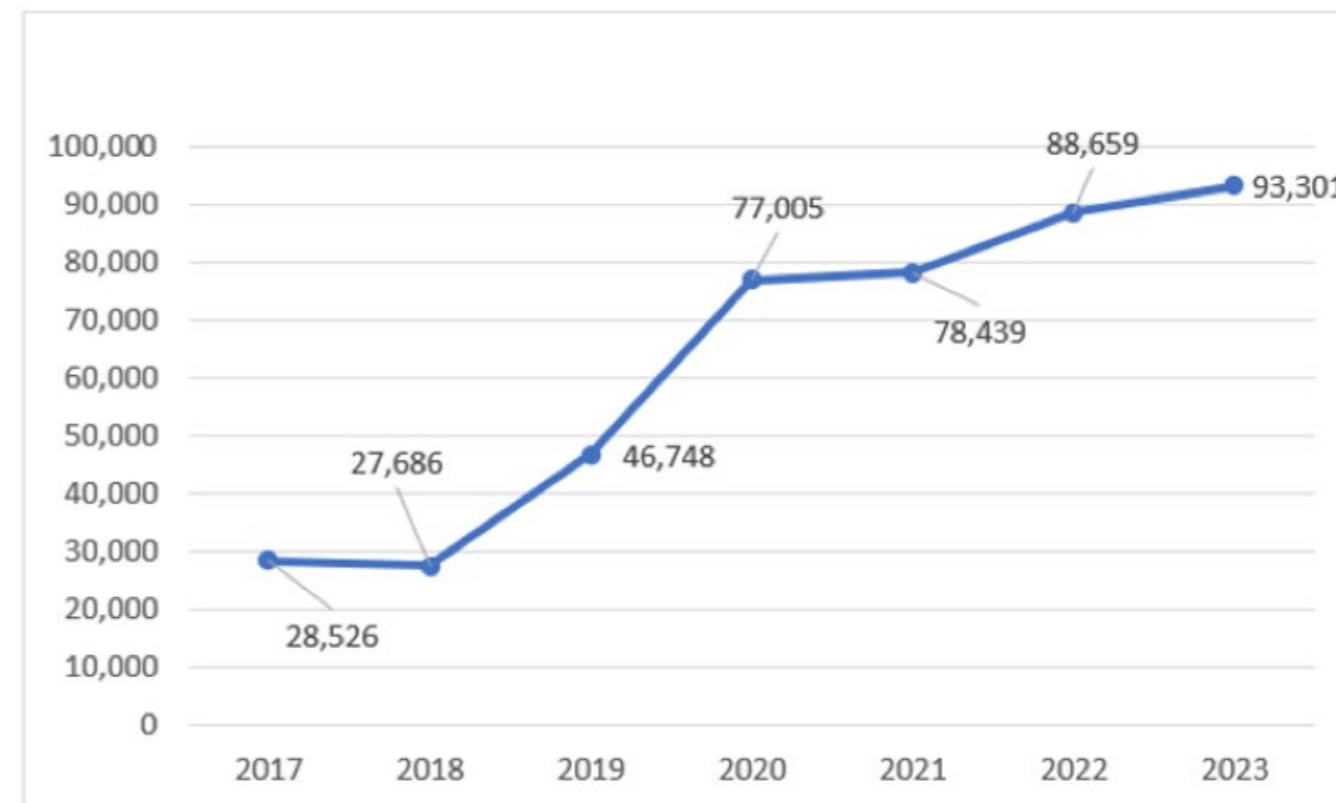
Cyber security threats continue to grow, and we need to ensure we have the appropriate controls and defences in place. It is an on-going task to reduce our risks and vulnerabilities and attempt to be prepared for new zero-day threats. Patch management, augmenting existing controls, staff awareness training and regular testing are part of our normal operations to maintain a good security posture.

- Over the past 12 months, Cork County Council IT Service Desk has handled a total of 15,252 requests, an average of 1,271 requests a month.
- Our Resolve SLA (fixing the issue/request within agreed SLA timeframes) is 97%.

DIGITAL SERVICES

2023 showed an increased demand for digital services used by staff and citizens in Cork County. There was a total of 93,301 online submissions recorded in 2023. This is a 5% increase on 2022 and reflects the increasing demand for online services.

QUANTITY OF ONLINE SUBMISSIONS



NEW SERVICES DELIVERED IN 2023 INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Annual Ethics Declaration 2023
- Arts Grant Scheme - Accessible Submission 2023
- Arts Grant Scheme 2023
- ASDP 2023
- Beach inspection 2023
- Beach Lifeguards' Daily Reports 2023
- Blended Working Applications and Cancellations Bulk Processing
- Blood Donor Drive
- Book an Event Location in County Hall Complex
- Books of Condolence (3 books)
- Call for Arts Facilitators
- Climate Action Building Low Carbon Communities
- Community Recognition Fund 2023
- Community Support Fund 2023
- Cork County Council Idea Greenhouse 2023
- County Cork Heritage Grant Scheme 2023
- Creative Ireland Grant 2023
- Cycle Week Services 2023
- Daily Beach Weather report
- Festival Fund 2023
- From The Well Short Story Competition 2023
- Idea Greenhouse
- LEADER 2023 to 2027 Community Consultation Survey
- Library HQ Winter Exhibition Open Call
- Lifeguards Beach reports
- Log Public Lighting Issue 2023
- Manager's Orders Online 2023
- Municipal Districts Fund 2023
- My Housing Reps List (for Councillors)
- My Tasks and Assignments MTA01
- Offer a Home - MD Property Allocation
- Online Recruitment Competitions (133 competitions)
- Parents Leave Application
- Parents Leave Cancellation
- Part 8 Development Submissions (16 Schemes)
- Section 38 Roadworks Submissions (4 Schemes)
- Staff Training Survey
- Town Centre First Survey Skibbereen

THE TOP 10 SERVICES IN 2023 MAKE UP 54% OF THE OVERALL ONLINE SUBMITTED REQUESTS.

Service	Quantity
Housing Repairs	17,804
Roads and Footpaths Report an Issue	9,992
Motor Taxation Office Book an Appointment	7,760
Ask A Question	4,171
Out-of-Hours Form	3,296
Request for Assistance	2,679
Public Representation Requests to Housing	2,180
Job Application Forms	2,069
Roads and Services Certificates	1,824
Total	49,951



Corporate Services



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

CORPORATE SERVICES

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR OF THE COUNTY OF CORK

Cllr. Danny Collins was in office from June 2022 – June 2023. Cllr. Frank O’Flynn was elected as Mayor in June 2023 and remains in office until June 2024.

The 10th Annual Mayor’s Community Awards were held on 18 April 2023. Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Danny Collins presented a total of eleven awards on the night. Barry Cogan from the Southern Division won the overall Individual award and Banteer Community Sportsfield CLG won the overall Community Group award. Mayor Collins commended all nominees on the night for their commitment and dedication to their communities.



Mayor’s Community Awards

The Mayor’s Charity Dinner hosted by Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Danny Collins was held on 27 May 2023 at the West Lodge, Bantry. MC Colm O’Regan and special guests, presenter Patricia Messinger, and celebrity comedian Bernard Casey added to the atmosphere, ensuring much needed funds were raised for the charities. The charity dinner raised funds for two charities: Cancer Connect and Bandon Hyperbaric Oxygen Centre (B.H.O.C). A total of €20,000 was raised on the night with each charity receiving €10,000.



Mayor’s Charity Dinner

Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Frank O’Flynn hosted a civic reception to honour the Cork U20 All Ireland Hurling Team on 9 October 2023 in County Hall. The event was attended by manager Ben O’Connor, selectors Terence McCarthy, Anthony Nash, Ronan Curran, Ger O’Regan, Chairman Mark Sheehan, Vice Chairman Pat Horgan, and Captain Michael Mullins. Mayor O’Flynn said the team’s victory in the All-Ireland U20 Hurling Championship was due to their commitment to the sport and the unwavering support of their coaches and families.



Civic Reception, Cork U20 All-Ireland Hurling Championship Winners

Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Frank O’Flynn welcomed pupils and teachers from the Fermoy municipal district to County Hall on 12 December 2023 for the switching on of the Christmas lights. Schools in attendance on the day were St Patrick’s School Glanworth, Grange National School Fermoy, Curraghagalla National School and Ballindangan National School.



Turning on the Christmas Lights

MEETINGS OF ELECTED MEMBERS

Full Council	
Full Council Meetings held in 2023	22
Special Meetings held in 2023	0
Annual Meeting Date 2023	23 June 2023
Notice of Motions Received in 2023	76

BYE LAWS

MEMBERS APPROVED THE FOLLOWING ON 13 MARCH 2023:

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2001 (BYE-LAWS) SECTION 199

Adoption of Cork County Councils Library Bye-Laws, 2023.

MEMBERS APPROVED THE FOLLOWING ON 12 JUNE 2023:

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2001 (BYE-LAWS) SECTION 199

Approval of Cork County Councils Road Traffic Special Speed Limit Bye-Laws for National Routes, 2023.

FOI, COMPLAINTS AND OMBUDSMAN

2023	
Freedom of Information Requests	273
Internal Reviews Requests	16
Information Commissioners Requests (OIC)	11
Ombudsman Requests	37
Complaints under Customer Charter	26

11 FOI decisions were referred to the OIC (Office of Information Commissioner) during 2023.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

273 Freedom of Information requests were received in 2023. Of these:

Request Outcome	Quantity
Requests Granted	46
Requests Part Granted	63
Requests Refused	100
Requests Transferred	22
Requests Withdrawn	10
Requests Withdrawn and Dealt with Outside FOI Process	32

DATA PROTECTION

There were 30 Data Subject Access Requests submitted in 2023.

There were 9 Data Breaches during 2023, none of which were reportable to the Data Protection Commission.

There were 2 complaints received from the Data Protection Commission during 2023.

GOVERNANCE

The Audit Committee (AC) is part of the governance framework, tasked with considering the organisation’s internal control systems and procedures and providing assurance to the Council regarding the suitability of those systems. The committee comprises 7 members made up of elected members, an external chairperson, and external nominees who are appointed for a 5-year term.

