



LIMERICK COUNTY COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT 2005



LIMERICK COUNTY PROFILE



County Limerick , situated in the Mid-West of Ireland, dates back to the year 1210 when King John of England set up the first 12 Irish Counties , of which Limerick was one. It is an ancient and rich land. Its countryside is pleasing to the eye from the mountains of Mullaghareirk in the South-West; the Ballyhoura and Galtee Mountains in the South-East and the Sliabh Felim Mountains in the North-East; along the Golden Vale through to the tidal estuary of the River Shannon.

The County itself comprises an area of approximately 2,735 square kilometres and contains 119 civil (i.e. pre-Reformation) parishes, 58 ecclesiastical parishes, 136 electoral divisions, 1,938 townlands, 5 local government electoral areas and 2 Dáil Constituencies, East and West Limerick. The total population of the County was 121,281 (Census 2002) which showed an increase of 7.3% since 1996.

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FOREWORD OF CATHAOIRLEACH

It gives me great pleasure, as Cathaoirleach of Limerick County Council, to welcome the publication of our Annual Report for the year 2005. Once again, this has been a year of considerable achievements continuing the good work of the past number of years.

Firstly, I would like to mention our Corporate Plan which was adopted in May and sets out the corporate objectives and strategies of the Council up to 2009. The Plan reflects the changing role of the Council as not only a provider of services in the areas of Housing, Roads, Water and Environment, but also our increasingly active role in the quality of life and social inclusion issues which require greater interaction with our communities.

Wider community involvement in policy-making decisions is at the heart of the Strategic Policy Committee process. These Committees, which were reconstituted in January, strengthen local democracy through the participative democratic involvement of sectoral interests with Councillors in formulating policy.

As I stated earlier, this has been another year of considerable achievements. Tremendous progress is once again evident in the performance of the Housing Programme and the provision of houses, with houses completed or in progress in 16 locations throughout the county. I am delighted to see that the Voluntary Housing Sector has had another very active and successful year. The Voluntary Housing Sector is a great advert for local democracy in action with local communities providing houses for those in need of housing within their own communities.

One of the areas where progress is most evident has been the improvement in our roads network and this progress will continue with the fourth crossing of the River Shannon due to commence in the near future. Another area of increasing activity has been the construction of Water and Sewerage Schemes and these are leading to the revitalisation and rejuvenation of the county's towns and villages. Also, our Small Towns and Villages Initiative, using Public Private Partnerships in the provision of infrastructural services, has made significant progress.

It has been a great honour for me to serve once again as Cathaoirleach of Limerick County Council. My term as Cathaoirleach has given me considerable enjoyment and satisfaction. I would like to thank my fellow Councillors and compliment them for their support, commitment and co-operation during the year.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to record my sincere thanks to the County Manager and the hard-working staff of the Council for their outstanding commitment and hard work throughout the year.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Brigid Teefy'.

Brigid Teefy
Cathaoirleach



COUNTY MANAGER'S STATEMENT

I am particularly pleased to welcome this Annual Report for 2005 as it gives the Council the opportunity to publicise the considerable progress which has been achieved during the year. The report also highlights our involvement in many facets of modern life and our considerable interaction with communities in County Limerick.

Strategic Planning has become extremely important in local authorities especially considering our involvement in recent years in social inclusion, quality of life and community participation in addition to the ever increasing workloads in our traditional areas of operation such as Roads, Housing, Water and Sewerage. Our Corporate Plan provides the mechanism for strategic planning allowing the Council to set out objectives and strategies to meet these objectives over the five year life of the plan. In addition a system of monitoring and performance measurement will provide the basis for annual review of the Corporate Plan.

A welcome new source of funding has been the growth of the Development Fund from planning contributions. This discretionary fund will finance projects such as the development of three substantial neighbourhood parks in the City Environs, development of playgrounds throughout the county and various infrastructural projects. The fund will also provide finance for the Community, Sports and Cultural Grants Scheme to support community based clubs and voluntary organisations in the development of community, recreational, sporting, environmental and cultural facilities.

The widened democratic remit of local authorities has placed considerable demands on staff and resources. With the continuing economic boom there is increased expectations amongst our customers for better and more varied services. Limerick County Council is fortunate in the quality of the staff who work within the organisation and this is borne out by the fact that we are the lead authority for many regional projects such as the Shannon River Basin District Management Project, the Regional Waste Management Plan and the Southern Ring Road Phase II with the tunnel crossing of the River Shannon.

The changes within local government have also placed added responsibilities on our public representatives as they now deal with greater demands for services and more complex issues surrounding the economic, social and cultural life of the county. Through the Strategic Policy Committees our Councillors now have more responsibility in development of policy on the important issues which impact on the lives of the people of County Limerick.

I would like to compliment the Cathaoirleach and Members of the Council for the manner in which they perform their work on behalf of the people of County Limerick and I would also like to record my thanks for their co-operation and commitment. Finally I would like to especially thank the staff for the considerable dedication and commitment which they have displayed throughout the year.

Ned Gleeson
County Manager

MISSION STATEMENT & CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

To enhance the lives of the people of County Limerick through the efficient delivery of accessible quality services, with a focus on social inclusion and the promotion of sustainable balanced development.

OBJECTIVES:

Social Inclusion

To embed the principle of social inclusion in all policies, practices and service delivery, in recognition of the diversity, equality and right to inclusion of all people.

Quality of Life

To improve the quality of life of the people of Limerick through supporting the provision of social, community, cultural and recreational initiatives and facilities in order to ensure a healthy and vibrant community.

Housing

To ensure that all citizens of County Limerick have adequate accommodation appropriate to their needs.

Transportation

To provide and maintain a safe and effective transportation network within the County incorporating the principles of sustainable development, social inclusion and environmentally friendly work practices.

Water Services

To ensure the provision of adequate water supplies and wastewater disposal facilities in a manner which safeguards the environment and public health and underpins the sustainable development of the County.

Planning & Economic Development

To adopt a positive approach to balanced economic development through the proper planning and sustainable development of the County.

Environment

To protect, conserve and enhance the natural and built environment of County Limerick.

Human Resources

To enable, encourage and support our Councillors and employees to perform, contribute and develop to their full potential.

Information Systems

To maintain and progress a secure and reliable infrastructure of Information and Communications systems which will facilitate the management and operations of Limerick County Council.

Finance

To provide relevant, timely and accurate financial information to assist in the making of informed decisions.

Corporate Services

To support and enhance the democratic role of the Council and to develop, co-ordinate and promote a corporate culture and business ethos within the organisation.

OUR CORE VALUES

Limerick County Council endeavours to uphold the following core values:

Quality Customer Service

To respond to the needs, concerns and aspirations of the community and to provide quality and accessible services in an efficient and friendly manner.

Local Democracy

The Council is committed to the value of local democracy – both representative and participative. The role of elected Councillors as representative democracy is valued as is the role of the social partners (the Community and Voluntary Forum, Trade Unions, the farming pillar and business/employers representatives) as participative democracy. The Council aims to work in partnership with all sectors of the community.

The Staff

The Council recognises its most important resource – its staff – and their development, training, safety and welfare is a primary objective.

Standards

The Council is committed to the integrity of local government and public service and will continue to uphold the highest ethical standards, openness and transparency.

Sustainable Development

To promote balanced sustainable development and to protect, conserve and enhance our environment, in the best interests of the people and future generations.

Social Inclusion

To promote participation and social inclusion in meeting the needs of the community.

Value for Money and Efficiency

To encourage continuous improvement through the effective and efficient use of all resources and the involvement of all stakeholders.

Civic Leadership

To adapt to the new role of community leadership and to secure the engagement of all sectors of the community and other service providers through a partnership approach.

Equality

To provide equality in all activities, both as an employer and a service provider.

Communications

To continue to recognise the importance of effective communication with staff and the wider community.

MEMBERS OF LIMERICK COUNTY COUNCIL

BRUFF ELECTORAL AREA



Rose Brennan

**Leas
Chathaoirleach
2005-2006**
14, Park Avenue,
Adare,
Co. Limerick (PD)



Richard Butler

Dooradoyle Road,
Dooradoyle,
Co. Limerick (FG)



John Clifford

Crean, Bruff,
Kilmallock,
Co. Limerick (FF)



Niall Collins

3, Mount Russell,
Fr. Russell Road,
Dooradoyle,
Co. Limerick (FF)



Leonard Enright

Ballyanrahan,
Patrickswell,
Co. Limerick (FF)



Cormac Hurley

94, Sheelin Road,
Caherdavin Park,
Co. Limerick (FG)



**Deirdre Ní
Chinnéide**

2, Dromore Rise,
Raheen,
Co. Limerick (Lab)

CASTLECONNELL ELECTORAL AREA



Noel Gleeson

Cullenagh,
Cappamore,
Co. Limerick (FF)



Mary Harty

Corelish West,
Pallasgreen,
Co. Limerick (FG)



**Kieran
O'Donnell**

8, Milltown Manor,
Monaleen,
Castletroy,
Co. Limerick (FG)



Mary Jackman

Newtown,
Castletroy,
Co. Limerick (FG)



Noreen Ryan

Lacka,
Castleconnell,
Co. Limerick (FF)



Brigid Teeffy

**(Cathaoirleach
2005 - 2006)**
Ballybricken,
Grange,
Co. Limerick (PD)



Eddie Wade

Cahernorry,
Drombanna,
Co. Limerick (FF)

KILMALLOCK ELECTORAL AREA



**Eddie
Creighton**

9, St. Joseph's Tce.,
Hospital
Co. Limerick (PD)



John Gallahue

Main Street,
Ballylanders,
Co. Limerick (FF)



**James
Houlihan**

Stylepark,
Bruree,
Co. Limerick (FG)



Pat McAuliffe

Railway Road,
Kilmallock,
Co. Limerick (FF)



NEWCASTLE ELECTORAL AREA



Michael Collins

Ballinvallig,
Newcastle West,
Co. Limerick (FF)



Francis Foley

33, Collins Park,
Abbeyfeale,
Co. Limerick (FF)



Liam Galvin

Ballaugh,
Abbeyfeale,
Co. Limerick (FG)



**Patrick
O'Donovan**

Churchtown Road,
Newcastle West,
Co. Limerick (FG)



Jerome Scanlan

Ballydonnell,
Feohanagh,
Co. Limerick (FG)

RATHKEALE ELECTORAL AREA



John Griffin

Main Street,
Rathkeale,
Co. Limerick (FF)



David Naughton

Ballysteen,
Askeaton,
Co. Limerick (FG)



Tom Neville

Croagh,
Rathkeale,
Co. Limerick (FG)



John Sheahan

Ballyguilteneane,
Glin,
Co. Limerick (FG)



Kevin Sheahan

Cloonreask,
Askeaton,
Co. Limerick (FF)



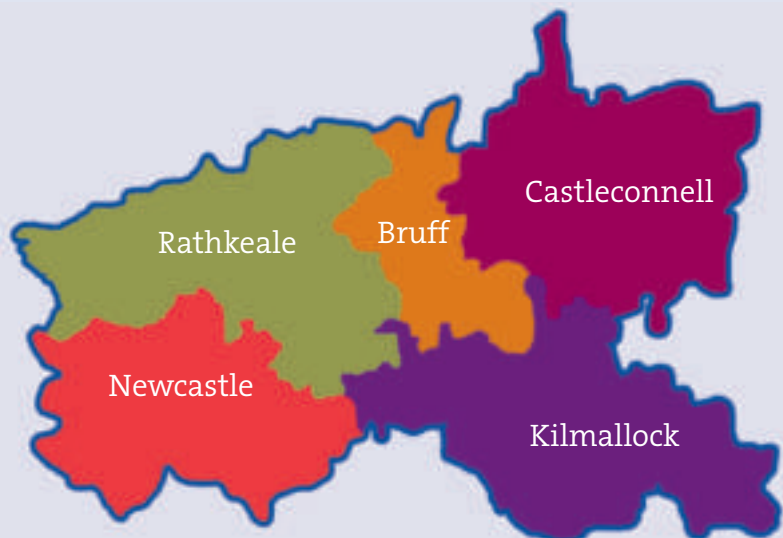
Brigid Teefy

Cathaoirleach



Rose Brennan

Leas Chathaoirleach



COUNCIL MEMBERS AND MEETINGS



Making history - as two ladies are elected at the AGM in June - Cllr. Brigid Teeffy, as Cathaoirleach and Cllr. Rose Brennan, as Leas Cathaoirleach

There are 28 members on the council - 7 members in the Bruff and Castleconnell Electoral Areas, 5 members in the Newcastle and Rathkeale Electoral Areas and 4 members in the Kilmallock Electoral Area.

Council Meetings are normally held on the fourth Monday of each month (except August when there is no meeting) in the Council Chamber at County Hall. The full Council met on 15 occasions (excluding committee meetings).

CORPORATE POLICY GROUP

The Corporate Policy Group (C.P.G.) is a Committee of the Council consisting of the Cathaoirleach of the Council and the Chairs of each of the Strategic Policy Committees. Membership is as follows:

- Councillor Brigid Teeffy, Cathaoirleach
- Councillor Jerome Scanlan, Chairperson Housing SPC
- Councillor Michael Collins, Chairperson Transportation and Infrastructural SPC
- Councillor Noreen Ryan, Chairperson Planning and Development SPC
- Councillor Eddie Creighton, Chairperson Social Cultural and Community Development SPC
- Councillor Mary Harty, Chairperson Environmental SPC

The C.P.G. links the work of the different S.P.C.'s; acts as a type of cabinet and provides a forum where policy positions can be agreed for submission to the full Council which will retain the decision making authority. The C.P.G. also monitors the performance of the local authority and plays a key role in preparing the budget. The C.P.G. met on 3 occasions.

COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL

Strategic Policy Committees

Title	No. of Members	No. of Meetings
Housing	18	4
Transportation and Infrastructural	18	5
Planning and Development	18	4
Social, Cultural and Community Development	15	7
Environment al	15	5

Electoral Area Committees

Title	No. of Members	No. of Meetings
Bruff Area	7	11
Castleconnell Area	7	10
Kilmallock Area	4	7
Newcastle Area	5	12
Rathkeale Area	5	14

Other Committees

Title	No. of Members	No. of Meetings
Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee	12	5
Rural Water Committee	9	4

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES

Each Strategic Policy Committee comprises of elected Councillors and sectoral representatives, working together in a more participative form of democracy, thereby providing a more effective policy focus on the functions and activities carried out by Limerick County Council. Each SPC is supported in its work by a Director of Services. While each SPC formulates and develops policy, the final decisions will rest ultimately with the full Council.

Planning & Development SPC:

Chairperson: Councillor N. Ryan
 Members: Councillor K. Sheahan.
 Councillor E. Wade.
 Councillor J. Clifford.
 Councillor J. Griffin.
 Councillor N. Gleeson.
 Councillor D. Ní Chinnéide.
 Councillor M. Jackman.
 Councillor K. O'Donnell.
 Councillor J. Scanlan.
 Councillor D. Naughton.
 Councillor J. Sheahan.

Sectoral Representatives*Development/Construction & Business/Commercial*

- Mr. Liam Ryan, Managing Director, BMS Ireland, Ballysimon Road, Limerick.
- Mr. Tony O'Shea, Knock Estates, 12A Knockhill, Ennis Road, Limerick.

Community & Voluntary, including Environment, Conservation, Culture and Disadvantaged

- Ms. Ann Gill, Patrickswell Community Council, Knockanes, Patrickswell, Co. Limerick.
- Mr. Charles Richardson, Knockcarron Community Council, c/o Moanmore, Emly, Co. Tipperary.
- Mr. Jeremiah O'Connor, Athea GAA Club, "Dalcon", Upper Athea, Athea, Co. Limerick.

Agriculture/Farming

- Mr. John Walsh, Cloughnadromin, Ballysimon, Co. Limerick.

Planning and Development SPC

During 2005, the Planning and Development Strategic Policy Committee met on five occasions. Councillor Noreen Ryan, Castleconnell is the committee chairperson.

A number of issues have been considered and discussed by the strategic policy committee including Telecommunication masts, County Development Plan, Housing need, Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines, and the County Heritage Plan.

Social, Cultural and Community Development SPC:

Chairperson: Councillor E. Creighton .
 Members: Councillor R. Brennan.
 Councillor F. Foley.
 Councillor Ml. Collins.
 Councillor P. McAuliffe.
 Councillor L. Enright.
 Councillor P. O'Donovan.
 Councillor C. Hurley.
 Councillor D. Naughton.
 Councillor L. Galvin.

Sectoral Representatives*Development/Construction & Business/Commercial*

- Mr. John Quinn, Quinn Savage Smyth Architects, 12, Barrington St., Limerick.

Community & Voluntary, including Environment, Conservation, Culture and Disadvantaged

- Ms. Joan Dempsey, Bruff Social Services, Ballyreesode, Bruff, Co. Limerick.
- Mr. Seamus Hunt, St. Vincent de Paul, c/o Dromindeel, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick.
- Mr. Seamus Ryan, Kilfinane and Coshlea Historical Society, Low Bridge, Kilfinane, Co. Limerick.

Agriculture/Farming

- Mr. Robert Ruttle, Kilbreedy, Kildimo, Co. Limerick.

Social, Cultural and Community Development SPC:

The Social, Cultural & Community Development Strategic Policy Committee considered and discussed a range of areas and issues during 2005. A total of 7 full committee meetings took place and members started with a review of the SPC's role and functions.

Other items that the members considered and commented on included:

- Limerick County Council's Draft Corporate Plan
- Limerick County Council's Draft Heritage Plan 2005 – 2011
- A presentation outlining the main areas of the Library Service, which collectively is one of the largest established cultural/educational infrastructures in Ireland.

Members reviewed and discussed the conditions for allocation of the Arts Grants, including new criteria for the awarding of a grant to an individual or organisation. The consequences of these changes will ensure all successful applications will have to have an arts focus and fulfill the criteria. Funding will now be more realistic and the whole process will be much more straightforward and transparent.

Two delegates from County Limerick Comhairle na nÓg 2005 reported on the issues of drug and alcohol misuse and facilities for young people at the June meeting.

Status reports were provided on Limerick County Council's Community, Sports and Cultural Grants Scheme and members also received an update on County & Group Broadband Schemes.

A County Play Plan that aims to increase opportunities for children to play and be active was presented to members for consideration. The Play Plan is a co-ordinated approach involving a number of organisations and aims to meet local expressed needs in the delivery of play facilities. Currently, the levels of physical activity and participation in sport among primary and secondary schoolchildren are below recommended levels and need to be increased.

Members were also given a presentation on the Barcelona Declaration that aims to create a more inclusive society for people with disabilities. The Barcelona Declaration obliges Local Authorities to undertake work and develop new policies and procedures in a number of areas to ensure the rights of people with disabilities.

In December the SPC received information on the review of Limerick County Development Board's Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development of County Limerick.

The review focused on a limited number of key priorities and actions over the period 2006 -2008. The actions will be integrative in nature and aim to have a more joined-up approach to local service delivery involving the relevant agencies and organisations.

Transportation and Infrastructural SPC:

Chairperson: Councillor Ml. Collins

Members: Councillor R. Brennan.
Councillor B. Teeffy.
Councillor P. McAuliffe.
Councillor N. Collins.
Councillor J. Gallahue.
Councillor K. Sheahan.
Councillor L. Galvin.
Councillor J. Houlihan.
Councillor K. O'Donnell.
Councillor T. Neville.
Councillor M. Jackman.

Sectoral Representatives

Development/Construction & Business/Commercial

- Mr. John McInerney, PJ Hegarty & Sons Ltd., Mount Kennett Place, Limerick.
- Mr. Peter Ryan, Director, Argosea Services, 25 William Street, Limerick.

Community & Voluntary, including Environment, Conservation, Culture and Disadvantaged

- Mr. Sean Donovan, Loughill Community Development Association, Loughill West, Co. Limerick.
- Mr. Denis McAuliffe, Great Southern Trail Ltd., Meenoline South, Templeglantine, Co. Limerick.

Agriculture/Farming

- Mr. Aidan Gleeson, Coolaemy, Ballyorgan, Co. Limerick.

Trade Union

- Mr. William Davoren, SIPTU, Doon House, Elm Park, Clarina, Co. Limerick.

Transportation & Infrastructural SPC:

The Council's Transportation & Infrastructural Strategic Policy Committee met on five occasions in 2005. Items discussed by the Committee include:

1. Speed Limits
2. Traffic Calming
3. Public Lighting
4. Code of practice for the management of the supply of water.
5. Policy in relation to Water Services infrastructure within new developments
6. Signposting

Environmental SPC:

Chairperson: Councillor M Harty
 Members: Councillor E. Creighton.
 Councillor J. Griffin.
 Councillor L. Enright.
 Councillor J. Gallahue.
 Councillor D. Ní Chinnéide
 Councillor P. O'Donovan.
 Councillor R. Butler.
 Councillor J. Houlihan.
 Councillor C. Hurley.

Sectoral Representatives*Development/Construction & Business/Commercial*

- Mr. Trevor Montgomery, Senior Environment Engineer, Aughinish Alumina, Askeaton, Co. Limerick.

Community & Voluntary, including Environment, Conservation, Culture and Disadvantaged

- Mr. Michael Buckley, Recycling for a Better Future, Main Street, Ballylanders, Co. Limerick.
- Mr. Michael Ryan, Oola Tidy Towns, "Bwthyn Mihangel", Chapel Lane, Oola, Co. Limerick.
- Mr. Joe Whelan, Askeaton Community Council, Clounreask, Askeaton, Co. Limerick.

Agriculture/Farming

- Mr. Ger Quane, Creggane, Charleville, Co. Cork.

Environmental S.P.C:

The membership of the Environmental Strategic Policy Committee was re-constituted in 2004 and its first meeting was held in March, 2005. In accordance with the recommendations of the IPA document, "The Review of the Operation of Strategic Policy Committees", the members prepared a work programme for the year, which included consideration of the following projects:

- The River Basin District Advisory Council.
- Derelict sites in County Limerick.
- Develop policies and review of the Regional Waste Management Plan.
- Emergency Services 5 Year Business Plan.
- The Limerick Clare Energy Agency.

A total of five meetings of the Environmental S.P.C. were held at which policy-making in relation to the above named matters was discussed in detail.

Housing SPC:

Chairperson: Councillor J. Scanlan
 Members: Councillor B. Teeffy.
 Councillor E. Wade.
 Councillor J. Clifford.
 Councillor N. Ryan.
 Councillor N. Collins.
 Councillor F. Foley.
 Councillor N. Gleeson.
 Councillor T. Neville.
 Councillor R. Butler.
 Councillor M. Harty.
 Councillor J. Sheahan.

Sectoral Representatives*Development/Construction & Business/Commercial*

- Mr. Liam McArdle, Custom Construction, Foxfield, Dooradoyle Road, Limerick.

Community & Voluntary, including Environment, Conservation, Culture and Disadvantaged

- Ms. Alice McAuliffe, Dromin & Athlacca Housing Project, "Shalom", Athlacca, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick.
- Mr. Larry Begley, Mountcollins Development Association, Mountcollins, Co. Limerick.
- Mr. Kevin Flynn, West Limerick Independent Living Limited, c/o Leahys, Foynes, Co. Limerick.
- Ms. Angela Quilligan, Desmond's Women's Group, Knockane, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick.

Trade Union

- Ms. Brid Foley, MANDATE, Greenhills, Crecora, Co. Limerick.

Housing SPC

The Housing Strategic Policy Committee met on 4 occasions and discussed a range of issues including:-

- Assessment of Housing Needs.
- Action Plan for Social & Affordable Housing.
- Traveller Accommodation Programme.
- Presentation on Rental Accommodation Scheme.
- Draft Policy for Assessment of Loan Applications.
- Disabled Persons Grants and Essential Repairs Grants.
- Geothermal Heating Systems.
- Discussion Document on Anti-Social Behaviour.

REPRESENTATION ON OTHER BODIES

1. General Council of County Councils

Councillor David Naughton.
Councillor Leonard Enright.
Councillor Rose Brennan.

2. Mid-West Regional Authority

Councillor Kieran O'Donnell.
Councillor Cormac Hurley.
Councillor James Houlihan.
Councillor Leonard Enright.
Councillor Eddie Creighton.
Councillor Eddie Wade.
Councillor Noel Gleeson.

*Operational Committee of Mid-West
Regional Authority*

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Brigid Teefy.
Councillor Eddie Creighton.

3. Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly

Councillor Eddie Creighton.
Councillor Leonard Enright.

4. Limerick Market Trustees

Cathaoirleach Councillor Brigid Teefy.
Councillor Deirdre Ní Chinnéide.
Councillor Mary Jackman.
Councillor Kieran O'Donnell.
Councillor Niall Collins.
Councillor Rose Brennan.
Councillor Kevin Sheahan.
Councillor Francis Foley.
Councillor Michael Collins.

*Management Committee of Limerick
Market Trustees*

Councillor Kevin Sheahan.
Councillor Niall Collins.

5. Shannon Foynes Port Company

Councillor Kevin Sheahan.

6. Library Association of Ireland

Councillor Kevin Sheahan.

7. Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances

Councillor Niall Collins.

8. Local Authority Members' Association

Councillor Kevin Sheahan.

9. National University of Ireland, Cork - Governing Authority

Councillor John Gallahue.

10. University of Limerick - Governing Authority

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Brigid Teefy.

11. Adare Heritage Trust Ltd.

Cathaoirleach Councillor Brigid Teefy.

12. Limerick County Enterprise Board

Councillor Mary Harty.
Councillor Brigid Teefy.
Councillor Michael Collins.
Councillor Noreen Ryan.

13. West Limerick Resources Ltd.

Councillor Liam Galvin.
Councillor Michael Collins.
Councillor Niall Collins.

14. Ballyhoura Development Limited

Councillor Pat McAuliffe.
Councillor James Houlihan.

15. RCCN (Rural Community Care Network)

Councillor Francis Foley.
Councillor Jerome Scanlan.

16. Hunt Museums Trust

Councillor John Griffin.

17. Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee

Councillor John Griffin.
Councillor Mary Jackman.
Councillor Pat McAuliffe.
Councillor Francis Foley.
Councillor Patrick O'Donovan.

18. County Rural Water Committee

Councillor John Griffin.
Councillor John Gallahue.
Councillor James Houlihan.

19. County Limerick Vocational Education Committee (Appointed at Council Meeting of 18th October, '04).

Councillor Liam Galvin.
Councillor Mary Jackman.
Councillor John Sheahan.
Councillor John Clifford.
Councillor John Griffin.
Councillor Patrick McAuliffe.
Councillor Niall Collins.
Councillor Rose Brennan.
Councillor Brigid Teefy.