The Audit Committee met on 5 occasions during 2023, remotely and the following directorates presented at said meetings:

- Planning
- Finance
- Water, Coastal and Flood Management
- Internal Audit presented at one meeting for handover of Internal Auditor
- NOAC/CE/LG Auditor

As part of the committee’s work programme, Internal Audit has a programme of audits that are completed throughout the year and presented to the committee during the ongoing meetings throughout the year.

NATIONAL OVERSIGHT AND AUDIT COMMISSION (NOAC)

The Annual Return was completed in April 2023

RISK OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (ROC) AND RISK MANAGEMENT

The Risk Registers continue to be maintained and managed in the CalQRisk platform. This has been supported by individual directorate risk register reviews at each ROC meeting. The ROC met on 5 occasions during 2023, every 2 months. The directorate risk registers reviewed were:

- Water, Coastal and Flood Management
- County Solicitors
- ICT
- Economic Development, Enterprise and Tourism
- Corporate Services

THE CORPORATE RISK REGISTER IS REVIEWED ON AN ONGOING SCHEDULE.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

The Property Management Department is responsible for overseeing all the property transactions for Cork County Council, primarily Roads, Planning and Housing Directorates. In 2023 the following transactions were finalised:

Transaction Type	Quantity
Land Acquisition including NRA	58
Wayleaves/Right of Way (ROW)	5
Leases/Licenses	34
Disposals	73
Acquisition of Houses including Part V	497
Miscellaneous	14
Total Number of Transactions	681

FACILITIES

This department has responsibility for the buildings on campus, County Hall, County Library HQ, Business Growth Hub, Fire Control Building, Multi-level car park and external areas.

Approximately 1,750 Facilities Helpdesk requests are handled annually.

THESE ARE APPROXIMATELY 15,000 MAINTAINABLE ASSETS ON SITE, MAINTENANCE INCLUDES:

- Statutory maintenance, fire detection, sprinkler, emergency lighting, gas installations, electrical testing, passenger lifts, water quality, fall arrest systems etc.
- Planned preventative maintenance of all systems, air conditioning, air handling, heating and distribution, lightning protection, CCTV, fire alarms, intruder alarms, access control, kitchen equipment, chiller units, building management system etc.
- Electrical failure back up and electrical network testing
- Electrical generation, Uninterruptible Power Supply, Residual Circuit Diode, Thermal Imaging, Transformer, Switchgear, earth loop impedance testing
- Statutory Insurance/Irish Engineering Service inspections
- Passenger lists, boilers, water tanks, calorifiers, pressure vessels, kitchen extinguisher

THE FACILITIES SECTION CARRIES OUT WORK IN RELATION TO:

- Safety OHSAS 18001
- Energy ISO50001, EMAP (Energy Management Action Plan),
- NEEAP (National Efficiency Action Plan)
- Climate Action Plan commitments

OTHER INITIATIVES COMPLETED IN 2023 INCLUDE:

- Full upgrade of the County Hall lighting control system to increase the degree of control and operational efficiency of the system.
- Ongoing works to optimise the operational energy efficiency of the campus through the BMS and associated controls, which has resulted in an increase of less than 1% in electrical consumption from the 2018 baseline, and a reduction of 17.8% in the gas utility consumption from the 2018 baseline.
- Business Continuity Planning Development – upgrade of the computer-controlled lighting system and the Building Management system controls onto the main IT network server system.
- Infrastructural upgrade of the MSCP lighting system from fluorescent fittings to LED fittings and controls reflecting a 14% energy reduction for the building.
- Implementation of a new catering services contract for the County Hall campus incorporating a new policy to reduce waste produced from single use cups – a reduction of 174pprox.. 2,000 single use cups per week.
- Installation of a new library building carpark access control barrier system.
- Upgrade of Floor 17 (Vertigo) lighting system from fluorescent light fittings to a programmable, energy efficient LED system.
- Refurbishment of the main campus spine roadway.
- Introduction of the new campus wide waste recycling stations, resulting in a segregated waste streams.
- Infrastructural upgrade of the fire alarm system panels in the Co Hall and Co Library buildings.

PORTERS

This section provides front-of-house and information services as well as management of manned security function and carries out the monitoring and operation of access control, CCTV and intruder alarm systems. It looks after the high-volume franking and post function for the campus. Meeting room set up and audio-visual equipment checks are carried out by this team as well as daily accessibility building checks. In addition, this team, along with the Facilities Team, arrange the setup of corporate and other events in the County Hall foyer and elsewhere in the building.

INTERNAL AUDIT

Internal Audit provides independent assurance to management that the governance, risk management and internal control processes in Cork County Council are operating effectively.

The Internal Auditor reports directly to the Chief Executive and reports on audit findings to the Audit Committee comprised of 3 elected members and 4 external industry management professionals.

Internal Audit delivered the following in 2023:

- Progressed the annual audit plan of specific audits approved by the Audit Committee at the start of 2023.
- Provided consultative services on risk management and controls to operational departments.
- Supported and responded to the needs of the Audit Committee in carrying out its statutory function.
- Carried out the Public Spending Code annual quality assurance and submitted same to NOAC.

CONTACT CENTRE, MAIN SWITCHBOARD AND COUNTY HALL RECEPTION

Section/ Service	Total Calls Handled	Emails Received
Contact Centre	66,212	4,038
County Hall Reception Desk/ Switch	58,863	N/A
Out of Hours	4,227	N/A
Post fulfilment in Contact Centre	8,282	N/A
Total Motor Tax Appointments Made via Online System	4,367	N/A
Credit Card Payments Handled	2,408	N/A

COMMUNICATIONS

OVERVIEW

The Corporate Communications and Marketing Office plays a pivotal role in supporting Cork County Council by ensuring clear and effective dissemination of information regarding the Council's services, activities, and decisions to the public. It facilitates effective corporate communications, media relations and marketing activities across both traditional and modern platforms. Its primary objective is to promote the councils' services, activities, future projects, and decisions to the citizens and businesses of Cork County in a trustworthy, clear, honest, and transparent manner.

Over the years, the office has built a reputation as a dependable source of timely and relevant information. This established trust allows it to communicate the council's goals and achievements effectively to the diverse stakeholders we serve fostering community involvement and awareness.

Additionally, the office supports the mayor's office by actively promoting the mayor as the representative of the people of Cork County, ensuring that the community remains connected to their elected officials.

It also engages in various campaigns to advance objectives outlined in the Corporate Plan, aiming to enhance community engagement, build relationships and foster positive outcomes.

In summary, the Corporate Communications and Marketing Office facilitates effective communication, fosters transparency, whilst maintaining the valued reputation of the Council and promoting the Councils achievements to citizens and businesses alike.

MEDIA RELATIONS

In 2023, the Communications and Marketing Office managed 815 media queries. We issued 231 media releases, ensuring that Cork County citizens were well-informed about Council events, projects and incidents impacting the community, including severe weather events. Our team also drafted and assisted with editorial features, forewords, press/radio advertisements, photo calls and local public awareness campaigns.

KEY CAMPAIGNS, EVENTS, AND INCIDENTS

The Communications and Marketing Office managed and supported over 30 campaigns as well as 28 events. There were 7 severe weather events, representing a 133% increase from 2022. Highlights include:

CAMPAIGNS:

- Best in Cork Awards
- New Climate Action Plan – public engagement campaign from first stage in April to final submission in November
- Town Centre First regeneration plan for Skibbereen
- Affordable homes schemes on offer in Cobh and Carrigaline



Affordable Home Schemes offered during 2023

SEVERE WEATHER:

Date	Event	Details
June 2023	Status Orange Rain and Thunderstorm	Heavy rain and thunderstorms
August 2023	Storm Betty	Strong winds and rainfall
September 2023	Status Orange Rainfall Warning (x2)	Two separate rainfall warnings
October 2023	Status Orange Rainfall Warning	Midleton Floods
October 2023	Storm Babet	Severe wind and rainstorm
November 2023	Storm Ciarán	Strong winds and heavy rainfall
December 2023	Storm Gerrit	Severe weather conditions

EVENTS:

Event
St. Brigid inspires Cork County Council's Women's Caucus
The Today Show with Daithi and Sinead
Dursey Island Cable Car reopening following €1.6 million upgrade.
N22 Macroom to Baile Bhuirne Official Opening
Kinsale Library Opening
Ironman, Youghal



St. Brigid Inspires Cork County Council's Women's Caucus



Dursey Island Cable Car Reopening



Kinsale Library Opening

COUNTY MAYOR'S OFFICE

Our office ensures that the Mayor of the County of Cork effectively represents the citizens of the Cork County in various events and matters of local and national significance. In 2023, we assisted the mayor's office with the provision of 152 speeches and video scripts, an increase of 38% from the previous year, including recording video messages as needed. Additionally, we drafted 20 mayor's columns for publication in the Echo and 21 in The Cork Independent.

MAJOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Cork County Councils Communications and Marketing Office participate in the Major Emergency Management Interagency Sub-Group for Public Communications. This includes regular meetings to collaborate and share information on public health advisories, such as the annual "Be Summer Ready" and "Be Winter Ready" campaigns, as well as participation in major emergency exercises.

Social Media

Cork County Council's corporate social media accounts have grown to 83,704 followers, with significant increases in both impressions and engagement. In 2023, we posted 3,763 times, including 397 posts in Irish, which garnered over 13 million impressions and over 285,000 engagements, an increase of approximately 75,000 from 2022. Our audiences trust us as a reliable and timely source of information, as evidenced in spikes in engagement and impressions before and during severe weather events and awareness campaigns.

The Corporate Communications and Marketing Office remains committed to enhancing the council's communications efforts, ensuring transparency, and promoting the council's achievements to the community and businesses, reinforcing our dedication to public service



Mayor's Charity Ball

WEBSITE

The Web Master continues to maintain the Cork County Council corporate website in both the English and Irish Languages and ensures its continued availability to people seeking council services.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

STAFF HUB:

The Communications and Marketing Office continues to support the 'Staff Hub' which launched in 2021 and is an integrated internal communications process supporting all areas of Cork County Council

CADOO:

The Communications Office manages an internal text alert system for critical updates and emergency notifications to Cork County Council staff.



Best in Cork Awards

Strategic Policy Committees



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE NO. 1

PLANNING AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr Michael Lynch, Director of Planning and Strategic Development

14 MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

REPRESENTATIVES CORK COUNTY COUNCIL

CHAIRPERSON: COUNCILLOR MICHAEL HEGARTY

MEETING ADMINISTRATOR: KEVIN O'REGAN

Members		
Councillor John Healy	Councillor Michael Hegarty	Councillor Liam Madden
Councillor Tony O'Shea	Councillor Ted Lucey	Councillor Michael Paul Murtagh
Councillor Frank O'Flynn	Councillor Seamus McGrath	Councillor Sheila O'Callaghan
Councillor Joe Carroll	Councillor Bernard Moynihan	Councillor Alan Coleman
Councillor Frank Roche	Councillor James Kennedy	

EXTERNAL SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES

Sector	Representative
Agriculture	Billy Cotter
Business and Employers	Aiden O'Neill
Environment / Conservation	Bernadette Connolly
Development / Construction	Michael O'Flynn
Community / Voluntary	Carol Harpur
Social Inclusion	Tadgh Quill-Manley
Others	Prof Donagh Berry

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE NO. 2

ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE ACTION AND BIODIVERSITY

Mr. Louis Duffy, Director of Environment and Emergency services

14 MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

REPRESENTATIVES CORK COUNTY COUNCIL

CHAIRPERSON: COUNCILLOR ANTHONY BARRY

MEETING ADMINISTRATOR: TED O'LEARY

Members		
Councillor Jack White	Councillor Kevin Murphy	Councillor Anthony Barry
Councillor Gerard Murphy	Councillor Alan O'Connor	Councillor Liam Quaide
Councillor Deirdre Kelly	Councillor Michael Looney	Councillor Audrey Buckley
Councillor Sean O'Donovan	Councillor Deirdre O'Brien	Councillor Ross O'Connell
Councillor Cathal Rasmussen	Councillor Marcia D'Alton	

EXTERNAL SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES

Sector	Representative
Agriculture	Chris Hayes
Business and Employers	Cian Murphy
Environment / Conservation	Raffaella Valenti
Development / Construction	Michael O'Shea
Community / Voluntary	Conor O'Brien
Environment/ Conservation	Caitríona Courtney
Others	Madeleine Murray Proinsias Ó'Tuama

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE NO. 3

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE

Mr. Louis Duffy, Director of Environment and Emergency services

14 MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

REPRESENTATIVES CORK COUNTY COUNCIL

CHAIRPERSON: COUNCILLOR FRANK O'FLYNN

MEETING ADMINISTRATOR: JOHN FORDE

Members		
Councillor Michael Hegarty	Councillor Susan McCarthy	Councillor John Paul O'Shea
Councillor Kay Dawson	Councillor John O'Sullivan	Councillor Frank O'Flynn
Councillor Pat Hayes	Councillor Ann Marie Ahern	Councillor Gearóid Murphy
Councillor Martin Coughlan	Councillor Paul Hayes	Councillor James Kennedy
Councillor Gerard Murphy	Councillor Noel McCarthy	

EXTERNAL SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES

Sector	Representative
Agriculture	Jimmy Hosford
Business and Employers	Bryan O'Donnell
Trade Union	Michael Delargey
Development / Construction	Aidan Mangan
Community / Voluntary	Owen Hurley
Others	Dr. John Hobbs Martin Corkery Seamus Coffey

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE NO. 4

TOURISM

Ms. Sharon Corcoran, Director of Economic Development and Enterprise

14 MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

REPRESENTATIVES CORK COUNTY COUNCIL

CHAIRPERSON: COUNCILLOR ALAN COLEMAN

MEETING ADMINISTRATOR: ROSE CARROLL

Members		
Councillor Karen Coakley	Councillor Susan McCarthy	Councillor Marie O'Sullivan
Councillor John O'Sullivan	Councillor Deirdre Kelly	Councillor Joe Carroll
Councillor Pat Hayes	Councillor Sean O'Donovan	Councillor Alan Coleman
Councillor Declan Hurley	Councillor Danny Collins	Councillor Sean O'Connor
Councillor Paul Hayes	Councillor Mary Linehan Foley	

EXTERNAL SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES

Sector	Representative
Agriculture	
Business and Employers	Derry Cronin Aaron Mansworth
Community / Voluntary	Doug Lucey
Others	Josephine O'Driscoll Clayton Love Valerie Murphy Eileen O'Shea

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE NO. 5

HOUSING

Mr. Maurice Manning, Director of Housing

14 MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

REPRESENTATIVES CORK COUNTY COUNCIL

CHAIRPERSON: COUNCILLOR SEAMUS MCGRATH

MEETING ADMINISTRATOR: KAREN HIGGINS / FIONA HAYES

Members		
Councillor John Healy	Councillor Liam Madden	Councillor Noel McCarthy
Councillor Sinead Sheppard	Councillor Anthony Barry	Councillor Seamus McGrath
Councillor Gillian Coughlan	Councillor Patrick Gerard Murphy	Councillor Mary Linehan Foley
Councillor Ben D'Alton O'Sullivan	Councillor Sean O'Connor	Councillor Cathal Rasmussen
Councillor Danny Collins	Councillor Danielle Twomey	

EXTERNAL SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES

Sector	Representative
Trade Union	Colm J Cronin
Development / Construction	Stephen McCarthy Susan R Cullen
Community / Voluntary	Eileen Kelly McCarthy
Social Inclusion	Jose Ospina Margarita O'Driscoll

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE NO. 6

ROADS AND TRANSPORT

Mr. Pádraig Barrett, Director of Roads and Transport

14 MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

REPRESENTATIVES CORK COUNTY COUNCIL

CHAIRPERSON: COUNCILLOR DECLAN HURLEY

MEETING ADMINISTRATOR: NOREEN MURPHY

Members		
Councillor Michael Creed	Councillor Tony O'Shea	Councillor Kevin Murphy
Councillor Ted Lucey	Councillor Eileen Lynch	Councillor Michael Paul Murtagh
Councillor Michael Looney	Councillor William O'Leary	Councillor Deirdre O'Brien
Councillor Ann Marie Ahern	Councillor Gillian Coughlan	Councillor Frank Roche
Councillor Declan Hurley	Councillor Ben D'Alton O'Sullivan	

EXTERNAL SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES

Sector	Representative
Agriculture	
Business and Employers	Seán Twohig
Trade Union	John Bowen
Environment / Conservation	Dr Darren McAdam-O'Connell
Development / Construction	Seán Carrigy
Community / Voluntary	Bríd Coakley
Social Inclusion	Tim Hanley
Others	Superintendent Adrian Gamble Aled S Williams

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE NO. 7

SOCIAL INCLUSION, COMMUNITY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Niall Healy, Municipal District Operations and Rural Development

13 MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

REPRESENTATIVES CORK COUNTY COUNCIL

CHAIRPERSON: COUNCILLOR JOHN PAUL O'SHEA

MEETING ADMINISTRATOR: CAROL CONWAY

Members		
Councillor Eileen Lynch	Councillor Ian Doyle	Councillor Audrey Buckley
Councillor Bernard Moynihan	Councillor Gobnait Moynihan	Councillor Marcia D'Alton
Councillor Michael Creed	Councillor John Paul O'Shea	Councillor Kay Dawson
Councillor Marie O'Sullivan	Councillor Katie Murphy	Councillor Liam Quaide
Councillor Danielle Twomey		

EXTERNAL SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES

Sector	Representative
Trade Union	Eddie Mullins
Environment / Conservation	Ana Ospina
Community / Voluntary	Mair Kelly Pauline O'Dwyer Gavin Falk
Social Inclusion	Pat Dooley

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE NO. 8

ARTS CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

Mr. Niall Healy, Municipal District Operations and Rural Development

13 MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

REPRESENTATIVES CORK COUNTY COUNCIL

CHAIRPERSON: COUNCILLOR PATRICK GERARD MURPHY

MEETING ADMINISTRATOR: IAN MCDONAGH

Members		
Councillor Karen Coakley	Councillor Jack White	Councillor Caroline Cronin
Councillor Sinead Sheppard	Councillor Patrick Gerard Murphy	Councillor Ian Doyle
Councillor William O'Leary	Councillor Gobnait Moynihan	Councillor Ross O'Connell
Councillor Martin Coughlan	Councillor Gearóid Murphy	Councillor Sheila O'Callaghan
Councillor Alan O'Connor		

EXTERNAL SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES

Sector	Representative
Community / Voluntary	Kenneth Buckley
Community / Voluntary	
Social Inclusion	
Others	Mary Hegarty Geoff Gould Eamon Lankford Ann Davoren

Appendices



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ANNUAL SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN OBJECTIVES 2023

Principle Service	Corporate Plan Theme One	Corporate Plan Objective One	Corporate Plan Theme Two	Corporate Plan Objective Two	ASDP Objective	Performance Standard	NOAC Performance Indicator	Status	Comment
CORPORATE SERVICES - 19 OBJECTIVES									
Irish Office/Oifig na Gaeilge	1. Our People	1.1 Develop	8. Communications	8.3 Brand Identity	Promote greater use of the Irish Language and the role of the Irish Officer	Irish classes roll out 2023 to Staff offering 4 ability levels. Enhance support of 2 Gaeltacht areas	Not Applicable	Completed	
Elected Members	1. Our People	1.7 Enhance	7. Governance and Democracy	7.5 Enabling Elected Members	Develop and support the democratic role of the elected members	Democratic role of Elected Members supported and developed	Not Applicable	Completed	
Facilities	1. Our People	1.8 Health & Safety	6. Service Quality	6.5 Benchmark	Retaining the ISO 50001:2018 Energy Management System certification	Effectively manage use of the utility supplies & comply with statutory regulations	Not Applicable	Completed	
Service Transformation Team	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.10 Accessibility	6. Service Quality	6.1 Service Design	Accessibility and Inclusion. Optimise online services for everyone, integrate online services with the website, verify adherence to legislation and NDA accessibility guidelines	New yourcouncil.ie homepage. Verification of adherence to latest accessibility standards	Not Applicable	Completed	
Property Procurement, Sale & Leasing Agent	5. Capacity for Growth	5.5 Housing	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.1 Vibrant Towns	Support & assist the Housing Directorate in achieving the Departmental targets for Social Housing	Departmental targets to be achieved by December 2023	Not Applicable	Completed	
Service Transformation Team	6. Service Quality	6.2 Digital Transformation	6. Service Quality	6.1 Service Design	Support the Public Service Digital Strategy of getting 80% of services online by 2030, seeking out opportunities for digitisation and for cost and carbon savings etc.	Additional 50 new online services delivered. Cost and Carbon savings reported	Not Applicable	Completed	
Major Emergency/ Severe Weather	6. Service Quality	6.8 Engage	8. Communications	8.2 Collaboration	Collaborate with directorates and government bodies to provide a high quality level of response to call answering service during major weather events	Deliver on Council's major emergency plan	Not Applicable	Completed	
Customer Services	6. Service Quality	6.8 Engage	8. Communications	8.2 Collaboration	Collaborate with directorates to provide an effective, professional and high quality customer service level, in the Contact Centre and the Main Switch	Ongoing	Not Applicable	Completed	
Irish Office/Oifig na Gaeilge	6. Service Quality	6.9 Deliver	8. Communications	8.4 Engagement	Ensure compliance with Languages Act, including the Languages Act 2021, and CCC's Irish Language Scheme	Compliance with all legislation. Close out all issues raised through ICO.	Not Applicable	Completed	