20. Limerick County Development Board

Cathaoirleach Brigid Teefy,
Councillor Noreen Ryan
Councillor Eddie Creighton,
Councillor Michael Collins
Councillor Mary Harty
Councillor Jerome Scanlan

CONFERENCES ATTENDED 2005

The Council was represented at the following conferences in 2005:

The Duhallow Conference, A 3-Day Seminar

20th - 22nd January, Kanturk

Public Relations and the Elected Representative, Corporate Training for the Public Sector

26th - 27th January, Galway

Cumann Merriman Winter School Conference

28th - 30th January, Bunratty

Wicklow County Council Tourism Seminar

27th January, Newtownmountkennedy

A Theatre of Tourism

28th - 29th January, Dunadry

Mid West Regional Authority, 11th Annual Conference

3rd - 4th February, Ennis

Seminar For Councillors, The Local Government Planning Service

4th - 5th February, Dungarvan

National Energy Conference

10th - 11th February, Mallow

Association of Municipal Authorities of Ireland

11th - 12th February, Letterkenny

Farmers Market -

A Way for farmers to increase their income

14th February, Cork

The Kerry Literary & Cultural Centre

17th - 18th February, Listowel

Suicide Prevention & Awareness

18th - 19th February, Leitrim

3rd National Tourism Conference

24th - 25th February, Carlow

16th Colmcille Winter School

25th - 27th February, Letterkenny

General Council of County Councils

3rd - 5th March, Enfield

4th Annual Clonmel Conference

4th - 5th March, Clonmel

7th Irish & UK Local Authorities Standing Conference on Nuclear Hazards

10th - 11th March, Drogheda

Wexford Historical Society,

60th Anniversary Conference

11th - 13th March, Wexford

LAMA – 22nd Annual Conference

31st March - 1st April, Cork

Cork County Council's Annual Mayor's Conference

14th - 15th April, Cork

Implications for Local Development-Post 2006

The Common Agriculture Policy

14th - 15th April, Kilkee

Annual Joint Conference -

Library Association of Ireland

19th - 22nd April, Derry

21st Annual Environmental Conference

21st - 22nd April, Carrigaline

The Duhallow Conference 2005

21st - 24th April, Kanturk

Irish Rural Link, Annual Conference

21st - 22nd April, Carrick-on-Shannon

Training Seminar for Councillors -

The Local Housing Service

22nd - 23rd April, Ballinamore

Optimising the Environment for Enterprise

26th - 27th April, Portlaoise

Drogheda Cross Border Focus

28th - 30th April, Drogheda

14th Annual Kerry Environmental

Recognition Conference

4th - 7th May, Ballybunion

BMW Regional Assembly Annual Conference

5th May, Tullamore

Citizen Learner

11th - 12th May, Dundalk

6th Annual Regional Assembly Conference

19th - 20th May, Killarney

The Westport Experience, Annual Conference 2005

19th - 21st May, Westport

Three Day Conference 'Blackwater Valley Tourism'

19th - 21st May, Mallow

Media Skills - Seminar for Councillors

21st May, Arklow

Implementing the Agreement

'North & South Cooperation five years on'

27th May, Dublin

Regional Policy Conference

3rd June, Tullamore

Surviving or Thriving?

Quality of Life, Issues in Rural Ireland

9th June, Dublin

Training Seminar for Councillors, Sustainable Rural Housing, Guidelines for Planning Authorities

10th - 11th June, Castlebellingham

E-Government Locally

14th - 15th June, Middleton

County Development Board/Leitrim County Council's Conference

16th June, Carrick-On-Shannon

Fuelling the Future

18th - 19th June, Kinsale

Future of Rural Tourism

23rd - 25th June, Roscommon

Confederation of European Councillors, Summer Seminar

23rd - 24th June, Mullingar

11th Byrne/Perry Summer School

24th - 26th June, Gorey

Village Design Conference

28th June, Castle Durrow

A New Approach to Childcare

1st July, Dublin

Douglas Hyde Conference 2005

15th - 17th July, Strokestown

William Carleton Summer School

1st - 5th August, Clogher

The Parnell Summer School

14th - 19th August, Rathdrum

Merriman Summer School 2005

20th - 27th August, Lisdoonavarna

General Humbert - Michael Davitt Summer School

23rd - 28th August, Kilcummin

Local Government and The Arts

26th - 27th August, Letterkenny

2nd IRDA Conference - Rural Housing a Rural Right

31st August - 1st September, Kilkee

Big Jim Larkin Autumn School 2005

16th - 17th September, Warrenpoint

Business in a Rural Economy - An International Approach

21st - 22nd September, Cookstown

Promoting a Sustainable Energy Culture in Europe,

22nd - 23rd September, Cork

Fine Gael Local Government Member's Conference,

22nd - 24th September, Athlone

Conference on Planning Rural v Urban

5th - 7th October, Killybegs

Great Blasket Commemoration 2005,

7th - 9th October, Tralee

Confederation of European Councillors Overseas Conference,

12th - 14th October, Berlin

Planning and Design for Heritage and Development

18th - 19th October, Killiney

Councillor Training Seminar, Education and Local Government

28th - 29th October, Carrick On Suir

L.A.M.A. Silver Jubilee Year

4th - 5th November, Letterkenny

Filling the Vacuum

8th - 9th November, Ennis

A O I F E Conference 2005

11th - 13th November, Waterford

Local Economic Development Conference

24th November, Limerick

Irish Leader Annual Conference 2005

24th - 25th November, Dublin

17th National Tourism Conference

25th and 26th November, Ennistymon

Rural Transport Initiative

28th - 29th November, Kilkenny

Combat Poverty Agency

6th December, Dublin

Training Seminar For Councillors, The Local Government Budget

10th December, Bunclody

CIVIC RECEPTIONS

The Members formally propose and second the awarding of the Civic Honour at one of their monthly Council meetings and the Civic Receptions are normally held at a subsequent monthly meeting or a special meeting called for the purpose of awarding the Civic Honour. The purpose of the honour is to recognise the outstanding achievement or contribution of the person/persons to the county, country or internationally.

Two unique Civic Receptions were held during 2005.

The first was held on 21st March 2005 to honour the achievements of County Limerick Students who won awards at the Esat Bt Young Scientist 2005 Competition.



Patrick Collison a student from Castletroy College who won the Esat BT Young Scientist of the Year 2005 receives his Scroll from Cathaoirleach Councillor Eddie Wade.



Mary Ennis and Billy Fehin Hazelwood College, Dromcollogher who won the Esat/BT Young Scientist of the Year 2005 Comhar Award (Sustainable Development Award) together with their teacher Ms. Maria Neville.



Cathaoirleach Councillor Eddie Wade presents Scroll to Claire Conaghan, Aine Mulcahy, and Sean Liston of Desmond College, Newcastle West in recognition of their achievement in winning the Esat/BT Young Scientist of the Year 2005 Runners Up (group) and Patent Office Award.

Second Civic Reception

The second Civic Reception was held on 6th May 2005 and was mainly sporting in emphasis with current sports stars from Boxing and Rugby together with the Limerick Hurling Panels from 1984 and 1985. The final recipient was Mr. Joe English from Chicago.



Cathaoirleach Councillor Eddie Wade presents a Scroll to Mrs Berry English on behalf of Joe English in recognition of his contribution to the Irish American community in Chicago and in particular to natives of Limerick. Mr. Joe English was ill at the time of the reception.



Cathaoirleach Councillor Eddie Wade presents a Scroll to Paul O'Connell in recognition of his achievements in Rugby and in particular his selection on the British and Irish Lions 2005 Tour of New Zealand.



Cathaoirleach Councillor Eddie Wade presents a Scroll to John Hayes in recognition of his achievements in Rugby and in particular his selection on the British and Irish Lions 2005 Tour of New Zealand.



Cathaoirleach Councillor Eddie Wade presents a Scroll to Andy Lee in recognition of his achievements in the sport of Boxing.



Cathaoirleach Councillor Eddie Wade presents a Scroll to Councillor Leonard Enright on behalf of Limerick Senior Hurling Panels in recognition of the achievement of the Limerick Senior Hurling Panels in winning the National Hurling League in 1984 and 1985.

ENVIRONMENT, EMERGENCY SERVICES AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS



Tom Enright
*Director of
Environment,
Emergency
Services &
Consumer Affairs*

ENVIRONMENT

This Directorate is responsible for a diverse range of functions and services. The principal divisions within the Section are as follows:

- Pollution Control and Water Quality Management.
- Litter Management.
- Waste Management.
- Derelict Sites.
- Energy Agency and Conservation.
- Fire and Emergency Services.
- Building Control.
- Health and Safety.
- Veterinary Services.
- Civil Defence.
- Corporate Building Programme.
- Water Safety.

Pollution Control and Water Quality Management

The Pollution Control Division is responsible for the implementation of Local Government Environmental Legislation in the following areas: air, water, noise and nuisance. It also has a general water quality monitoring and management role. Specific activities undertaken by the section include the investigation of water pollution incidents, licensing of discharges to waters and sewers, licensing of significant emissions to air, monitoring of drinking water, urban waste water plants, rivers and lakes.

Water Pollution and the Phosphorous Regulations, 1998

Water pollution is a major concern in County Limerick. Therefore much of the work of the pollution control section is devoted to this matter. Only 46% of rivers in County Limerick are classed as unpolluted, compared to a national figure of 62%. In addition, the Rivers Maigue and Deel, which drain the majority of the County, are the most polluted rivers in the Country, in terms of Phosphorous loading. Under the Phosphorous Regulations, 1998 the Council is obliged to achieve a significant improvement in river water quality by 2007. To this end, the Council has established a team

consisting of an Agricultural Scientist and two Field Inspectors with administrative and technical support to undertake a comprehensive programme of farm inspections, discharge licensing and general pollution investigations.

Since the team was established in November 2002, pollution surveys have been completed in approximately 85% of the River Deel catchment. In total, over 1500 farm visits have been carried out along with inspections of septic tanks, industrial and commercial premises and sewage treatment plants. The team works in close co-operation with individuals and community groups with a view to addressing the problems identified.

Enforcement of Water Pollution Legislation

Enforcement of Water Pollution Legislation is an important element in ensuring good water quality. The Environment Section investigated 180 complaints relating to water issues, which resulted in 17 successful prosecutions under the Water Pollution Act 1977 & 1990.

Environment Laboratory

The Environment Laboratory is responsible for the following areas of work:

1. Management plan for Drinking Water Quality.

The laboratory staff monitor drinking water to ensure that the quality is legally compliant and fit for consumption by our customers and for group water scheme users. The laboratory also provides technical assistance to County Council area offices, group water schemes and members of the public as requested. In 2005, a total of 474 scheduled samples were taken. 451 additional samples were taken as part of water supply quality incident investigation and resolutions.

2. Management plan for Urban Waste Water Treatment Plants.

This management plan ensures Limerick County Council's compliance with the requirements of the Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992 (Urban

Waste Water Treatment) Regulations 1994 S.I. 419.. In 2005, 390 samples were taken from 44 discharge points.

3. Management plan for Surface Waters for Abstractions.

The management plan includes the legal classification of drinking water treatment plants with surface water sources in the County and the legal quality standards that the raw water for these plants should meet. The plan sets out sampling frequencies and analysis required. This plan was complied with in 2005.

4. Management plan for licensed activities

Limerick County Council licenses both discharges to waters and sewers in accordance with the Local Government (Water Pollution) Acts 1977 & 1990 and the associated Regulations. The laboratory is involved in the following way:

4.1 Licensing programme

This programme initiated licensing by sector. Limerick County Council has completed the nursing homes and hotels sectors in 2005.

4.2 License Review Programme

This involves an assessment of existing licenses and reviewing them where required. This programme was largely completed.

4.3 Industry sampling programme

136 industry samples were taken.

4.4 Licensing Audit Programme

Three prosecutions for serious non-compliance with license conditions were completed and two are still continuing. In addition, 518 industry self-monitoring returns were assessed for compliance.

5. Monitoring programme for river catchments and lakes

Fifteen river catchments and two lakes were monitored to assess compliance with the relevant regulations. In total, 834 samples were taken at monitoring stations throughout the County during the year.

6. Dangerous Substances Monitoring

24 key locations throughout the County were sampled and tested for dangerous substances. All locations were found to be below the legal limits.

Shannon River Basin District Management Project

Ireland has been divided into eight river basin districts (RBDs) covering the whole of the island of Ireland, in accordance with new EU and Irish environmental legislation. The Shannon RBD, with a total area of 18,000 km², is the largest RBD in Ireland and covers the natural drainage area of the River Shannon and the associated coastal areas of Clare, Limerick and Kerry. It extends into the functional area of eighteen local authorities, with Limerick County Council identified in Irish legislation as the Co-ordinating Local Authority for the RBD. Limerick County Council is also the Contracting Authority for the Shannon RBD Management Project, which has been established with National Development Plan funding to assist the local authorities in the RBD to meet the requirements of the legislation. The initial phase of the project will culminate with the production of a draft River Basin Management Plan for the district in 2008.

2005 saw the completion of the Article 5 Characterisation Report for the Shannon RBD. This report provides an initial assessment of the pressures and activities that present a threat to some water bodies not achieving the requirement of “good status” by 2015. It also provides an assessment of the value of water in the RBD and how the cost of provision of water services is recouped. It is available on the Project website at www.shannonrbd.com or by contacting the Environment Section of Limerick County Council.



River Arra, Newcastle West

Litter Management

Limerick County Council continued to implement its multi-faceted approach to tackling the problem of indiscriminate littering throughout the County. A combination of awareness, enforcement and other measures were adopted to promote behavioural changes among all sectors of the population towards littering and illegal dumping. The three Environmental Control Officers were actively engaged in enforcing the provisions of the Litter Pollution/Waste Management Acts e.g., investigating litter complaints, abandoned vehicles, backyard burning, etc. In 2005, the Environmental Control Officers were assigned 2010 complaints and 85% (1710) of these were resolved within this period. The Council's two clean-up crews worked in tandem with the Environmental Control Officers and carried out works to eliminate a number of black spot areas throughout the County.

Council staff issued a total of 112 on-the-spot fines under the Litter Pollution Acts 1997 to 2003. Each fine is €125.00 and a collection rate of 83% was recorded for the year. Furthermore, a total of 34 prosecutions were initiated under the Litter Pollution/Waste Management Acts and 11 convictions were secured.

A total of 117 groups participated in National Spring Clean, which is run by the Council in conjunction with An Taisce during the month of April. The Environmental Control Officers worked closely with these groups by co-ordinating clean-ups, providing bags, gloves, litter pickers etc., and organising for the collection/disposal of all waste. Limerick County Council appreciates the work of all participants in improving the appearance of their local areas.