Principle Service	Corporate Plan Theme One	Corporate Plan Objective One	Corporate Plan Theme Two	Corporate Plan Objective Two	ASDP Objective	Performance Standard	NOAC Performance Indicator	Status	Comment
Electoral Register	7. Governance and Democracy	7.1 Democracy	7. Governance and Democracy	7.5 Enabling Elected Members	Franchise and Electoral register maintained and up to date	Register is fully up to date	Not Applicable	Completed	
Audit Committee	7. Governance and Democracy	7.2 Governance	7. Governance and Democracy	7.6 Internal Audit And Audit Committee	Minimum 5 Audit Committee review meetings in 2023	Review 5 directorates	Not Applicable	Completed	
Corporate Risk Management	7. Governance and Democracy	7.2 Governance	7. Governance and Democracy	7.3 Risk Management	Ensure compliance with legislation on FOI and other governance requirements and support risk management	Ensure maximum compliance with all relevant legislation	Not Applicable	Completed	
Corporate Risk Management	7. Governance and Democracy	7.3 Risk Management	7. Governance and Democracy	7.2 Governance	Implement Council's Risk Management Policy through the Risk Oversight Committee (ROC)	Minimum 6 ROC meetings. Ongoing training for Directors of Service, Heads of Function and Risk liaisons	Not Applicable	Completed	
Internal Audit	7. Governance and Democracy	7.6 Internal Audit And Audit Committee	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	Maintain and support the Audit Tracker system and ensure governance requirements are met	"Director of Service sign off Quarterly			
Internal Audit	7. Governance and Democracy	7.6 Internal Audit And Audit Committee	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	Maintain and support the Audit Tracker system and ensure governance requirements are met	Director of Service sign off Quarterly Follow up 100% of High Priority and 40% medium Priority recommendations	Not Applicable	Completed	
PR/Publicity	8. Communications	8.1 Plan	8. Communications	8.2 Collaboration	Embed the Corporate Communications and Marketing Strategy	Create planned content, aligned with corporate objectives, covered by media, website, social media	C3B: Total number of website and social media followers at end 2023	Completed	
PR/Publicity	8. Communications	8.3 Brand Identity	8. Communications	8.4 Engagement	Embed the Council's brand book and strengthen the Council's brand identity	Ensure the organisation adopts best practice principles to the application of the Council's brand	Not Applicable	Completed	
Service Transformation Team	9. Innovation	9.1 Innovation & Design	9. Innovation	9.3 Business Intelligence	Advance work of the Innovation Working Group (IWG) and Strategy, improving communication across the Council, deliver more strategic use of data and services	Four IWG meetings Innovation Strategy developed BI dashboards for staff and public	Not Applicable	Completed	

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Service Transformation Team	9. Innovation	9.1 Innovation & Design	6. Service Quality	6.1 Service Design	Promote the design principles for government by using them in our service design projects, attending or arranging design events and sharing our experience in service design with staff and the public	Design Principles integrated into design process. Team participation in four design events	Not Applicable	Completed	

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COUNTY ENGINEERS AND WATER SERVICES - 9 OBJECTIVES									
Property Activation & Regeneration Unit	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.1 Vibrant Towns	5. Capacity for Growth	5.2 Urban Regeneration	Develop & implement process for management of strategic derelict and vacant properties. Develop proposals for 3rd round URDF grants & manage delivery of projects	Continued delivery of pilot projects.	Not Applicable	Completed	
Capital Projects Office - Water Infrastructure Design	3. Sustained Economic Vibrancy	3.5 A Base For Investment	4. Climate and Environment	4.4 Sustainable Communities	Comply with Service Level Agreement, Annual Service Plan, and Uisce Éireann Protocols, agreed with Uisce Éireann for the efficient delivery of cost effective Water Services Capital Projects.	Maintain overall rating for delivery of the Uisce Éireann ASP as achieved in 2022	Not Applicable	Completed	
Capital Projects Implementation Unit	3. Sustained Economic Vibrancy	3.5 A Base For Investment	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.1 Vibrant Towns	Coordinate and manage delivery of the Social Sustainability Investment Programme through the agreed structures and protocols.	Project approvals progressed & recorded and overall monitoring of programme & spend in compliance	Not Applicable	Completed	
Coastal Management & Flood Projects	4. Climate and Environment	4.3 Natural Assets	3. Sustained Economic Vibrancy	3.10 Marine Assets	Flood Projects-Progress OPW funded major & minor flood schemes. Finalise SLA with OPW & agree associated costs. Coastal Projects-Complete delivery of BALAMI projects.	Major & minor projects-100% recoupment by year end	Not Applicable	Completed	
Wastewater Operations	4. Climate and Environment	4.5 Water	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	Comply with the Service Level Agreement, Protocols and Annual Service Plan agreed with Uisce Éireann to provide effective wastewater treatment and collection system	Maintain overall rating for delivery of the Uisce Éireann ASP as achieved in 2022	Not Applicable	Completed	
Rural Water	4. Climate and Environment	4.5 Water	5. Capacity for Growth	5.3 Rural Regeneration	Continue to support Group Scheme development in the county and ensure timely application for grant support to individual group schemes, individual well grants and payment of subsidies.	Maintain 2022 GWS grant support. Prepare & submit MARWP 2022-2024 bids. Process 80% DWG in 6 weeks.	W1: % of Private Drinking Water Schemes in compliance with statutory requirements in respect of the monitoring of the quality of private drinking water supplies during 2023	Ongoing	CCC will be establishing a stand alone Rural Water Section, with increased resources in early 2024 to ensure increased support for Group schemes & timely processing of Domestic well grant applications

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Drinking Water Operations	4. Climate and Environment	4.5 Water	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	Comply with the Service Level Agreement, Protocols, and Annual Service Plan agreed with Uisce Éireann to ensure availability of drinking water in compliance with Drinking Water Regulations	Maintain overall rating for water quality under the Uisce Éireann ASP	Not Applicable	Completed	
Small private schemes Water Quality	4. Climate and Environment	4.5 Water	6. Service Quality	6.5 Benchmark	Update of small private schemes database and adoption of a suitable risk approach to ongoing monitoring	Maintain register in co-operation with the Environment Dept.	W1: % of Private Drinking Water Schemes in compliance with statutory requirements in respect of the monitoring of the quality of private drinking water supplies during 2023	Ongoing	CCC will be establishing a stand alone Rural Water Section, with increased resources in early 2024 to ensure quality rural water & small private scheme monitoring and compliance.
Public Water Services	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	6. Service Quality	6.9 Deliver	Facilitate the transfer of direct management of public water services operations and capital projects to Uisce Éireann	Handover of direct management to UE without any impact on the service delivery to the public.	Not Applicable	Completed	

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DIGITAL AND ICT - 5 OBJECTIVES									
Representing the Council in different statutory processes, e.g arbitrations and oral hearings	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	7. Governance and Democracy	7.4 Business, Service & Systems	Represent the Council in an effective and professional manner in statutory processes.	Professional standard.	Not Applicable	Ongoing	
Provision of legal service to Municipal Districts	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	7. Governance and Democracy	7.4 Business, Service & Systems	Provide legal advice in a timely and effective manner.	Professional standard.	Not Applicable	Ongoing	
High Court, Circuit Court and District Court Litigation	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	7. Governance and Democracy	7.4 Business, Service & Systems	Provide an effective litigation service to the Council as and when required.	Professional standard.	Not Applicable	Completed	
Working with the Housing Directorate in the various social housing schemes e.g. social leasing, payment and availability agreements, Capital Assistance Scheme, CALF scheme, Incremental Purchase Scheme etc.	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	7. Governance and Democracy	7.4 Business, Service & Systems	Provide an effective and professional property service.	Professional standard.	Not Applicable	Ongoing	
Providing a legal advisory service to Senior Management and Directors of Service.	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	7. Governance and Democracy	7.4 Business, Service & Systems	Provide legal advice in a timely and effective manner.	Professional standard.	Not Applicable	Ongoing	
Maintenance of a Litigation Risk Register	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	7. Governance and Democracy	7.4 Business, Service & Systems	Provide information to assist in the assessment of the Council's legal liabilities.	Professional standard.	Not Applicable	Ongoing	
Conveyancing and Disposals on behalf of the Council.	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	7. Governance and Democracy	7.4 Business, Service & Systems	Provide an effective and professional property service.	Professional standard.	Not Applicable	Completed	

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DIGITAL AND ICT - 5 OBJECTIVES									
Support line of business applications and systems	6. Service Quality	6.2 Digital Transformation	9. Innovation	9.2 Digital Transformation	Support ICT solutions for line of business systems	Provide support to ensure systems are available, replace obsolete components	Not Applicable	Ongoing	Working to replace legacy components
Provide efficient, cost effective service delivery	7. Governance and Democracy	7.2 Governance	6. Service Quality	6.6 Invest	Deliver high quality, cost effective services	Implement best practices for Service Management, all procurement to include Green ICT indicators	Not Applicable, C4: Cost of ICT per WTE	Ongoing	All procurement includes Green ICT principles and adheres to PS spending code guidance
Deliver secure/resilient IT services	7. Governance and Democracy	7.3 Risk Management	6. Service Quality	6.6 Invest	Ensure all IT services are being delivered in a way that provides a secure, stable and reliable environment	Appropriate security controls in place, all security incidents and new threats managed effectively	Not Applicable	Ongoing	This is an ongoing activity to protect our systems and infrastructure from cyber attacks
Improve access to Information Management and Collaboration channels	8. Communications	8.2 Collaboration	1. Our People	1.6 Connected	IT are supporting more effective information management and providing more collaboration facilities	Rollout of Sharepoint and new fileshare disks to provide easier access to council information	Not Applicable	Ongoing	Rollout of Sharepoint Document Management sites is continuing with a number of directorates migrated during 2023
Provide the technology to enable Operational Transformation	9. Innovation	9.2 Digital Transformation	6. Service Quality	6.6 Invest	IT are supporting operational transformation through the implementation of modern workplace technologies	Roll out of MS O365 to enhance collaboration channels and provide easier access to information	Not Applicable	Ongoing	Continuing to exploit technology to enhance and automate public and internal services

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ENVIRONMENT - 8 OBJECTIVES									
Deliver effective Environment, Fire Service, Food Safety & Animal Welfare programmes	1. Our People	1.1 Develop	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	Develop and implement efficient customer focussed workflow practices and document management systems.	Catalogue of SOPs & programme for development of SOPs in place in environmental awareness section. Project plan for document management system	Not Applicable	Ongoing	Progress made in documenting SOPs - Project plan for document management system remains to be delivered. Awaiting progress on Office 365 transition.
Develop & deliver Agency and Shared Services to UE, FSAI, Government Departments, and Sectoral Agencies. (incl. CARO, WERLA, DSL, Non SLA Labs and Cork City)	4. Climate and Environment	4.1 Green Is Core	4. Climate and Environment	4.2 Measure Impact	Ensure that all existing and new Agency and Shared Services are managed to protect the interests of Cork County Council, while delivering on their performance targets.	Timely agreement of Annual Program. Ongoing review of target delivery and risk assessment of SLAs.	Not Applicable	Ongoing	
Promote Climate, Environment and Fire Safety Awareness within Cork County Council and the Community	4. Climate and Environment	4.1 Green Is Core	4. Climate and Environment	4.4 Sustainable Communities	Integrate Awareness and education into all Directorate activities. Implement a risk-based community fire safety and education program.	As set out in individual Team plans	Not Applicable	Ongoing	Significant awareness programmes delivered, in particular in area of waste prevention. To further integrate awareness initiatives into other areas, the objective will be included again in ASDP 2024
Support Climate Action within Cork County Council and the Community	4. Climate and Environment	4.1 Green Is Core	4. Climate and Environment	4.2 Measure Impact	Support and monitor corporate implementation of the Climate Change Charter, Legislative obligations, and Sectoral targets.	Measurement of Charter target compliance & dissemination to other Directorates	Not Applicable	Ongoing	LA Climate Action Plan was finalised in 2023. Significant cross directorate consultation was undertaken. This will need to be built on in 2024 to ensure delivery of agreed actions.
Deliver effective Environment, Fire Service, Food Safety & Animal Welfare programmes	4. Climate and Environment	4.2 Measure Impact	7. Governance and Democracy	7.2 Governance	Build Risk Management and Climate Change target compliance into all decision making processes.	Climate Change & Risk on agendas of all team meetings and in reports supporting Dir Order requests	Not Applicable	Ongoing	Progress made in embedding Risk Management and Climate Change into directorate decision making processes, including in team agendas and directorate reports. To ensure progress maintained objective will again be included in ASDP 2024

Principle Service	Corporate Plan Theme One	Corporate Plan Objective One	Corporate Plan Theme Two	Corporate Plan Objective Two	ASDP Objective	Performance Standard	NOAC Performance Indicator	Status	Comment
Deliver monitoring, audit, testing, and enforcement programs for Environment, Fire Services, Food Safety & Animal Welfare	4. Climate and Environment	4.3 Natural Assets	4. Climate and Environment	4.2 Measure Impact	Meet the targets in annual Environmental (RMCEI) inspection Plan 2023. Promote culture of compliance with the building regulations and monitor and enforce fire safety legislation.	RMCEI targets fully met. Deliver target of 12% to 15% of new buildings inspected	PIA: Buildings inspected as a percentage of new buildings notified to the local authority	Completed	
Provide incident response services for Environment, Fire and Emergency, Food Safety, Animal Welfare, Waste and Litter Management	6. Service Quality	6.5 Benchmark	4. Climate and Environment	4.2 Measure Impact	Maintain operational readiness and capability to deliver an appropriate response to incidents. Develop and support a learning culture through ongoing review of incidents.	As set out in individual Team plans	F2B: Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Part-Time Stations (retained fire service) in respect of fire	Completed	
Deliver effective Environment, Fire Service, Food Safety & Animal Welfare programmes	1. Our People	1.1 Develop	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	Develop and implement efficient customer focussed workflow practices and document management systems.	Catalogue of SOPs & programme for development of SOPs in place in environmental awareness section. Project plan for document management system	Not Applicable	Ongoing	Progress made in documenting SOPs - Project plan for document management system remains to be delivered. Awaiting progress on Office 365 transition.

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FINANCE - 11 OBJECTIVES									
Rates	3. Sustained Economic Vibrancy	3.7 Growth Preparedness	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	Maximise Effective Rateable Valuation Base	Enhance 2022 Valuation base	Not Applicable	Completed	
Rate Collection	3. Sustained Economic Vibrancy	3.7 Growth Preparedness	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	Maximize Collection Levels	Improve upon 2022 collection performance	M2A: Collection level of Rates from the Annual Financial Statement for 2023	Completed	
Payroll	6. Service Quality	6.2 Digital Transformation	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	Provide an effective payroll service to all staff and align with national shared services policy	Meet statutory payroll obligations and review MyPay performance	Not Applicable	Completed	
Payments	6. Service Quality	6.2 Digital Transformation	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	Provide an effective accounts payable service to creditors & in compliance with relevant legislation	Meet statutory prompt payment commissioner obligations	Not Applicable	Completed	
Corporate Financial Governance	6. Service Quality	6.6 Invest	7. Governance and Democracy	7.2 Governance	Commission fully integrated Enterprise Resource (ERP) Systems to adequately support business processes, activities and obligations.	1. Deliver on plan to select ERP 2. Resource project team 3. Commence implementation of sys Upgrade	Not Applicable	Ongoing	Project team selected and working on System preparation including data cleansing and Business Process Reviews. Implementation will commence in March 2024 and be completed in Q1/Q2 2025
Corporate Financial Governance	7. Governance and Democracy	7.2 Governance	7. Governance and Democracy	7.3 Risk Management	Manage the financing requirements and risks in a risk averse and cost-effective manner.	1. Minimise overdraft investment return on basis of minimum risk 3. Minimise cost loan book 4. Up to date bank reconciliation	Not Applicable	Completed	
Corporate Insurances	7. Governance and Democracy	7.2 Governance	7. Governance and Democracy	7.3 Risk Management	Manage insurance policies and claims in a cost efficient and timely manner.	Adequate claims coverage at best value possible	Not Applicable	Completed	

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House loan collection	7. Governance and Democracy	7.2 Governance	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	Maximize collection levels for housing loans & continue to reduce to arrears.	Reduce arrears value and reduce number of accounts in arrears.	M2C: Collection level of Housing Loans from the Annual Financial Statement for 2023	Completed	
Motor Tax	7. Governance and Democracy	7.2 Governance	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	Provide an efficient and effective Motor Tax service	Applications processed and discs issued in a timely manner.	Not Applicable	Completed	
Procurement	7. Governance and Democracy	7.2 Governance	7. Governance and Democracy	7.4 Business, Service & Systems	Promote best practice processes & embed a value delivery culture, ensuring VFM savings & efficiencies, targeting opportunities, mitigating risks, ensure compliance with policy & legislation	Implement the Corporate Procurement Plan, Engage with directorates, training, activity reporting	Not Applicable	Completed	
Corporate Financial Governance	7. Governance and Democracy	7.2 Governance	9. Innovation	9.3 Business Intelligence	Establish optimal corporate finance governance structures which meet industry standard best practice, statutory requirements & corporate objectives, Capital Project Appraisal & PSC compliance, & budgetary control/ performance	Governance & Systems Project progression; PSC compliance; Budget variances explained; Timely publication of AFS, Budget & Capital Programme	Not Applicable	Ongoing	Governance project was launched in Q4 2023. Action Plan in place which is delivering the basis for change.