The Council received a grant of €12,500 from the DoEHLG under the Anti-Litter Awareness Initiatives Grant Scheme. These monies were used on anti-litter publicity type projects including the design of a litter logo, tax disc holders, car litter bags etc.

The DoEHLG introduced the National Litter Pollution Monitoring System in 1999 to monitor the levels of litter pollution on a nationwide basis. As part of the National Litter Pollution Monitoring System the Council's Environmental Control Officers carried out a number of Litter Pollution Quantification Surveys in 2005. The results of the surveys allow us to measure the extent and severity of litter pollution within our functional area, recognise the types, most likely sources and causes of litter, monitor the changes in litter levels from location to location and over time, identify the location of litter black-spots, and evaluate the impact of anti-litter measures.



Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Eddie Wade launches the Council's Car Litter Bag in the drive against litter

Waste Management

Regional Waste Management Office

As lead authority for the implementation of the Limerick/Clare/Kerry Regional Waste Management Plan, the Council administers the Regional Waste Office, which, at present, is located in Mallow Street, Limerick. The office employs a Regional Waste Co-Ordinator, a Waste Minimisation Officer, an Executive Scientist and an Assistant Staff Officer. The Draft Waste Management Plan was launched in October and a very active public consultation process followed. This is due to be completed in mid-April, 2006 by which time all prescribed bodies will have been consulted on the Plan.

The office processes Waste Collection Permit applications. To date, a total of 352 have been received, 281 of which have been granted. It has responsibility for reviewing Annual Environmental Reports submitted in respect of "waste movements". The office also co-ordinates waste enforcement in the region in conjunction with the EPA's Enforcement Network and played a key role in implementing the WEEE regulations introduced in August. Furthermore, the Regional Waste Management Office manages the Business-to-Business (B2B) Green Mentor Programme, which focuses on waste prevention in the commercial sector. This project is funded under the EPA's Cleaner Greener Production Programme.



County Manager, Ned Gleeson, at the Launch of the Draft Waste Management Plan

Enforcement

The Environment Section received 2,600 pollution complaints, 83 % of which related to waste/litter issues. Following investigation, most of the complaints were resolved without recourse to the issuing of warning letters, formal notices or legal proceedings. Statutory notices were issued and / or prosecutions were initiated in respect of the remainder.

Permitting / Regulation

The Council issued a total of 27 Waste Permits in respect of new facilities in 2005, bringing the total number of permitted facilities in the county to 57. A further 17 applications were under assessment at the end of the year. The Council audited 20 Waste Permitted Facilities during the year. In addition, 23 Waste Collectors were audited during the year to ensure compliance with their Waste Collection Permit.

Packaging Regulations

The Council continues to inspect major producers of packaging waste in order to assess compliance with the Packaging Regulations. Four concerns have opted for Self-registration with the Council. The remaining producers are members of REPAK.

Recycling Facilities

At present, there are 47 bring bank facilities in the county offering collections for glass, steel and aluminium cans. A number of these sites also include facilities for re-cycling plastics, clothes and newspapers. The Council opened two new civic amenity centres at Newcastle West and Kilmallock in April 2004. Up to 2,500 members of the public use these facilities each month. A third facility located at Mungret and serving the city environs is due to be opened in 2006.

Gortadroma Landfill

The landfill accepted 43,252 tonnes of waste for disposal. Waste intake has declined for the third year in succession (82,164 tonnes in 2003 and 50,222 in 2004). While the decline is partly due to pricing policy, it is also reflective of the increasing impact of recycling initiatives, including the roll out of segregated collection systems county wide in 2005.

An Bord Pleanála confirmed the Compulsory Purchase Order for the lands required for the proposed extension to the landfill and also granted approval for the development of five new cells on the site. The EPA also issued a revised waste licence to include the proposed extension of the site.

Plans were advanced for the installation of a landfill gas to energy project on the site using a public private partnership arrangement. The Council was awarded a 1-megawatt contract in the AER VI competition run by the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources. This contract guarantees a premium price for electricity supplied to the national grid for up to 15 years, where the power is generated from renewable sources. It is intended to start exporting electricity from the site in late 2006.



Recycling for a better future in County Limerick

Environmental Awareness

During 2005, the Council's Environmental Awareness Officer, carried out an extensive programme of awareness activities which focussed, in particular, on waste matters.

Environmental Awareness Activities

- A spring / summer edition of the "Managing Waste Better" newsletter was produced to highlight initiatives / recent developments in relation to recycling, composting and anti-litter programmes.
- A new series of leaflets on topics such as Managing Farm Waste, Managing Construction & Demolition Waste, and Household Waste Recycling Centres were produced by the Environment Section and distributed to the public.
- Up to 57 primary / secondary schools were visited by the Environmental Awareness Officer.
- A further four primary schools and one secondary school received the Green Flag Award.
- An "Environmental Awareness" day was held in April during "Real Nappy Week", the purpose of which was to promote waste minimisation in the home.
- Talks were delivered to 13 community interest groups.
- Over 1500 composting cones were sold at a subsidised rate to householders. The cones were sold through the Council's Area Offices and the Newcastle West Recycling Centre. Furthermore, a one-day sale of cones was held at County Hall on Saturday June 25th.
- Six composting workshops were held at various locations throughout the county.
- Twelve special "Open Days" were held in the Council's Warehouse, Dooradoyle Road to facilitate household recycling of waste materials.
- Seasonal recycling arrangements for Easter egg packaging together with an extensive "Green Christmas Campaign" were again organised in conjunction with householders and county schools.
- A total of 10 schools participated in the Council's "Waste to Art" competition and 12 schools participated in the Environmental Schools Garden Challenge.
- Over 40 primary schools participated in the "Race Against Waste" Christmas decoration competition.
- All primary schools were offered free schoolbook recycling.
- Six county schools participated in energy awareness workshops organised by Sustainable Energy Ireland.
- A total of 29 Recycling Centres in the county have been adopted. Glin Community Council were awarded "Best Adopt A Bank" for 2005.
- The Local Environmental Improvement Grant scheme continued and 30 groups from County Limerick were awarded monies totalling €29,725.00.
- Eight groups were awarded funds totalling €15,000.00 from the joint LCC/DoEHLG Local Agenda 21 Environmental Partnership Fund.
- Approximately 400 entries were received for the Council's "Better Environment Awards" competition.
- The Council actively supported the national "Race against Waste" Campaign.
- As part of the Review of the Regional Waste Management Plan, an extensive public consultation programme was held during the last quarter of 2005. This included newspaper/radio advertising, and five "Information Days" throughout the county.



Cathaoirleach Eddie, with two responsible County Residents- Catherine and Milly, Scooping the Poop at Lough Gur.

Derelict Sites

A countywide survey of potential derelict sites continued throughout the year.

The Minister for The Environment, Heritage and Local Government designated seventy-nine district electoral divisions in County Limerick to be urban land for the purposes of the Derelict Sites Act, 1990 by S.I. 813 of 2005.

The Derelict Sites Register was maintained and continually updated in 2005, and a significant number of sites were added to it. The following table shows the number of entries and removals made in the Register since 2001:

Year:	Entries:	Removals	On Register at Yr. End:
2001	5	9	26
2002	-	3	23
2003	-	1	22
2004	17	13	26
2005	21	3	44

Six notices under Section 11 of the Act were served requiring the completion of specified remedial works by owners or occupiers. Two prosecutions were commenced for alleged failure to comply with notices.

A number of sites in the newly designated urban areas were valued for the purposes of the Act, with a view to raising a financial liability for Derelict Sites levy as an incentive to the owners/occupiers to remedy the dereliction. The levy is charged on the basis of three per cent of the determined valuations per annum.

No derelict site was compulsorily acquired.

The Derelict Sites Register is a statutory register established under Section 8 of the Derelict Sites Act, 1990. It is available for public inspection in the Environment Section during normal business hours.

Limerick/Clare Energy Agency

The Limerick Clare Energy Agency (L.C.E.A.) was established with equal funding from Limerick County Council and Clare County Council. Limerick County Council is the lead authority for the project.

The LEADER groups in Limerick and Clare, together with the University of Limerick and Aerobord, have agreed to sponsor many of the projects set out below.

The priorities for the Agency are as follows:

Focus:	Action:
Sustainability	Energy & Emissions Balance - Limerick & Clare. The Energy & Emissions Balance will for the first time identify and quantify the amount of energy produced from all sources in counties Limerick and Clare. It will also analyse the consumption of energy by the various economic sectors; industrial, commercial, residential etc. Climate Change Strategy - Limerick & Clare.
Energy Management	Energy Cost Reduction for Local Authorities. Energy Efficiency Benchmarking of County Council facilities.
Energy Training	Community Training for LEADER groups in Limerick & Clare.
Energy Audits	Energy Audits of Community Facilities in Counties Limerick & Clare.
Energy Awareness	Energy Conference & Launch of L.C.E.A. Schools Awareness Programme.
Social Responsibility	Fuel Poverty Programme.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Limerick County Fire Department aims to maintain and improve the quality of response to fire and emergency incidents, to ensure the fire safety of planned and existing buildings in accordance with the relevant legislation and Codes of Practice and to promote public awareness of Fire Safety.

The Department maintained its ISO9001 2000 Quality Award following external surveillance audits; it is one of only two fire authorities in the country to have attained this accreditation. The results of an externally audited customer satisfaction and improvement survey carried out during 2005 indicate that Limerick County Fire & Rescue Service enjoys the respect and appreciation of the general public / organisations that directly interface with it and furthermore, that it is considered that the service delivers value for money.

The Fire Prevention Department processed 205 fire safety certificate applications and assessed a total of 487 planning referrals in respect of new developments. Up to 87 existing buildings and 127 assembly buildings were inspected and 8 "During Performance" inspections were carried out throughout 2005.

As part of Fire Safety Week, an open day was held at Rathkeale Fire Station, which attracted up to 400 visitors. There were also fire safety demonstrations at the Crescent and Castletroy Shopping Centres. The Fire Department organised a "fire safety colouring competition" for school children. The Cathaoirleach, Councillor Brigid Teeffy, presented the prizes to the winning pupils in December. Staff from the Fire Section visited up to 31 primary schools during the year. Fire safety self-assessment information was made available to 194 industries throughout the county and 30 pre-fire planning visits were made to these premises.

The county's operational response is provided by 6 fire stations located at Abbeyfeale, Cappamore, Foynes, Kilmallock, Newcastle West and Rathkeale. Limerick City Fire Service is retained to provide fire cover in the City Environs. In total, these brigades responded to 1018 incidents in County Limerick in 2005.

Approval in principle was received from the DoEHLG for the building of a new fire station in Kilmallock and capital funding totalling €252,202.82 was granted for the purchase of fire service equipment.



Rathkeale Fire Station Open Day 16/10/2005



John Mulready S.O. and David Hickey AFO demonstrating Smoke alarms in the Crescent Shopping Centre, Dooradoyle.



Winners of the Fire Safety Colouring Competition 2005 pictured with David Hickey AFO and John Lyons S.O.

BUILDING CONTROL

The primary responsibility of the section is to ensure that every new development is constructed in accordance with the Building Control Act, 1990 and Regulations made pursuant to it. Powers of enforcement relate to a wide range of matters including structural stability, fire safety, materials, workmanship, heating/insulation, ventilation and access for the disabled.

A developer must submit a Commencement Notice to the section prior to starting work on any development. The information contained therein forms the basis of site inspections of the work in progress. In cases where issues arise in relation to construction, efforts are first made to resolve the matter through discussion and co-operation. However, in some instances, enforcement measures are necessary.

The section received approximately 1150 Commencement Notices relating to over 2400 buildings. A total of 43 Warning Letters were issued, 2 Enforcement Notices and 12 prosecutions were initiated.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Council is required by statute to provide for the health and safety of its staff. In this regard, a number of services are co-ordinated by the Health & Safety Section:

Training: Identify training needs, devise training schedules, deliver training, review external trainer performance, and maintain training records.

Review of Safety Statements: Safety statements must be reviewed periodically to ensure that the content is kept up to date.

Annual Inspections: All County Council operations, in particular, outdoor activities are inspected and reports prepared accordingly. This is a continuous process which aims to monitor progress and compliance.

Safety Monitoring Committee and Consultative Committee: Meetings are held periodically in order to ensure the inclusion of all staff in the safety decision-making process.

Accident / Incident Reporting: This is co-ordinated through the section to ensure statutory reporting is carried out and accidents are properly investigated. There were no major accidents involving Council

personnel in 2005. It is necessary to investigate serious incidents as existing procedures may require to be changed as a result.

The following is a list of some of the Health and Safety Training provided by the Council in 2005:

- FAS Safe Pass Training Course.
- Artic Driver Training.
- First Aid Training.
- Risk Assessment Seminar.
- Signing/Lighting/Guarding at Roadworks.
- Personal Protective Equipment Course.
- Supervisor Health and Safety Training Course.
- FAS Waste Management Training etc.

VETERINARY SERVICES

One of the main responsibilities of the Veterinary Department is the delivery of services in connection with the Council's role as an agency of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland. In this regard, domestic abattoirs, domestic meat manufacturing/processing premises and associated food vehicles in the county are supervised by the Council's team of Veterinary Inspectors to ensure compliance with food safety legislation and hygiene standards. Procedures and conditions governing the slaughtering of animals/ animal welfare in licensed premises were monitored. During the year a total of 2,480 Cattle, 8614 sheep and 174 pigs were processed for human consumption in domestic abattoirs in Co. Limerick.

Control of Dogs

At the beginning of the year, in agreement with Limerick City Council, the Council assumed responsibility for the provision of the Dog Control Service in both City and County. Previously the I.S.P.C.A had delivered the service on behalf of both local authorities. Owners purchased a total of 8,458 individual and 34 general dog licences during the year. The Council's Dog Control Kennels admitted 1,489 stray/unwanted dogs during the year. Of these, 17 dogs were re-claimed by their owners, up to 240 were re-homed and remainder were put to sleep.