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HOUSING - 14 OBJECTIVES									
Housing Capital & Finance	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.4 Quality Of Life	5. Capacity for Growth	5.5 Housing	Progress the delivery of Affordable Housing: St. Joseph's Road, Mallow; Cammogue, Kinsale; Beechgrove, Clonakilty, and 1 cost rental Kilnagleary, Carrigaline	Commence planning for 300 units on 3 schemes and progress design for 1 Cost Rental Scheme.	H1B: No. of dwellings added to the LA owned stock during 2023 (whether constructed or acquired)	Ongoing	100 Affordable units completed to end 2023. 512 applications received for Clonmore, Carrigaline and Cobh schemes.
Housing Capital/ Operations	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.4 Quality Of Life	5. Capacity for Growth	5.5 Housing	Work towards the social housing build targets set by the Department of Housing Local Government & Heritage through direct construction, AHB delivery, turnkey acquisitions and leasing.	Build 440 units for 2023	H1B: No. of dwellings added to the LA owned stock during 2023 (whether constructed or acquired)	Ongoing	Achieved 359 Builds in 2023. Delivery programme in 2023 was mix of social and affordable.
Housing Capital/ Operations	5. Capacity for Growth	5.5 Housing	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.4 Quality Of Life	Acquisition of Tenant in Situ dwellings in accordance with Circular 8 2023	Acquisition of 60 dwellings	H1B: No. of dwellings added to the LA owned stock during 2023 (whether constructed or acquired)	Completed	
Housing Capital/ Operations	5. Capacity for Growth	5.5 Housing	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.4 Quality Of Life	Progress the planning, design, and construction of social housing on Council owned, or acquired sites.	Preliminary Stage: 6 Design Stag: 145 Tender Stage: 22 Under Construction: 51	H1B: No. of dwellings added to the LA owned stock during 2023 (whether constructed or acquired)	Completed	
Housing Options	5. Capacity for Growth	5.5 Housing	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.4 Quality Of Life	Respond to the demand that exists for HAP, RIHL & Private Grants and process all applications received, in a timely manner.	Number of applications processed to completion HAP 500, LAHL 150, Private Grants 1,000	Not Applicable	Completed	
Housing property Allocation	5. Capacity for Growth	5.5 Housing	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.4 Quality Of Life	Meet the objective as set out in the Local Strategy for Housing People with Disabilities.	Achieve 20% of all allocations for People with Disabilities.	Not Applicable	Completed	

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Housing Maintenance monitoring	5. Capacity for Growth	5.5 Housing	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.4 Quality Of Life	Carry out a planned maintenance programme maximising the funding allocation from the DHLGH.	Maintenance on 158 properties. Undertake 12 Extensions and 118 Minor works DPG adaptations	H4A: Expenditure during 2023 on the maintenance of LA housing compiled from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023, divided by the no. of dwellings in the LA stock at 31/12/2023, i.e. the H1E less H1F indicator figure	Ongoing	DPGs 144 Minors completed and 15 Extensions ongoing as per Department Funding
Refurbishment of Vacant houses	5. Capacity for Growth	5.5 Housing	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.4 Quality Of Life	Implement a programme to refurbish and re-let voids & derelict voids and minimise vacancy.	150 vacant houses refurbished and vacancy rate of 1.8%	H3A: The time taken from the date of vacation of a dwelling to the date in 2023 when the dwelling is re-tenanted, averaged across all dwellings re-let during 2023	Completed	
Homelessness	5. Capacity for Growth	5.5 Housing	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.4 Quality Of Life	Reduce the number of adults and children in long term homelessness and work with all stakeholders to minimise homelessness.	40 allocations to Social Housing 65 HAP tenancies by the Placefinder Officer 5 Housing First	H6A: Number of adult individuals in emergency accommodation that are long-term homeless as a % of the total number of homeless adult individuals in emergency accommodation at the end of 2023	Ongoing	77 allocations to Social housing, 80 to HAP, 5 families from Direct Provision to HAP, and 45 Homeless prevention to HAP including Placefinder. 7 Housing First tenancies created.

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Energy Efficiency Projects management	5. Capacity for Growth	5.5 Housing	4. Climate and Environment	4.4 Sustainable Communities	Carry out an energy efficiency retrofitting programme, maximising the funding made available by the DHLGH.	183 properties benefitting from retrofitting works.	H4A: Expenditure during 2023 on the maintenance of LA housing compiled from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023, divided by the no. of dwellings in the LA stock at 31/12/2023, i.e. the H1E less H1F indicator figure	Completed	
Private Rental Inspections	5. Capacity for Growth	5.5 Housing	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.4 Quality Of Life	Increase the number of private rental standards inspections	Target of 3,277 inspections in 2023.	H5B: Number of rented dwellings inspected in 2023	Ongoing	1,904 properties inspected.
Housing Capital & Finance	5. Capacity for Growth	5.5 Housing	7. Governance and Democracy	7.2 Governance	Continue Rent Review for the entire County and maximise Rent Collection. Reduce rent arrears from €1m at end of 2023	Collection of rent to exceed €21.35m as provided for in Adopted Budget for 2023, exceed 2022.	Not Applicable	Completed	
Housing property Allocation	5. Capacity for Growth	5.5 Housing	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.4 Quality Of Life	Assessment of new applications for social housing support and reassessment of approved applicants who notify the Council that their household circumstances have changed. Analyse & monitor demand.	Adherence to timelines set out in Social Housing Regulations 2011.	Not Applicable	Completed	
Travellers Strategy	5. Capacity for Growth	5.5 Housing	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.8 Inclusion & Integration	Provide suitable accommodation to applicants who are members of the Traveller community in accordance with the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 – 2024.	12 units of accommodation through HAP/standard Housing.	Not Applicable	Completed	

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HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT - 9 OBJECTIVES									
Staff Training	1. Our People	1.1 Develop	6. Service Quality	6.6 Invest	Continue to develop & deliver an annual people management training programme to line managers, develop a plan for coaching and /or mentoring for staff, and deliver induction training	Programmes Delivered	Not Applicable	Ongoing	The indoor and outdoor induction is currently being delivered. HRM are engaging with external providers and staff on a number of training and development programmes.
All sections	1. Our People	1.2 Knowledge Base	6. Service Quality	6.7 Plan	To provide a framework for the development of SOPs and due diligence processes across the organisation	SOPs in place across each section	Not Applicable	Ongoing	This process is always on going.
Safety	1. Our People	1.3 Wellbeing	1. Our People	1.8 Health & Safety	Develop & deliver a staff well-being programme that embeds a culture of staff well-being & promotes positive workplace behaviour by developing and delivering a dignity at work training & awareness	Well-being programme rolled out to include Let's Talk Health & Wellness for outdoor staff, & training RE Dignity at Work	Not Applicable	Ongoing	The well-being programme is constantly being evaluated and reviewed in line with staff needs.
Safety	1. Our People	1.8 Health & Safety	1. Our People	1.1 Develop	Ongoing development of procedure around continual improvement, to include good catches & safety conversations, to ensure the effective evaluation of performance of, & continual improvement of Safety Management System	Improved Safety Management System (SMS)	Not Applicable	Ongoing	The SMS is constantly being monitored, reviewed and updated where necessary.
HRM General	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.8 Inclusion & Integration	6. Service Quality	6.8 Engage	Continue to develop & deliver an awareness and support programme to maximise the impact of Cork County Council as an inclusive workplace.	CCC recognised as a good and inclusive employer	Not Applicable	Ongoing	HRM work closely with various external stakeholders and staff to make CCC an inclusive workplace.
Staff Training	3. Sustained Economic Vibrancy	3.1 Partnership For Growth	5. Capacity for Growth	5.10 New Forms Of Working	Work with academic institutions in the development & promotion of internships & apprenticeships, especially for harder to recruit roles & build on the plan developed for recruitment of hard to fill roles	Relationships built with key external academic institutions	Not Applicable	Ongoing	HRM has ongoing engagement with relevant educational institutions.

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HRM General	4. Climate and Environment	4.1 Green Is Core	6. Service Quality	6.2 Digital Transformation	Continue to develop and implement on a phased basis, a plan for a paperless HRM service	HRM related documentation available online	Not Applicable	Ongoing	HRM is working to provide an online application process for many of its services.
Business Transformation	6. Service Quality	6.4 Business & Service	7. Governance and Democracy	7.4 Business, Service & Systems	Negotiate a Support Services Agreement under the Master Co-operation Agreement with UE which meets support commitments in the short-term and reduces dependency on CCC over the medium to long-term	SSA signed off by the CE	Not Applicable	Ongoing	This is nearing completion and should be finalised in Q1 2024.
HRM General	7. Governance and Democracy	7.3 Risk Management	6. Service Quality	6.7 Plan	Ongoing review of established process to mitigate organisational HRM risks such as accrued leave	Plans in place to mitigate risks	Not Applicable	Ongoing	The Risk Register is constantly under review.

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M.D. OPS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT - 10 OBJECTIVES									
Library promotion	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.3 Social Engagement	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.6 Community Capacity	Promote library as centre of information, learning, culture & community through collections, publications & events. Deliver a range of cultural & community programmes.	Ongoing promotion & programme delivery	L1A: Number of visits to libraries per head of population	Ongoing	
Ukrainian Crisis	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.6 Community Capacity	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.8 Inclusion & Integration	Lead a multi-agency response to the Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis, in particular through the Community Response Forum, Support Hubs, and progression of national and local interventions	Ongoing	Not Applicable	Ongoing	
Community Development	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.7 Older Persons Wellbeing	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.8 Inclusion & Integration	Progress Age Friendly County Strategy, Progress Older People's Council Work Programme, Progress Age Friendly Alliance, Progress & Promote Social Inclusion.	Ongoing	Not Applicable	Ongoing	
Capital Projects	3. Sustained Economic Vibrancy	3.7 Growth Preparedness	3. Sustained Economic Vibrancy	3.5 A Base For Investment	Progress Capital & SSIP projects assigned to directorate	Ongoing	Not Applicable	Ongoing	
Leisure Facilities	3. Sustained Economic Vibrancy	3.7 Growth Preparedness	5. Capacity for Growth	5.4 Place Making	Manage, maintain & develop local facilities & amenities inc parks, playgrounds, open spaces, beaches, piers & harbours etc.	Ongoing	Not Applicable	Ongoing	
Climate	4. Climate and Environment	4.2 Measure Impact	4. Climate and Environment	4.1 Green Is Core	Progress climate action initiatives & Biodiversity interventions in accordance with CCC/ directorate programme and with input from Environment Directorate	Ongoing	Not Applicable	Ongoing	
Capital Projects	5. Capacity for Growth	5.2 Urban Regeneration	5. Capacity for Growth	5.3 Rural Regeneration	Submit high quality project proposals under RRDF, T&V, ORIS, Clár etc & prepare town framework concepts where applicable.	Ongoing	Not Applicable	Ongoing	
Derelict Sites	5. Capacity for Growth	5.2 Urban Regeneration	3. Sustained Economic Vibrancy	3.2 Implementation Of Planning Policy	Support the Town Centres First policy by addressing vacancy and dereliction through: (a) implementation of MDORD Derelict Sites Action Plan, (b) working with the Property Activation & Regeneration Unit	Ongoing	Not Applicable	Ongoing	
Service Delivery	6. Service Quality	6.1 Service Design	6. Service Quality	6.8 Engage	Lead and coordinate the delivery of municipal services across communities and businesses	Ongoing	Not Applicable	Ongoing	
Democracy	7. Governance and Democracy	7.1 Democracy	7. Governance and Democracy	7.5 Enabling Elected Members	Develop & Support democratic role of MD Members.	Ongoing	Not Applicable	Ongoing	