Control of Horses

Under the Control of Horses Act, 1996, the Council seized/impounded 46 horses. Horses are only released in accordance with the Council's Control of Horses Bye Laws and on payment of the fees due.

CIVIL DEFENCE

Limerick County Civil Defence was very active during 2005. Highlights included the establishment of Training Centres, Training / Operational Events and Assistance to the Community.

Training Events included:

- Hosting its first National Event since 1994 in which teams from Cork, Tipperary, Galway, Waterford, Dublin and Kilkenny visited Limerick. In all up to 220 volunteers attended this event. Skills were tested in the following disciplines: First Aid, Rescue, Map Reading, Communications, Welfare and Outdoor Dynamics.
- National Boating Exercise - Roscommon.
- Regional Fire Pump Drill Competition - Skibbereen.
- Annual Training Camp – The Burren, Co Clare.

Training Centres

“Life Saving First Aid” classes were carried out in the following centres:

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|
| - Rathkeale | Life Saving First Aid |
| - Newcastle West | Life Saving First Aid |
| - Kilmallock | Life Saving First Aid |
| - Pallasgreen | Life Saving First Aid |
| - Annacotty | Rescue and Aux Fire Service |
| - Glin | First Aid Trained Personnel |



National Exercise 2005 at Newcastle West, hosted by County Limerick Civil Defence

A recruitment drive initiated in 2005 included:

- Presentations to schools in the County.
- The holding of an Open Day in the Crescent Shopping Centre, Dooradoyle.
- Civil Defence Display at UL Science Fair.
- Civil Defence attendance at careers/information days.
- Increased Civil Defence activity at local events.
- Advertising.

Community Events / Operations

Civil Defence provided assistance at numerous local and national community events including:

- Search for missing persons
- Wild Water World Cup- Castleconnell
- Adare Fete
- Chernobyl Children Project
- JP McManus Invitational Pro-Am Adare
- Tall Ships Race - Waterford
- Crecora Show
- Foynes Irish Coffee Festival
- Cappamore Show
- Scouting Ireland – Pallaskenry
- Limerick Show
- Milford Hospice Fair
- Kilfinane Harvest Fair
- Terry Fox Run – Ballingarry
- Irish Student Badminton Tournament
- Kerry Motor Rally
- Christmas Swim Killeery Pier Glin

In April, Ms. Phyllis O'Halloran, Civil Defence Officer, retired after many years of dedicated service. Mr. Joseph Kirby was appointed as her replacement.

It was with great sadness that her many friends in Civil Defence learned of the death of Mrs. Breda O'Brien who had been Assistant Civil Defence Officer for many years. A Guard of Honour was formed by her many Civil Defence colleagues at her removal and burial. Ar dheis Dé to raibh a h-anam dílis.

CORPORATE BUILDING PROGRAMME

The following projects were advanced:

- **Library Headquarters and Offices at Dooradoyle.**

It is proposed to relocate the following Council services to the former O'Toole's building on the Dooradoyle Road: Library Headquarters, Archives, Motor Taxation Office, Regional Waste Management Office, Regional Road Design Office, Environmental Laboratory and County Enterprise Board.

This will ensure that a comprehensive service will be provided to all customers at a convenient location. The sum of €4.6m was approved by the DoEHLG towards the Library Headquarters / Archives and, it is expected that work will commence on site in March, 2006 with a target completion date of April, 2007.

- **Area Offices and Library at Rathkeale.**

Plans were prepared for the upgrading of the existing Carnegie Building in Rathkeale to include a new Library / Community building. It is proposed that new Area Offices will be built adjacent to this building. Work is expected to commence on site in 2006.

- **Machinery Yard at Kilmallock.**

It is proposed to relocate the existing Stores and Machinery Yard to Gotoon in order to facilitate the redevelopment of the area offices at Kilmallock. It is expected that work will commence on site in March, 2006.

- **Fire Station in Kilmallock.**

Plans for a new Fire Station in Kilmallock have been forwarded to the DoEHLG for approval. Approval to proceed to planning stage is awaited.

- **Area Offices in Kilmallock.**

Notices have been inserted in the EU Journal for the appointment of an Architect Led Design Team for the development of new Area Offices, Library and a Courthouse on behalf of the Courts Service. It is proposed to progress to the planning stage of these new facilities in 2006.

- **Civil Defence Building, Annacotty.**

Tenders have been received in respect of the refurbishment and extension of this building.

- **Neighbourhood Parks in the City Environs.**

A Landscape Consultant has been appointed to prepare plans / designs and to supervise the construction of 3 New Neighbourhood Parks in Ballykeeffe, Caherdavin and Castletroy.

A number of facilities are proposed for these parks including playgrounds, pitches, sports halls and large green areas incorporating walkways and cycle-ways.

It is proposed that work will be carried out on a phased basis beginning in 2006.



Proposed Neighbourhood Park at Castletroy.

National Disability Strategy and Local Government Sectoral Plan

An accessibility audit has been carried out on all towns, villages, polling stations, public parks and county council owned buildings. This audit will form the basis of the sectoral plan for County Limerick for which funding will be allocated by the DoEHLG.

Accessibility works for the benefit of people with disabilities have been carried out at the following locations:

- Toilets at Lough Gur.
- Libraries at Pallaskenry, Ballingarry, Newcastle West, Ballylanders, Caherconlish, Hospital, Shanagolden, Athea and Broadford.

In addition all staff received training in Disability Awareness.

WATER SAFETY

Lifeguard Service

Four lifeguards and one pier attendant were employed for the Summer bathing season at Glin and Killeary piers. The fine weather experienced during 2005 led to increased numbers of visitors to these popular bathing areas. Pre-employment training in resuscitation was provided for the lifeguards.

The Maritime Safety Act, 2005

This Act came into force on 29th June 2005. The stated purpose of the Act is to enhance public safety and amenity and to protect natural and other heritage areas, by strengthening the law against the improper use of certain fast power craft such as 'jet skis' and speedboats on coastal and inland waters. Local Authorities, the Gardaí and Harbour Authorities have been given extensive new powers in relation to regulation of activities involving small craft on coastal and inland waters. Owners or operators of such craft can now be prosecuted for a range of statutory offences. A court can also authorise the confiscation of any vessel being used dangerously.

Water Safety Area Committee

Swimming and lifesaving courses under the syllabus of the Irish Water Safety Association were held at Foynes, Glin and Askeaton.



Members of Limerick County Area Committee - Irish Water Safety Association: L/R J. Considine, Water Safety Development Officer, J. Conway, K. Sheahan, M1. P. O'Sullivan (chair), K. O'Sullivan, M Trinder, K. O'Hara, M. Cassidy, K. Chareilton

Rigid Inflatable Boat

The Council's boat was professionally refurbished during 2005. It was used to provide lifeguard cover for the Killeary Pier St. Stephen's Day swim at the end of the year.



Foynes Port

SERVICE INDICATORS

E- Environmental Services

Water

	2002	2003	2004	2005
E1 % of River Channel				
Unpolluted	45.7	46	45.7	45.7
Slightly polluted	23.8	24	25.6	25.6
Moderately Polluted	28.6	28	27.1	27.1
Seriously Polluted	1.9	2	1.6	1.6
E2 Percentage of Drinking Water analysis results in compliance with statutory requirements - Public Schemes	86.3	85.65	98.2	99.01
Percentage of Drinking Water analysis results in compliance with statutory requirements - Private Schemes	0	0	95.6	96.83

Fire Services

	2002	2003	2004	2005
E3 Average time in minutes, to mobilise Fire Brigades in				
Time in minutes to mobilise Firebrigades in Full Time Stations	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Time in minutes to mobilise Firebrigades in Part Time Stations			4.36	4.43
E4 Percentage of attendances at scenes where				
First attendance is at scene within 10 mins	-	-	34.25	43.38
First attendance is at scene between 10 & 20 mins	-	-	45.21	43.08
First attendance is at scene after 20 minutes	-	-	20.54	13.54

Fire Prevention

E5 Total number of fire certification applications				
Received	-	-	269	200
Processed	-	-	243	205

Waste Management

	2002	2003	2004	2005
E6 % of households provided with segregated waste collection	-	-	N/A	N/A
Limerick Co Co does not operate a Waste Collection Service				
E7 Household waste recycled				
Tonnage of Household Waste Recycled	-	-	-	4542
percentage of household waste recycled			14.3	14.9
E8 Household waste going to Landfill				
Tonnage of Household Waste going to Landfill	-	-	-	21046
Percentage of household waste going to landfill			84.4	69.3

E9 Recycling Facilities

	2002	2003	2004	2005
Bring Banks				
Number of Facilities				
Glass	42	47	47	47
Cans	42	47	47	47
Textiles	13	10	9	10
Batteries	10	12	0	0
Oils	1	1	0	0
Others	12	13	44	44
Civic Amenity Sites				
Number of Facilities				
Glass	-	-	4	4
Cans	-	-	4	4
Textiles	-	-	3	3
Batteries	-	-	3	3
Oils	-	-	3	3
Others	-	-	4	4
Total Number of Facilities (Bring Banks and Civic Amenity Sites)				
Glass	-	-	51	51
Cans	-	-	51	51
Textiles	-	-	12	13
Batteries	-	-	3	3
Oils	-	-	3	3
Others	-	-	48	48
Bring Banks				
No of Locations per 5000 of population				
Glass	1.85	1.93	2.1	2.1
Cans	1.85	1.93	2.1	2.1
Textiles	0.57	0.41	0.49	0.53
Batteries	0.44	0.49	0.12	0.12
Oils	0.04	0.04	0.12	0.12
Others	0.53	0.53	1.98	1.98
Tonnage of Waste collected for recycling per 5,000 population				
Glass	-	-	46.39	48.25
Cans	-	-	4.32	5.09
Textiles	-	-	2.31	6.44
Batteries	-	-	1.32	2.65
Oils	-	-	0.16	0.32
Others	-	-	70.02	74.30

Litter Prevention and Environmental Enforcement

E10 Litter

	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of Litter Wardens				
Full Time Litter Wardens	3	3	3	3
Part Time	2	2	2	2
Number of Litter Wardens (both full & part-time) per 5000 population	-	-	0.2	0.2
Number of Spot Fines issued	101	185	184	112
Number of Prosecutions due to non-payment of on-the-spot fines	4	22	24	1
Number of Prosecutions Secured	-	-	1	0
% of areas within the Local Authority area				
Unpolluted (i.e. Litter free)	-	-	15.7	7.9
Slightly polluted with litter	-	-	45.71	33.7
Moderately polluted with litter	-	-	34.3	47.2
Significantly polluted with litter	-	-	4.29	10.1
Grossly polluted with litter	-	-	0	1.1
			100	100

E11 Environmental Complaints and Enforcement

	2002	2003	2004	2005
Total number of cases subject to complaints concerning environmental pollution (relating to waste, litter, water pollution, noise pollution, air pollution)	-	-	2,173	2,282
Number of Complaints investigated	-	-	1,989	2,209
Number of enforcement procedures taken	-	-	196	366

E12 % of Schools participating in environmental campaigns

	2002	2003	2004	2005
Primary Schools	-	-	38.8	49
Secondary Schools	-	-	84.2	76

* 2004 Indicator only

TRANSPORTATION AND WATER SERVICES



Paul Crowe
Director of
Transportation
& Water Services

ROADS

Major Schemes

Limerick Southern Ring Road – Phase II

The Limerick Southern Ring Road Phase II project, which will incorporate a fourth crossing of the River Shannon, will involve the construction of 9.75 km of new dual carriageway, along with associated link roads and side roads, linking the N7 Limerick Southern Ring Road Phase 1 and N20 Cork Road in the area of Rossbrien with the N18 Ennis Road near the Radisson and Two Mile Inn hotels. The project includes for a fourth crossing of the River Shannon which will involve a tunnel crossing, approximately 900m in length, linking the townland of Coonagh, on the northern bank, with the townland of Bunlicky on the southern bank of the Shannon.

Following a lengthy tender process 2005 saw further significant advancement in the development of this project with the announcement by the National Roads Authority (NRA) in September 05 of a Provisional Preferred Tenderer for the Scheme. Other significant associated work carried out during the period included the completion of on site archaeological resolution along the route and the preparation of advance contracts for site clearance and the construction of an access road in the area of Rossbrien; both contracts to be implemented prior to construction commencement on the main contract.



Test Trenching at Coonagh for Limerick Southern Ring Road Phase II

An award of the contract and construction commencement is anticipated in the third quarter of 2006.

N7 Nenagh to Limerick

2005 saw substantial progress in the development of this 38Km Motorway standard roadway. The prequalification process for the main construction contract commenced mid year resulting in six consortia being short listed and subsequently invited to tender, in Quarter 4 2005. This scheme is being progressed as a Design and Build project. The project will ultimately form part of the Motorway/High quality Dual Carriageway linking Limerick to Dublin.

2005 also saw the commencement of a number of advance contracts including Archaeological test trenching, Supplementary Ground Investigation, Site Clearance, Fencing, Mammal Surveys as well as other advance works.

Construction on this project is scheduled to commence in Quarter 3 2006 with a construction period in the region of three years.

N21 Adare Bypass

The 6.5km N21 Adare Bypass has progressed significantly from the initial constraints study area through to a selected route and draft Specimen Design. The selected "Black" route, bypassing Adare to the north, was announced to the public at an information day in Adare on the 22nd March with 376 in attendance. The Constraints Study Report and Route Corridor Selection Report were then published.

Following the route's announcement the preparation of the Specimen Design, Environmental Impact Assessment and Compulsory Purchase Order were commenced. All landowners that may have been affected by the preferred route corridor were contacted and invited to a series of three personal consultation meetings with the project team during the year.

By the end of 2005 the draft Environmental Impact Statement and Compulsory Purchase Order were being finalised. Subject to the approval of the National Roads

Authority, it is expected these statutory documents will be published in 2006 and the statutory process seeking approval of the scheme by An Bord Pleanála commenced.

N21 & N24 Improvement Strategies

Preliminary studies were undertaken to look at a strategy of improvement needs for the N21 between Adare and the Limerick Kerry county bounds and the N24 from Ballysimon to connect with the Pallasgreen to Bansha Scheme. These strategies will form the basis for funding requirements going forward and will facilitate these National Routes to be upgraded to the required standard on a sequential basis.

National Road Improvement Schemes:

Continued improvements were made to the National Road Network. Works carried out by the Main Roads section consisted of a pavement overlay, including road markings, on the following roads:

1. **N20 Road Improvements:** (4.5km) County Boundary to Rockhill Cross
2. **N21 Road Improvements:** (5.5km) Coolanoran West of Rathkeale Bypass, Templeglantine to Barnagh and N21 East of Abbeyfeale
3. **N24 Road Improvements:** (4.1km) Pallasgreen to Brooks Bridge
4. **N69 Road Improvements:** (3.2km) Loughill to Mount Trenchard and Dock Road



Goulbourne Bridge

Other works carried out include:

N21 Goulbourne Bridge Replacement:

Replacement of existing Goulbourne Bridge west of Templeglantine Cross

Cork Road Bridge Newcastle West:

Construction of a new bridge adjacent to the "Bridge of Tears" The bridge works form part of an overall scheme to improve the existing junction of the R522 and R520.

St Nessans Road Improvements:

Improvement works included for Road Reconstruction and Overlay, Footpaths, Cycle Lanes, a new inbound Bus Lane, Public lighting, Traffic signals.

Plassey Park Road (1KM):

Improvement works included for Road Reconstruction and Overlay, Footpaths, Cycle Lanes, Public lighting, Traffic signals.

Annacotty to Newtown improvements

Work included for Road Reconstruction/Overlay, footpaths, Public Lighting, Drainage Watermains at Annacotty Village and the Newtown Road to Walkers Lane.

Croom Urban Renewal

Works consisted of the reconstruction of the town square, undergrounding of services, road and footpath reconstruction, public lighting and a new pedestrian crossing.



Croom Urban Renewal

Non – National Roads:

The Non National Roads Budget, excluding public lighting, was €19.718M. This comprised of a Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government allocation of €15.365M and €4.353M from our own resources. Works carried out included:

Type of Road	Surface Dressing	Road Reconstruction
Regional	30.06kms	15.5kms
Local	185.89kms	110.71kms

The grant allocation for EU Co-Financed schemes was €2.835M in 2005 and six projects received funding under this scheme, two of which were St Nesson's Road Dooradoyle (R526) and the Herberstown to Ballinamona Road R513.

Public Lighting:

The present stock of 10,000 public lights in Co. Limerick cost €950,000 which covered the associated energy and maintenance charges. A policy on Public Lighting is being considered at the Transportation Strategic Policy Committee.



Cathaoirleach of Limerick County Council Councillor Brigid Teefy and Mayor of Limerick Councillor Diarmuid Scully at the Launch of the Road Safety Campaign

ROAD SAFETY

Education:

Cinema Road Safety Campaign

In December 2005 Limerick County Council in conjunction with Limerick City Council and the National Safety Council commissioned a road safety advertising campaign in the Omniplex Cinema. The grim aftermath of serious crashes and collisions on our roads was vividly presented in an advert designed to grab the attention of the many young people who frequent the cinema on a regular basis warning everyone to slow down.

This innovative approach to raising road safety awareness using local landmarks is the first of its kind in the Country and it is hoped that it will lead to other such campaigns focusing on different aspects of road safety.

Cycling Safety Training

The Cycling Safety and Skills Programme continued with pupils from Croom, Ballyagran, Feenagh, Ardpatrick, Ballybrown, Doon and Bruff National Schools, taking part. The feedback from pupils, teachers and parents has been extremely positive. With such enthusiasm the Council is eager to continue to support this venture in 2006.

Junior School Warden Scheme

Junior School Wardens at Rathkeale, Kilmallock and Ballylanders continued to provide safe crossing facilities for their fellow classmates throughout the school year. Great credit is due to all of our wardens for their dedication and commitment to a very worthwhile programme.



An Chathaoirleach Cllr. Eddie Wade presenting Certificates of Competency to the Girls of Scoil Mocheallóg, Kilmallock in April 2005

The Regional Junior School Warden Final was held in Abbesside, Dungarvan, Co Waterford in May 2005. The boys and girls from Ballylanders N.S. took 2nd place in the competition in their first ever outing with the boys from St Joseph's N.S. Rathkeale taking 3rd place.

Retirements

Congratulations and best wishes are extended to two of the stalwarts of the Junior School Warden Scheme in Rathkeale, with the retirements during the year of Mr Pat Ambrose, St Joseph's Boys National School and Garda Con Horan.

Cycling Safety & Skills Training Programme

Year	School	No. Pupils
	Who Participated	
2004	Lisnagry N.S.	20
	Scoil Ó Curran B.N.S. Newcastle West	16
	St Joseph's Convent, Newcastle West	22
	Sub Total	58
2005	Croom N.S.	34
	Ballyagran N.S.	53
	Feenagh N.S. Kilmallock	27
	Ardpatrick N.S. Kilmallock	32
	St Joseph's N.S. Ballybrown	51
	Doon N.S.	21
	Bruff N.S.	50
	Sub Total	326

Road Safety Measures:

Traffic Calming Schemes: N24 Pallasgreen and N24 Oola

Work included for new traffic calming signage, footpaths, build-outs, public lighting and pedestrian crossing facilities.

High Cost Accident Schemes/Low Cost Accident Schemes 2005

Works carried out at the following locations included for improved road markings, signage, junction re-alignment (one location):

- N21 Junction with R515 (Templeglantine Cross)
- N21 Garryduff Cross
- N20 Creggane Cross

Horticulture:

National Tree Week 2005 took place from 6th to 12th March and was jointly sponsored by O2 and Coillte. Limerick County Council launched the week with the planting of an oak tree in the grounds of the Day Care Centre at Drombanna, Co. Limerick by Cllr. Eddie Wade, Cathaoirleach.

5,000 saplings were delivered throughout the County to community groups and schools.

The section also dealt with a number of dangerous trees and supervised the inspection and cutting of same during the year.

30,000 bedding plants were distributed to community groups in early summer. The Horticulture Section provided expert advice and guidance for Tidy Towns Committees and Community Councils around the County during the year.

The grass-cutting programme continued with approximately 502 acres of grass cut 32 times. This included grass cutting in 10 additional housing estates.

Specific projects undertaken include:

Lough Gur

Maintenance of the green areas was undertaken throughout the year, including grass cutting and pruning of trees.

Adare Town Park

The Horticulture Section carried out routine maintenance of green areas, shrubs and borders.

Newcastle West

Maintenance work was undertaken in the Demesne, Newcastle West and 7,000 new trees planted.

Landscaping in Housing Estates

The Horticulture Section carried out landscaping works in Abbeyfeale; Deerpark, Adare; Caherconlish; Croom; Kilmallock; Monaleen; Pallaskenry; and at the Halting Site, Dublin Road.

Plassey Walk

The control programme on the spraying of Giant Hogweed was continued.



An Chathaoirleach Cllr. Eddie Wade pictured with Deputy County Manager, Pat O'Connor, John O'Connor, Chairperson & Geraldine Hayes, Manageress, Drombanna Day Care Centre planting an Oak tree at Drombanna Day Care Centre.

Southern Ring Road

The Horticulture Section supervised the landscaping of the Southern Ring Road.

County Hall

The Horticulture Section supervised the planting of 4,000 shrubs and trees in the grounds of County Hall.

The Golden Mile:

2005 was the second year of the Golden Mile of Co. Limerick competition. This is proving a very popular competition and there was a large increase in the number of entries.

The purpose of the competition is to foster pride in, and environmental awareness of country roadscapes. The maintenance of the rural landscape is an important feature of our living environment and as the country roadscapes act as the front lines in our rural landscapes it is important that they are maintained and enhanced in an appropriate manner. Roadside boundaries are also of interest for their history, wildlife value and heritage features.

The 19 entries had a county-wide spread and attracted entries from a wide range of groups. Preliminary rounds of judging produced ten finalists. The winners were Kilmeedy Community Development Association, the runner up was the Kilmallock Tidy Towns Association.

WATER SERVICES

Major Capital Schemes

The Council's aim is to provide adequate water and wastewater services to existing settlements and also to ensure that infrastructural deficiencies do not hinder the growth of those settlements.

To assist in this process, Limerick County Council produces an Assessment of Needs for water services capital works in its area every 5 years. These Assessments provide the basis for scheme scheduling and approval of successive Investment Programmes by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The purpose of the Assessment is to develop for County Limerick " ...an overall strategic investment plan for the medium to long term and to set out a programme of works to meet the identified water services needs". The overall estimated value of the schemes identified in the latest Assessment of Needs is €109 million, at 2003 prices. In December, the Minister announced details of the Investment Programme for the period 2005-2007.

Sewerage Schemes

In recent years new public sewerage schemes have been constructed to serve the villages of Castleconnell, Fedamore and Croagh. Under the Water Services Investment Programme, significant progress has been made in relation to detailed design of schemes to serve Mungret, Kilmallock, Patrickswell and Adare. In addition planning has commenced on projects to serve Askeaton, Foynes, Shanagolden, Glin, Athea, Dromcollogher, Hospital, Pallasgreen and Bruff. The completion of these schemes in the coming years will help achieve one of the major aims of the County Development Plan i.e. the revitalisation and rejuvenation of the County's towns and villages.

Water Schemes

The Council, in co-operation with Limerick City Council, is continuing to progress the development of trunk water mains systems into County Limerick. This will be facilitated by the planned upgrade of the City Council's water treatment plant at Clareville. Elements of these trunk mains have already been constructed in conjunction with major road projects in the city environs. Construction of further elements to serve Patrickswell and Croom is imminent and planning is being progressed on a separate extension of the system to serve areas of East Limerick such as Caherconlish, Cappamore, Pallasgreen, Doon and Oola.

Planning continued to be progressed on advancing an upgrade of the Council's own Shannon Estuary Water Treatment Plant to increase production and provide enhanced environmental measures. This will also facilitate extension of the supply to serve Ballyhahill, Loughill, Glin and outlying areas. Finally, a contract was awarded at the end of the year for a long-awaited extension of the Shannon Estuary Scheme to serve the Pallaskenry/Kildimo area.

Small Towns & Villages Initiative

In 2005 significant progress was made by the Council in conjunction with private developers using a Public Private Partnership approach for the provision of adequate infrastructural services at a number of locations throughout the county.

The existing Sewage Treatment Plant has been upgraded in Kilfinnane to cater for 1500 population equivalent. Agreement has been finalised with a number of developers regarding the upgrade of Caherconlish Sewage Treatment Plant and work is due to commence in early 2006.



New Sewage Treatment Plant at Kilfinnane constructed under the Small Towns and Villages Initiative.

Planning Permissions have been secured to upgrade the existing Sewage Treatment Plants at Bruree, Bruff, Cappamore and Kilmallock. It is anticipated that works will commence at a number of these locations during 2006.

In addition, planning permission is now in place for a Sewerage Scheme in Feenagh and Tenders will be invited for this work in early 2006.

The Council finances its contribution to these schemes through monies generated by the Development Contribution Scheme in Planning.

Water Conservation Project

Water Conservation is becoming more and more important in the Council's function of delivering a safe, secure and reliable water supply to the people of County Limerick.

Increasing demands on limited resources means the benefits of the project are clearly visible. The cost of treating, pumping, storing and delivering water to every home in the County is increasing. Water Conservation also has a major benefit to the environment, less water used, means more water stays in its natural environment.

Project Staff consists of two leakage crews and a leakage foreman who have become highly skilled in the areas of leakage detection and pressure management. A total of 3524 leaks have now been identified in the water distribution network since the project commenced in 2002. In 2005, a total of 706 leaks were identified in the network.

Active leakage control and pressure management within the County has resulted in water savings in the region of 3100m³ (682,000 gals/day) approximately.

The work of the Water Conservation Staff has aided the Council in improving the level of service in areas where poor pressure is a problem. It has also continued to facilitate development where inadequate water supply may have been an issue."

Rural Water Programme

DBO Project for Group Water Supply Schemes

In Limerick 19 privately sourced schemes are participating in the Design Build and Operate project for the provision of modern water treatment facilities, which will enable the groups to comply with the requirements of the Drinking Water Regulations. The contract for the project was signed in October 2005. The construction phase of the project is estimated to last approximately 65 weeks.



DBO Contract Signing 5/10/2005 Limerick County Council in partnership with 18 Private Group Water Schemes.

Advance and Enabling Works for the DBO project bundle.

Limerick County Council recognised that a considerable amount of work was required to ensure the upgrading of group scheme distribution networks in advance of the Design, Build and Operate project becoming operational. The ultimate aim of these projects is to encourage and promote the conservation of water resources, in group water schemes, throughout the county. Projects considered for water mains refurbishment are: Lough Gur, Kilfinny, Glenstal, Granagh, Ballybricken, and Caherline/ Newtown.

New Group Schemes

Grant aid was provided to Cloughanarold, Cahermoyle No 2, Ballyneety, Old Barna Road and Fanningstown/ Patrickswell Group Water Schemes to connect to a public water supply. Grants were provided to the following group sewerage schemes: Tournafulla and Glenashrone.

Refurbishment Grants to Existing Groups

Watermains refurbishment works were completed in Croagh/ Farrendonnely, Cappagh, Kileedy, Glenroe, Coshma, Glenstal, Carnane and Creeves. The resources invested in County Limerick during 2005 for both the New Group and Refurbishment Grants amounted to €1.37 million.

Refurbishment and Takeover of Group Schemes

Resources to the value of €1,113,500 were invested in this element of the rural water programme. The following schemes benefited under the above heading: Newbridge/Cooltomin, Hillcrest, Meenoline, Cragg, Glenshesk/ Rathcahill, Dirreen/Athea, Inch St Laurence, Tullig South, Creeves, Carnane, Coolcappagh and the Hill, Abbeyfeale.