Principle Service	Corporate Plan Theme One	Corporate Plan Objective One	Corporate Plan Theme Two	Corporate Plan Objective Two	ASDP Objective	Performance Standard	NOAC Performance Indicator	Status	Comment
PLANNING - 10 OBJECTIVES									
Housing Estates	3. Sustained Economic Vibrancy	3.2 Implementation Of Planning Policy	5. Capacity for Growth	5.4 Place Making	Manage the resolution of Unfinished Housing Developments. Increase the number of housing estates to be taken in charge. To progress works under the Framework. Uplift the TIC Policy and Procedures.	Increase number of developments taken in charge. Ensure compliance with Bond conditions. Review TIC	Not Applicable	Ongoing	13 Estates taken in charge in 2023. Works ongoing under the framework that will facilitate the taking in charge of an additional 14 estates in 2024.
Development Management	3. Sustained Economic Vibrancy	3.2 Implementation Of Planning Policy	5. Capacity for Growth	5.3 Rural Regeneration	Provide an accessible and efficient Development Management Service which proactively supports the sustainable development of the County (in line with CDP vision statement)	Compliance with statutory timelines. Monitor and review of performance of specific indicators.	P2A: Number of LA planning decisions which were the subject of an appeal to An Bord Pleanála that were determined by the Board on any date in 2023, P2B: % of the determinations at A which confirmed (either with or without variation) the decision made by the LA	Ongoing	Applications processes as required. Note new integrated Planning System to be implemented in 2024
Planning Policy	3. Sustained Economic Vibrancy	3.2 Implementation Of Planning Policy	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.4 Quality Of Life	Active Land Management initiatives through the Vacant Sites Register, RZLT and monitoring of delivery	Implement RZLT, maintain Vacant Sites Register and engage with stakeholders.	Not Applicable	Ongoing	Implement as required by legislation.
Development Contributions	3. Sustained Economic Vibrancy	3.2 Implementation Of Planning Policy	7. Governance and Democracy	7.4 Business, Service & Systems	Collect Development Contributions levied with Planning Permission. Notify stakeholders of Special Contributions Collected.	Ensure proper application of Development Contribution Schemes. Pursue outstanding debts. Introduce efficiencies in collection process.	Not Applicable	Ongoing	Development Contribution Waiver Scheme introduced for residential developments that commence between 25th April 2023 and 24th April 2024 and is completed not later than 31.12.2025.

Principle Service	Corporate Plan Theme One	Corporate Plan Objective One	Corporate Plan Theme Two	Corporate Plan Objective Two	ASDP Objective	Performance Standard	NOAC Performance Indicator	Status	Comment
Planning Enforcement	3. Sustained Economic Vibrancy	3.2 Implementation Of Planning Policy	7. Governance and Democracy	7.2 Governance	To assess all complaints, and investigate as and when warranted to complete statutory process, whilst effectively communicating with respective stakeholders	Compliance with statutory timelines. To investigate all complaints and undertake appropriate investigations and complete statutory processes, effectively communicating with respective stakeholders.	P3A: Total number of planning cases referred to or initiated by the local authority in the period 1/1/2023, P3B: Total number of investigated cases that were closed during 2023, P3C. % of the cases at B that were dismissed as trivial, minor or without foundation or were closed because statute barred or an exempted development, P3D: % of cases at B that were resolved to the LA's satisfaction through negotiations, P3E. % Cases at B that were closed due to enforcement proceedings	Ongoing	Files opened in respect of complaints in relation to alleged unauthorised development. Ongoing review of open files.
Housing Infrastructure Implementation Team	3. Sustained Economic Vibrancy	3.7 Growth Preparedness	3. Sustained Economic Vibrancy	3.2 Implementation Of Planning Policy	Support the implementation of Urban Expansion Areas (UEAs)	Progress delivery of infrastructure in UEAs at Water Rock, Carrigtwohill & Cobh. Consider options to progress Monard SDZ.	Not Applicable	Ongoing	Infrastructure provision ongoing.
Planning Policy	3. Sustained Economic Vibrancy	3.7 Growth Preparedness	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.4 Quality Of Life	Provide Strategic Planning Guidance, through the adopted CDP and monitor the implementation of the policies and objectives	Implementation of CDP Policies and Objectives. Consider options to progress Monard SDZ.	Not Applicable	Ongoing	Monitoring of implementation of policies ongoing and guidance provided as required.
Planning Policy	4. Climate and Environment	4.1 Green Is Core	4. Climate and Environment	4.4 Sustainable Communities	Carry out Environmental Assessments (SEA/HDA/SFRA) to deliver high quality and sustainable outcomes	Undertake required environmental assessments, incl SEA Monitoring of Programmes, Plans and Projects	Not Applicable	Ongoing	Assessments and monitoring undertaken as required.

Principle Service	Corporate Plan Theme One	Corporate Plan Objective One	Corporate Plan Theme Two	Corporate Plan Objective Two	ASDP Objective	Performance Standard	NOAC Performance Indicator	Status	Comment
Archaeology, Heritage and Conservation Services	4. Climate and Environment	4.3 Natural Assets	4. Climate and Environment	4.4 Sustainable Communities	Provide expert advice on the provision of Archaeology, Heritage & Conservation services across the organisation including the Development Management Function, including grant schemes & deliver Architectural Conservation projects	Compliance with legislative requirements & avail of funding opportunities. Educational awareness	Not Applicable	Ongoing	Standard achieved. CMF, BHIS, HSF allocated grants administered H/MAC budgeted initiatives/actions implemented
Traffic and Transport	4. Climate and Environment	4.6 Supporting Sustainable Transport	4. Climate and Environment	4.4 Sustainable Communities	Promote and facilitate a switch to sustainable transport modes on a countywide basis through the delivery of integrated active travel and public transport infrastructure.	Oversee modal shift through the delivery of the active travel investment programme for Cork County	Not Applicable	Ongoing	Work on going on various projects as facilitated by funding. Note now under Roads as Sustainable Travel unit

Principle Service	Corporate Plan Theme One	Corporate Plan Objective One	Corporate Plan Theme Two	Corporate Plan Objective Two	ASDP Objective	Performance Standard	NOAC Performance Indicator	Status	Comment
ROADS - 10 OBJECTIVES									
Roads Operations	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.4 Quality Of Life	5. Capacity for Growth	5.4 Place Making	Deliver approved programme of verge maintenance and management of town approaches, adhering and contributing to this Council's policy of decarbonisation, biodiversity and pollinator plans	Deliver Programme	Not Applicable	Completed	
Management & Development Unit	4. Climate and Environment	4.4 Sustainable Communities	5. Capacity for Growth	5.4 Place Making	Maintain public lighting & ensure 98.5% of lights are working at one time, complete the 2023 New Lights Programme & other schemes are designed to current standards & to the minimum energy/carbon footprint	Delivery of Schemes	Not Applicable	Completed	
Public Lighting South West Efficiency Project	4. Climate and Environment	4.4 Sustainable Communities	5. Capacity for Growth	5.4 Place Making	To deliver the Public Lighting LED retrofit on behalf of the South West Region, Cork, Kerry, Waterford, Limerick & Clare County Councils.	Ongoing	E6A: Total billable wattage of the public lighting system, E6B: Average billable wattage of the public lighting system, E6C: Percentage of the total system that LED lights represent	Completed	
Fleet Management	4. Climate and Environment	4.6 Supporting Sustainable Transport	9. Innovation	9.3 Business Intelligence	Continue collaboration to achieve reduced fuel usage & maintaining ISO50001 accreditation. Continue review of new technologies & alternative fuels to reduce carbon emissions & develop fleet strategy.	Deliver in Q4	Not Applicable	Completed	
Management & Development Unit	5. Capacity for Growth	5.1 Sustainable Transport Infrastructure	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.10 Accessibility	Investigate all non medical fatal traffic accidents, with a view to ensuring road safety defects are minimised & participate in RSTWG to enhance road safety. Manage the Safety Improvement Grant Scheme	Manage Scheme	Not Applicable	Completed	
National Road Design	5. Capacity for Growth	5.1 Sustainable Transport Infrastructure	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.10 Accessibility	Develop a comprehensive pipeline of pavement projects, minor projects, major projects, greenways & safety improvements on the national roads network throughout the County	Ongoing Objective	Not Applicable	Completed	
Roads Operations / Regional & Local Roads Design Office	5. Capacity for Growth	5.1 Sustainable Transport Infrastructure	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.1 Vibrant Towns	Deliver the 2023 RI, RM, CIS, LIS, Bridge, Active Travel, Safety Improvement Schemes, Strategic & Specific Schemes in compliance with Procurement, Health & Safety and Quality Standards.	Deliver Programmes	R2A: Kilometres of regional road strengthened during 2023, R2B: Kilometres of regional road resealed during 2023, R2C: Kilometres of local road strengthened during 2023, R2D: Kilometres of local road resealed during 2023	Completed	

Principle Service	Corporate Plan Theme One	Corporate Plan Objective One	Corporate Plan Theme Two	Corporate Plan Objective Two	ASDP Objective	Performance Standard	NOAC Performance Indicator	Status	Comment
TOTAL OBJECTIVES SUBMITTED 121									
Roads Operations	5. Capacity for Growth	5.1 Sustainable Transport Infrastructure	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.1 Vibrant Towns	Roll out our Winter Service Plan using best practice and fuel efficient strategies and deliver Climate Action and Resilience projects including sustainable travel throughout the county.	Service Delivery	Not Applicable	Completed	
National Road Design	5. Capacity for Growth	5.1 Sustainable Transport Infrastructure	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.10 Accessibility	Major & Minor Projects; Issue Notices to Treat, Advance Works Preparation, Appoint Technical Advisors for design, tender & construction. Progress economically & in an environmentally sustainable way.	Ongoing Objective	Not Applicable	Completed	
Management & Development Unit	5. Capacity for Growth	5.1 Sustainable Transport Infrastructure	2. Strong Inclusive Communities	2.10 Accessibility	Respond to DOT Circulars by the allotted deadlines and complete PSCI surveying on LP & LT routes in 2023	Deliver by end Q4	R1B: The % of Local Primary road kilometres that received a PSCI rating in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2023, R1D: The % of Local Tertiary road kilometres that received a PSCI rating in the 60 month period prior to 31/12/2023	Completed	