Ten group schemes were taken in charge during 2005: The Hill, Abbeyfeale, Meenoline/ Sugarhill, Glenshesk/ Rathcahill, Cahernorry, Ballyanrahan, Direen Athea, Dromreask Athea, Garbally, Newbridge/ Cooltomin and Railway Road Askeaton.

Subsidy to Group Water Schemes

The Council continues to provide grant aid to private group water schemes to assist them in meeting their annual operational expenses. The total value of grants paid under this action amounted to €351,651.

Grant for Individual Well Supplies

115 applications were received during the year and 90 grants to the value of €162,735 were paid.



New 200,000 gallon resevoir under construction at Ballagh, Kileedy. Part of Advanced DBO Works.

Small Capital Schemes

Funds in excess of €1 million were invested in a programme of improvement works on both public water supply and sewerage schemes throughout the County. This grant aid of 75% with a matching contribution of funding by Limerick County Council of 25% allows resources to be invested, ensuring that the water services infrastructure is improved and upgraded on an ongoing basis.

Examples of the works undertaken include refurbishment of the reservoir at Jamestown, the purchase of a mobile water treatment plant to augment the water supply in Limerick City Environs, improvements in the level of supply in the Pallasgreen area and develop new sources at both Hospital and Herbertstown.

Burial Grounds

The focus in this area was in implementing the key recommendations of the Burial Ground Maintenance and Development Strategy which was adopted by the Council in 2003 specifically under three headings: (a) Capital Grants to Community Groups providing new facilities (b) Increased maintenance grants to voluntary groups and (c) identification of areas within old burial grounds for use/re-use as burial plots.

- a) A Capital Grant was paid to Crecora Burial Ground Committee in respect of the extension to the Burial Ground. In addition work was substantially completed on an extension to Monagea Burial Ground with assistance from the County Council.

- b) There are in excess of 240 burial grounds within the County and the Council is not in a position to maintain them all. However, the magnificent community spirit within the County is displayed through the wonderful work in this regard by a myriad of parish community groups. The Council was pleased to be able to maintain the increase in grant-aid provided in 2004. Such grant assistance was provided to 106 different voluntary groups who carried out maintenance works in 143 burial grounds.

- c) Progress was made under this heading in Burial Grounds in Raheen (Ballyneety), Ludden and Cahernorry.

Swimming Pools

Provision of new Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre at Askeaton

In the spring approval was received from the Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism to the contract documents that had been prepared for the project. The Council in partnership with Askeaton Pool Committee is advancing this ambitious scheme with an estimated cost of €5.5m. By year-end Ministerial approval had been secured to the recommended tender and a Department Grant of €3.8m sanctioned. Work is due to commence in early 2006.

In addition to the above, grant assistance towards running costs was provided to the operators of community swimming pools in Askeaton and Foynes.

SERVICE INDICATORS

R: Roads

R.1	2005	2004	2003
Local Roads Surface Dressed (Sq.Mt.)	679,693m ²	692,837m ²	N/A
Regional Roads Surface Dressed (Sq. Mt.)	148,515m ²	126,387m ²	N/A
% Local Roads Surface Dressed	6.5%	5.5%	9.3%
% Regional Roads Surface Dressed	5%	4.3%	11.2%

COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE, CORPORATE SERVICES AND HUMAN RESOURCES



Gerry Behan
Director of
Community and
Enterprise,
Corporate Services
and Human
Resources

COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE

Twinning

A delegation of elected members and officials visited BOSAM (Association of Local Municipalities) in Sweden between the 29th August and 2nd September 2005. This was a return visit to Sweden as the Swedish group had visited Limerick in October 2004. In addition to studying Development in Rural Areas, the group also visited an incinerator and recycling centre as part of the itinerary.

A delegation of 34 elected Councillors and Officials from Hohenlohe County, Germany visited County Limerick between the 9th and 12th May 2005. A special meeting was fixed for Wednesday, 11th May which the delegation attended and as it was our colleagues first visit to our new headquarters, a guided tour of County Hall was given by our Facilities Manager, Mr. Chris Barry. The delegation also visited tourist attractions in the Region.

On the 19th September a group of 3 Officials from Local Government bodies in Gdansk, Poland visited County Limerick.

The Group visited County Hall where they were given a Presentation on Irish System of Government; Local Government and Limerick County. They also visited a number of projects and initiatives in the City and met with representatives from West Limerick Resources regarding Rural Development issues. Mr. Ned Toomey of Limerick County Enterprise Board accompanied them on a tour of the newly constructed Bruree Food Units. The group also visited the FAS Headquarters in Raheen where a meeting took place regarding challenges of developing employment opportunities in Poland. We would hope to develop exchange agreements between ourselves and Gdansk in Poland.



Limerick County Council Delegation on return visit to Sweden



Delegation from Hohelohe L/R - Kraft Furst, Katrina Furstin, Cllr. E. Wade, Cathaoirleach, Brigitte Jahn, Helmut M. Jahn. in the Cathaoirleach's Office with artwork, donated by Hehenlohekreiss, to mark the Official Opening of County Hall



A Delegation from Gdansk, Poland with Mr Gerry Behan

COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD

County Limerick Play Plan

County Limerick Local Sports Partnership was formed in 2001 under the auspices of Limerick County Development Board. It aims to support local clubs and voluntary groups to develop sporting and recreational facilities and services in County Limerick. The committee of County Limerick Local Sports Partnership consists of representatives of agencies, clubs and community groups who work together in partnership to address local issues. At present there are over 310 sports clubs affiliated to County Limerick Local Sports Partnership.

In 2005 Limerick County Development Board designated responsibility for the preparation of a five-year County Play Plan to County Limerick Local Sports Partnership. County Limerick Local Sports Partnership brought together a number of representatives from voluntary and community agencies and groups to form a steering group that would support and advise in the development of the Play Plan.

As agreed in the Limerick County Play Policy, which was adopted by the Council in February 2005, the Council are committed to the following actions under the County Limerick Play Plan:

- Co-ordinated multi-agency approach
- Assigning an Officer responsible for delivering inter-agency Play Plan
- Delivery of Play facilities within available resources
 - Prioritising areas of greatest need (Socio Economic Profile, Total number of Children Under 12)
 - Take into account the needs of the five electoral areas of the County



Cliona Ryan, Cappamore, enjoying play facilities as part of the Consultation Process

Limerick County Development Board approved the Limerick County Play Plan in November 2005, which aims to increase the number of play opportunities for children in various settings, eg. Schools; Childcare etc. In particular, it identifies the following objectives as priorities:

Objective 1

To give children a voice in the design and implementation of play policies & facilities.

Objective 2

To raise awareness of the importance of play.

Objective 3

To ensure that children's play needs are met through the development of a child-friendly environment.

Objective 4

To maximise the range of public play opportunities available to children, particularly children who are marginalized or disadvantaged or who have a disability.

Objective 5

Improve the Quality and safety of playgrounds and play areas.

Objective 6

To ensure relevant training and qualifications are available to persons offering play and related services to children.

Objective 7

To Develop a partnership approach in funding and developing play opportunities.

Objective 8

To improve information on, evaluation and monitoring of play provision in County Limerick.

Comhairle na n-Óg 2004/2005

The 2004/2005 Comhairle na n-Óg was held in March 2005. Representatives from 14 Secondary Schools (67% of the secondary schools in County Limerick) and a number of youth groups attended at the Comhairle. The Comhairle provides a forum for young people aged 12-17 to discuss issues affecting their lives and also provides the opportunity to elect four young people to represent County Limerick at the Dáil na n-Óg 2005, which was held in the Croke Park Conference Centre. The topics discussed by the delegates were Alcohol and Drug Misuse and Recreation Facilities in County Limerick. A report on the Comhairle was presented to members of the Community, Social & Cultural SPC and the report was also copied to all Councillors.

The four delegates elected to attend the Dáil na n-Óg 2005 were:

Lorraine Breen,
John the Baptist Community School, Hospital

Leanne Moloney
Salesian Secondary School, Pallaskenry

Blaine Woulfe
Coláiste na Trocaire, Rathkeale

Michael Sheehan
Coláiste Mhuire, Askeaton

Community, Sport & Cultural Grants Scheme

The Community, Sport & Cultural Grants Scheme established by Limerick County Council in 2005 provides financial assistance for the development of community, recreational, sporting, environmental and

cultural facilities in the county. The scheme is intended to assist community based clubs and voluntary organisations as well as providing an extra resource to Limerick County Council to assist in the provision by it of facilities that might not be otherwise funded.

As well as seeking to increase the facilities available in the county, the scheme is also designed to encourage those providing facilities to endeavour to ensure equal access by all and to examine ways in which barriers might be removed. It is also designed to ensure that environmental improvement is encouraged as an element of all developments assisted through the scheme.

The scheme has also been designed to recognise the more limited resources available to some communities and voluntary groups and to give additional assistance where it is clear that an area or organisation has a low level of facilities and cannot improve matters without special assistance.

Finally, the scheme is designed to assist those projects that are receiving funding elsewhere or where no other source of funding is available. Applicants will, therefore be expected to have sought funding from other available sources before being assisted by the scheme.

Examples of Projects Eligible for Funding

- Specific facilities required by an organisation addressing the needs of disadvantaged groups
- Halls and meeting rooms
- Sports facilities
- Parks
- Amenity areas
- Arts projects



Comhairle na n-Óg 2004/2005

Types & Levels of Assistance

Technical Assistance

This fund permits community-based clubs or voluntary organisations to apply for financial assistance towards the cost of preparing a development plan or feasibility study.

Capital Assistance

Assistance under this fund is available to new projects or refurbishments of existing facilities. Funding will be allocated at a variable rate based on criteria. The variable rate is designed to give a higher level of grant assistance to communities and organisations that are most in need and that have least capacity to improve their situation. Rates of support may vary from 10% to 90% of total eligible cost of a project less grants from other sources up to a maximum of €100,000.

Community Sports & Cultural Grants Scheme 2005

Successful Applicants

Applicant/club:	Grant Awarded:
Adare Community Hall	€40,000
Askeaton AFC	€30,000
Askeaton Community Council	€15,000
Blackrock GAA Club	€15,000
Bruff GAA Club	€25,000
Bruff Rugby Club & Fitness Centre	€6,000
Caherconlish/ Caherline Community Centre Ltd.	€20,000
Cappagh GAA	€15,000
Cappamore Celtic Football Club	€10,000
Cappamore Development Association	€20,000
Croagh/Kilfinny Development Association	€35,000
Dromcollogher, Broadford GAA	€15,000
Glin Development Association	€30,000
Great Southern Trail Ltd.	€15,000
Hospital Crusaders AFC	€10,000
Kilcornan Community Council	€20,000
Kilmallock AFC	€15,000
Kilmeedy Community Development Group Ltd.	€20,000
Knockaderry/Clouncagh Community Council	€20,000
Knockainey AFC	€5,000
Knockainey Co-op Sportfield Society	€30,000
Loughill Community Development Association	€30,000
Newcastle West Community Centre Ltd.	€35,000
Newcastle West Community Council	€5,000
South Liberties GAA Club	€10,000
Total:	€491,000

Contribution Scheme 2005

	Awarded:
University Concert Hall Ltd.	€15,000
Foynes Aviation & Maritime Museum	€15,000
Hunt Museum, Limerick	€10,000
Adare Heritage Trust Ltd.	€12,000
Belltable Arts Centre, Limerick	€9,000
Friarsgate Theatre, Kilmallock	€8,000
Palatine Museum, Rathkeale	€5,000
Askeaton Civic Trust Heritage Centre	€5,000
Abbeyfeale Community Leisure Ltd., (Town Park)	€5,000
Centre for Independent Living, Newcastle West	€7,000
St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick	€5,000
St John's Cathedral, Limerick	€5,000
Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Eireann	€5,000
Community Games	€6,000
Athea Motorcycle Project	€6,000
Ballingrane Church Restoration Fund	€4,000
Limerick Marine Rescue Service	€5,000
Limerick Youth Services, Limerick	€4,000
Limerick Animal Welfare Ltd.	€4,000
Restoration of House in Medieval Core Area, Kilmallock (Sheares St.)	€10,000
Foynes Irish Coffee Festival	€15,000
Rathkeale Community Development Project	€10,000
Total	€170,000

Village Renewal Grants 2005

Group / Location	Description Of Works	Amount Proposed
Anglesboro Community Council	Develop Amenity Area	€4,000
Ballingarry Community Council	Develop Amenity Area	€5,000
Barna Residents Association	Develop Amenity Area	€3,000
Caherelly Sportsfield Co-Op Society Ltd.	Improvement Works to Community Hall	€5,000
Cappagh Community Council	Improvement Works to Community Centre and Improvement for Car Park	€4,000
Carrigkerry Development Assoc.	Develop Amenity Area	€5,000
Castlemahon Development Assoc.	Improvements to Community Hall	€4,000
Castletown	Provide Walkway	€4,000
Coolcappa Development Assoc	Develop Amenity Area	€3,000
Coonagh Sports & Social Club	Develop Amenity Area	€5,000
Donoughmore/Knockea/Roxboro Community	Develop Amenity Area at Dooley Park	€6,000
Feenagh Development	Develop Amenity Area	€2,000
Galbally	Develop Amenity Area	€4,000
Garryspillane Tidy Towns Development Groups	Develop Amenity Area	€3,000
Glenbrohane Tidy Towns	Develop Amenity Area	€2,000
Kilcolman Parish Committee	Develop Amenity Area	€5,000
Killeedy Community Council	Improvement Works to Community Hall	€4,000
Knockcarron Community Council	Improvement to Community Centre	€4,000
Lough Gur Development Co-Op Society Ltd.	Develop Amenity Area & Provide Car Park	€4,000
Loughill Community Development Assoc.	Develop Amenity Area	€4,000
Mountcollins Development Assoc.	Provide Car Park	€6,000
Old Mill Development Assoc.	Develop Amenity Area & Provide Footpath	€3,000
Oola Tidy Towns	Develop Amenity Area	€4,000
Pallasgreen Residents Assoc.	Develop Amenity Area	€4,000
Tournafulla Development Assoc.	Improvement Works to Community Centre	€3,000
Total		€100,000



Foynes Flying Boat Museum

COUNTY ARTS OFFICE

Perhaps the two key words underpinning the arts programme of 2005 were partnership and diversity.