APPENDIX 2

CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE 2023

Date	Conference	Location	No. of Attendees
January	The Finance Act 2022	Louth	3
	Farmers 4 Safety Conference	Tipperary	2
February	NMCI Seafarers Conference, 2023	Limerick	1
April	AILG Annual Conference	Kilkenny	27
	The Suck Valley Way Conference	Roscommon	6
October	Irish Planning Conference 2023	Malahide	5
	RIAI Conference 2023	Dublin	2
	ICSH Conference 2023	Wexford	4

APPENDIX 3

TRAINING CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE 2023

Date	Training and Conferences	Location	No. of Attendees
February	AIR "Regions in Focus" Seminar	Monaghan	20
	AILG Module 1 - "A Briefing on the Electoral Reform Act"	Limerick	19
March	LAMA Spring Seminar	Bantry	19
	AILG Module 2 - "Local Authority Climate Action Plans"	Wexford	10
	AILG Module 2 - "Local Authority Climate Action Plans"	Louth	6
June	AILG Module 3 - "Overview of Existing Planning Legislation and Policy Guidance"	Westmeath	2
	AILG Module 3 - "Overview of Existing Planning Legislation and Policy Guidance"	Kilkenny	10
July	AILG Module 4 - "Uisce Éireann (Irish Water) - A Briefing For Councillors"	Cork	3
	AILG Module 4 - "Uisce Éireann (Irish Water) - A Briefing For Councillors"	Sligo	13
September	AILG Autumn Training Seminar	Sligo	24
October	AILG Module 5 - "Elected Member Personal Security - Positive Home, Workplace and Mobile Security Practices."	Tralee	2
	LAMA Autumn Training Seminar 2023	Galway	15

APPENDIX 4

OTHER TRAVEL 2023

Date	Other / Special	Location	No. of Attendees
January	Pride of Place Awards	Dublin	2
March	U.S. St Patricks Day Delegation	Chicago	3
	U.S. St Patricks Day Delegation	Detroit	3
	U.S. St Patricks Day Delegation	New York	1
April	ICE Awards	Dublin	4
May	IE Digital Awards	Athlone	1
	Fermoy – Ploemeur Twinning Association	Brittany, France	1
June	Newport News, Virginia – Carrigaline Twinning Association	Virginia, USA	3
	Lamor Plage – Youghal Twinning Association	Lamor Plage, Brittany, France	3
	Belfast Study Visit	Belfast	10
November	Pride of Place Awards	Armagh	1
December	LGFA All Ireland Junior Club Final	Dublin	1

APPENDIX 5

STATEMENT OF INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROL (SIFC)

INTRODUCTION

I, Moira Murrell, Chief Executive (CE) of Cork County Council am responsible for the annual financial statement (AFS), prepared by the Director of Finance, in accordance with the accounting code of practice issued by the Minister under section 107 of the Local Government Act, 2001.

I certify that the financial statements of Cork County Council for the year ended 31 December 2023, are in agreement with the books of account and have been prepared in accordance with the accounting requirements of the Minister of Housing Local Government and Heritage.

The AFS is subject to external audit, by an auditor of the Local Government Audit Service, whose purpose is to form an independent opinion of the accounts and state whether the annual financial statement presents fairly the financial position of the local authority and of its income and expenditure for the period in question, and whether the transactions of the audited body conform with the statutory or other authorisation under which they purport to have been carried out.

The AFS reports on the day-to-day activity of Cork County Council in the form of the Statement of Comprehensive Income & Expenditure, summarised by Division. The Statement of Financial Position outlines the Cork County Council overall financial position as of the 31st of December 2023.

The Statement of Comprehensive Income represents expenditure and income on the day-to-day running of Cork County Council.

THE KEY SOURCES OF INCOME FOR CORK COUNTY COUNCIL ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Category	Current Year (€)	Previous Year (€)
Goods & Services	125,050,809	112,943,789
Grants & Subsidies	174,062,198	168,356,690
Other Contributions (as appropriate)	645,230	848,981
Rates	126,642,237	119,793,658
Local Property Tax	17,761,187	17,178,711

ACTIVITY ON THE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR 2023 IS AS FOLLOWS:

Category	Current Year (€)	Previous Year (€)
Income	441,161,661	419,121,830
Expenditure	403,404,493	393,162,546
Transfers to Capital	40,664,529	25,897,657
Exceptional Item	-	-
Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year	92,639	61,626
Prior Year Adjustment	-	-
Opening Revenue Reserve	7,656,878	7,595,252
Closing Revenue Reserve	7,749,517	7,656,878

The principal reason for increased Income and Expenditure when comparing Financial Year 2023 against 2022 is driven by increased grants received principally in the Roads, Transportation and Safety Division. A small surplus in the amount of €92,639 was made in 2023. This increased the General Revenue Reserve to €7,749,517.

The Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) represents the total financial activity of the council for the year together with comparative year figures as appropriate.

THE STATEMENT INCLUDES ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AS FOLLOWS:

- Assets both recently constructed/purchased and historical assets
- Work in progress and preliminary schemes- mainly roads and housing
- Long Term Debtors – housing loans
- Current Assets- including Stock, Debtors, Cash at bank
- Current and long term liabilities- mortgage and non-mortgage loan borrowings
- Various Reserves/Balances

THE NET ASSETS OF CORK COUNTY COUNCIL AT THE END OF 2023 TOTAL €8.161 BILLION AND ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Category	Current Year (€)	Previous Year (€)
Fixed Assets	7,559,201,870	7,468,134,112
Works in Progress	570,710,195	490,106,439
Long Term Debtors	161,641,030	160,763,974
Current Assets	425,194,283	439,986,006
Current Liabilities	198,059,594	227,344,546
Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)	227,134,689	212,641,460
Creditors (Amounts greater than 1 year)	357,478,405	366,143,034
Net Assets/(Liabilities)	8,161,209,379	7,965,502,951

A Statement of Funds Flow was introduced as part of AFS 2011. While the guidance of International Accounting Standard 7 Statement of Cash Flows has been followed, the business of local authorities is substantially different to most private sector organisations and therefore some minor changes to the format have been agreed to ensure the data displayed is meaningful and useful within the local government sector.

SYSTEM OF INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROLS

As CE of Cork County Council, I acknowledge my responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated by Cork County Council. This responsibility is exercised in the context of the resources available to Cork County Council. Also, any system of internal financial control can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected in a timely manner. Maintaining the system of internal financial controls is a continuous process and the system and its effectiveness are kept under ongoing review.

FINANCIAL CONTROL ENVIRONMENT

As CE of Cork County Council, I confirm that a financial control environment containing the following elements is in place:

- Financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability.
- Reporting arrangements have been established at all levels where responsibility for financial management has been assigned.
- Formal processes have been established at all levels where responsibility for financial management has been assigned.
- There is an Audit Committee which regularly review the internal financial control system.
- Procedures for key business processes have been documented.
- There are systems in place to safeguard the assets.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS AND MANAGEMENT REPORTING

As CE of Cork County Council, I confirm that a framework of administrative procedures and regular management reporting is in place including segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability and, in particular, that:

- procedures for key business processes have been documented
- there are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the ICT systems
- there are systems in place to safeguard the assets of the local authority and
- there are appropriate capital investment control guidelines and formal project management disciplines in operation.

PROCUREMENT COMPLIANCE

Cork County Council ensures that there is an appropriate and ongoing focus on good practice in tendering and purchasing and that procedures are in place to ensure compliance with all relevant procurement guidelines.

INTERNAL AUDIT AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

As Chief Executive, I can confirm that Cork County Council has an internal audit function with appropriately trained personnel, which operates in accordance with a written charter. Its work is informed by analysis of the financial risks to which Cork County Council is exposed and its annual internal audit plans are based on this analysis. I am satisfied that there are procedures in place to ensure that the reports of the internal audit function are followed up.

I can confirm that an Audit Committee is in place in accordance with the requirements of Section 122 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended).

The statutory functions of audit committees as set out in section 59 and 60 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 are as follows:

1. to review financial and budgetary reporting practices and procedures within the local authority that has established it;
2. to foster the development of best practice in the performance by the local authority of its internal audit function;
3. to review any audited financial statement, auditor's report or auditor's special report in relation to the local authority and assess any actions taken within that authority by its chief executive in response to such a statement or report and to report to that authority on its findings;
4. to assess and promote efficiency and value for money with respect to the local authority's performance of its functions; and
5. to review systems that are operated by the local authority for the management of risks.

I recognise that the audit committee plays a crucial role in the governance framework of local authorities, particularly in the context of increased public sector accountability. They have 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 local authority.

I acknowledge the Audit Committee's role in the risk management process and in the continuing review of the control environment and governance procedures in Cork County Council.

RISK AND CONTROL FRAMEWORK

Cork County Council has implemented a risk management system which identifies and reports key risks and the management actions being taken to address and, to the extent possible, mitigate those risks.

A corporate risk register is in place which identifies the key risks and evaluates and grades them according to their significance. The register is reviewed and updated by the Management Team on a regular basis. There is also a risk register in place for each directorate and these are also reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

The outcome of these assessments is used to ensure risks are managed to an acceptable level. The risk register details the controls and actions needed to mitigate risks and responsibilities for the operation of controls are assigned to specific staff.

As Chief Executive, I confirm that key risks and related controls have been identified and processes have been put in place to monitor the operation of those key controls and report any identified deficiencies.

The Statement of Internal Financial Control will be included in the draft Annual Report submitted to Council members and thereafter included in the published Annual Report prepared and adopted by the Council.

Signed by:



Dated: 29/10/2024

Chief Executive



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

A photograph of a modern building's interior, featuring a curved wall with horizontal panels and a glass railing. The scene is brightly lit, with shadows cast on the wooden floor. A large blue diagonal overlay covers the left side of the image, and a yellow triangle is in the bottom-left corner.

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