The spring season opened with a very successful series of lectures on "Limerick's Built Heritage." With the objective of raising awareness of the county's rich architectural heritage, the series was collaboratively organised by the Arts, Archaeology, Planning and Community & Enterprise Sections of the Council.

A full calendar of exhibitions, a multi-disciplinary arts programme for eleven primary schools, our annual literary festival Eigse Michael Hartnett, provided an ever-changing backdrop to a number of new initiatives.

The Arts Office and the Health Service Executive jointly engaged Artist/puppeteer Helen Hugel, to work in the "Ark", the children's wing of the Regional Hospital, Dooradoyle. Helene created with the sick children, colourful puppets and imaginary play objects from everyday hospital equipment such as syringes, thermometers etc.

In partnership with the County VEC, a series of introductory art classes for mature adults was organised in Castleconnell. Facilitated by artist Barbara Hartigan, the classes have afforded people a first time opportunity to explore and be creative with art materials.

With county dancer Mary Hartney, an integrated dance programme has been implemented in Rathfredagh Cheshire Home. Integrated dance is about people of all physical abilities creating and performing dance. This innovative dance project includes transition year students from the local post-primary school and the residents of Rathfredagh.

Ten organisations and individuals were awarded grants under the Arts Act 1973. With revised criteria applying to the grants, the awards varied in value from €700 to €1500. The Council's Arts Organisation Bursary, an award of €3000 was made to Summer Music on the Shannon, with the Individual Bursary going to Paul Dunworth to assist with his musical studies in London.



Brid Bradshaw, County Arts Office, with children from Ballybrown N.S. participating in the Council's Artist in Schools Programme



Colourful sock puppets made from hospital materials



Introductory Art Classes - Castleconnell

LIBRARY

Children's activities:

The annual "Children's Book Festival" drew a large and enthusiastic crowd to the Official Launch in Newcastle West Library on 8th October '05. This event now spans 3 weeks and consisted of 48 events held in 8 venues throughout the County. A broad range of activities were again on offer including science, art and craft workshops, digital photography and modern dance workshops and puppet shows. There was something for every age group including a visit by a local vet, to cookery classes for tots!! A full programme of author visits for children took place also throughout the year.

Social Inclusion:

The Library Service continues to provide a lively local venue for arts and cultural activities focussed on the promotion of an inclusive society. Newcastle West Library hosted an exhibition by residents of Rathfredagh Cheshire Home and special classes in Desmond College also exhibited work. A talk on wildlife photography was attended by students from Catherine Mc Auley School. Foynes and Dooradoyle Libraries hosted "Bealtaine" - the national festival celebrating creativity in older age with craft, storytelling and dance workshops. International and multi-cultural services for adults were further enhanced with the launch of a collection of multi-lingual fiction in Dooradoyle Library consisting of over 200 titles in languages as diverse as French, Slovakian, Urdu and Arabic.

Information Technology:

Information provision reached another level when Dooradoyle Library was nominated as one of eight relay centres in Ireland chosen for the Europe Direct Information Service. This is a new and exciting initiative aimed at bringing relevant information about the EU to members of the public in easy and accessible formats. The Service - which includes printed, online and freephone information sources, was launched by an Chathaoirleach Bridgid Teefy on 7th December '05. An additional extension to the information service in Dooradoyle Library is the subscription to the "pressdisplay" website, which allows readers free online access to over 250 international newspaper titles in full-text format.



"Science is Fun" workshop in Foynes Library during CBF '05



"Bealtaine" at Foynes Library



At the launch of the Europe Direct Information Service

Seachtain na Gaeilge:

Tá Seachtain na Gaeilge ag dul ó neart go neart gach bliain.

The Programme consisted of author visits from Gabriel Fitzmaurice, Eddie Lenihan and Ré Ó Laighléis. Bilingual talks ensured that even those with only the “cúpla focail” could participate and the week continues to be a focus for the love of all things Irish – language, music and dance. A total of 1,780 people participated in 11 events in Dooradoyle, Abbeyfeale, Newcastle West, Foynes and Kilmallock Libraries.

Key Performance Indicators:

- 18,901 Registered Readers
- 346,880 Books Issued
- 348,000 Recorded visits to Dooradoyle, Newcastle West, Adare, Abbeyfeale and Foynes Libraries
- 32,921 New titles added to stock
- 124 Cultural/Civic events hosted
- 35 Exhibitions
- 33,326 Hours of usage of internet PC's

Reader Development Week:

In June Limerick County Library Service participated in a national campaign celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Public Libraries Act by organizing a number of exciting author visits. John W Sexton, award winning children's author Kate Thompson and the very popular Micheál Ó Muirheartaigh kept audiences enthralled with lively tales. The campaign focussed on the positive role that local libraries can play in the community.

CORPORATE SERVICES

The Corporate Services Department covers a wide range of services in addition to providing management support services. The department deals with areas such as Higher Education Grants, Register of Electors, Freedom of Information, purchasing and a wide variety of ancillary services relating to Council business



Visit of the popular broadcaster Micheál Ó Muirheartaigh during “Reader Development Week”

Annual Progress Report on Corporate Plan

Section 134 of the Local Government Act 2001, requires preparation and submission of an Annual Progress Report on the Corporate Plan to the Elected Members. Each Directorate produced a progress report on their Operational Plan and these reports were put before the Members at the April 2006 Monthly meeting.

The following is a report on some of the main outcomes contained in the Annual Progress Report.

Social Inclusion

A review of Housing and Planning Permission forms was carried out by the County Limerick VEC Literacy Service.

Audits were completed in relation to accessibility in County Council facilities and disabled parking provision in public areas regulated by the Council. Disability Awareness Training for Staff and Members of the Council was completed.

A customer survey on service delivery was undertaken. The County Library conducted a review of book purchase to meet the changing population profile.

Quality of Life

A new Library in Glin was opened to the public in September 2005. Participation is ongoing in the Adult Literacy referral Network.

Under the Arts Programme for 2005 various elements of the programme were completed such as the Artist in Schools, Musician in residence, Administration of Arts Grants, Individual and Organisation Bursaries and the lecture series on Limerick's Built Heritage. Once again the annual literary festival Eigse Michael Hartnett was a major success.

The implementation of the Local Sports Partnership Sport and Recreation Plan was completed. The County Play Plan was adopted. Comhairle na n-Óg was hosted in County Hall in March 2005.

Housing

Under the delivery of the Building Programme the target set was commencement of 114 houses in 2005 and this target was achieved. Twenty housing units for the elderly were provided as part of the aim to provide housing for the elderly in all new housing schemes. The Voluntary Housing Sector commenced 75 housing

units exceeding the set target. Under the Windows and Doors Replacement Programme works on 129 houses were completed.

Transportation

The Limerick Southern Ring Road Phase 2 project incorporating the fourth crossing of the River Shannon progressed through the tender stage with the Provisional Preferred Tenderer being identified in September 2005.

The Preferred Route Corridor for the N21 Adare Bypass was identified.

The Croom Urban Renewal Scheme was also completed during the year.

Water Services

The Council delivered equivalent of over 100 billion glasses of potable water to its customers in 2005. We supplied over 28000 households together with a range of non-domestic customers.

In excess of 9000 laboratory tests were carried out on 1101 samples taken from water supplies

Major Capital Projects were advanced through the various approval processes associated with the National Water Services Investment Programme.

The first sewage treatment plant was constructed under the Small Towns and Villages Initiative at Kilfinane.

The Water Conservation Team continued to make a significant impact. To quote one example, a saving in daily consumption of 792 cubic meters was achieved in the water demand in Abbeyfeale; this represented 22 % of the plant output.

Planning

The County Development Plan 2005-2011 was finalised and formally adopted in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000. Local Area Plans for the Southern Environs, Caherdavin and Cappamore were completed.

A total of 3723 applications were all processed in accordance with the statutory deadlines. In the area of Planning Enforcement 340 cases were investigated resulting in the issuing of 212 warning letters and 128 Enforcement Notices.

Environment and Emergency Services

The Environment Section issued 306 Statutory Notices under waste legislation to stop illegal activities and initiated 32 prosecutions for breaches of waste and litter legislation. In relation to proactive pollution surveys including surveys of farms, septic tanks and commercial premises a total of 308 new inspections and 445 re-inspections were conducted.

In the area of promotion of public awareness on Waste Reduction 57 primary/secondary schools were visited and talks were delivered to 13 community interest groups.

A five year Business Plan was prepared for the Fire Service incorporating actions resulting from customer survey. The Fire Service exceeded timeline targets set in relation to attendance at emergency scenes. To improve Fire Safety Awareness a total of 31 schools were visited.

Internal Capacity and Resources

This area comprises Human Resources, Information Systems, Finance and Corporate Services.

A Programme of initiatives in the area of Staff Support was completed and Health Screening for staff was also delivered. There is ongoing promotion of the principles of the Dignity at Work Charter.

The process of developing an Internal Communication Strategy was commenced. A media awareness campaign was completed in relation to Higher Education Grants. A facility was provided on the Council website to allow the public check if their name has been entered on the Register.

Completion of the Annual Financial Statement was achieved within target. Transfer of all Payroll and staff expenses payments to Electronic Fund Transfer achieved.

The Information Systems commenced complete redesign of the Council's website with the aim of achieving Priority 1 & 2 of Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Higher Education Grants

Limerick County Council received 549 new applications for the academic year 2004/2005 and over 800 Renewals were processed. Total expenditure amounted to €3.5 m. and an additional €274,860 was paid out as Special Rate of Maintenance (Top Up) Grant. A total of 145 students were awarded Top Up Grants in 2004/2005, which was an increase of 35 students from 2003/2004 academic year.

Register of Electors

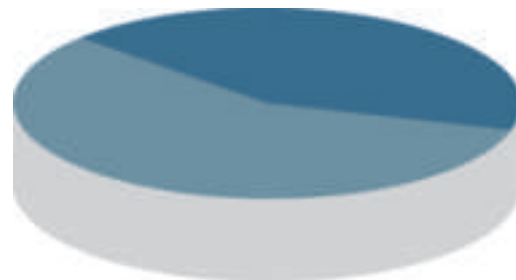
The Register of Electors is produced annually and comprises a list of all persons over the age of 18 years resident in the County who are entitled to vote in Elections to the Dáil, the European Assembly, Presidential and Local Elections and Referenda. The publication date for the Register of Electors is 1st February and the Register comes into effect on 15th February each year.

The Local Government Electorate stands at 95,976, comprising;

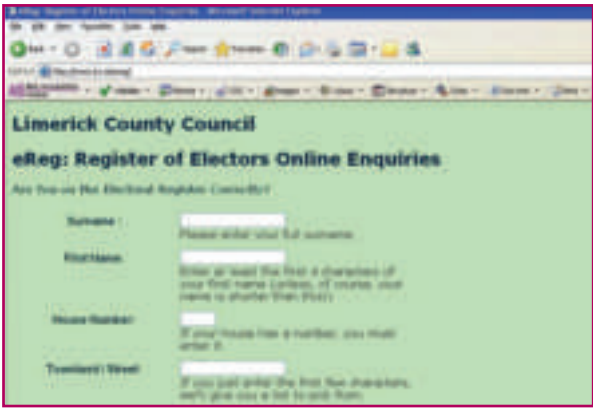


- Bruff	23,325
- Castleconnell	24,685
- Kilmallock	14,648
- Newcastle West	16,915
- Rathkeale	16,403

County Limerick Dáil Electorate stands at 95,425, comprising:



- Limerick East	40,659
- Limerick West	54,766



Members of the public can check if they are registered correctly on the Electoral Register on www.lcc.ie (Register of Electors Online Enquiries.) If your details are incorrect or you are not registered, please apply for an application form to electoralregister@limerickcoco.ie

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The purpose of the Freedom of Information Act, 1997 is to provide a legal right of access by the public to information held by Public Bodies. The Act sets out the legislative basis under which members of the public can obtain access to official information to the greatest extent possible consistent with the public interest and the right of privacy.

The Act came into effect for Local Authorities from 21st October 1998. (At that date, the public's right of access to information will be in respect of records created from the 21st October, 1998). The Act also requires Public Bodies to give assistance to the public to exercise that right.

Subject to the provisions of the Act, the Freedom of Information Act, 1997 provides for:

- A legal right to access information held by public bodies;
- A legal right for every person to have official information relating to him / herself amended where it is incomplete, incorrect or misleading;
- A legal right to obtain reasons for decisions affecting oneself;
- The establishment of an independent Office of Information Commissioner to review decisions made by Public Bodies relating to FoI requests.

Making a Request

Access to information held by Limerick County Council under FoI will be by means of the making of a valid FoI request. The request must:

1. Be made in writing;
2. State that the request is made under the Act;
3. Contain sufficient particulars in relation to the information concerned to enable the record to be identified.

All FoI requests should be addressed to the Freedom of Information Officer,
County Hall
Dooradoyle
County Limerick.

Total Requests Received In 2005: 28

Personal	1
Non- Personal	26
Mixed	1
Granted	20
Part Granted	2
Refused	5
Transferred	0
Handled outside FOI	2
Internal Reviews received	1
Fees Charged	€450.00

INTERNAL AUDIT

The Internal Audit Section is an independent function that reviews the systems, procedures and internal controls in place throughout the Council. These reviews are carried out in order that management can have confidence that the systems and procedures they have put in place:

- Safeguard the assets of the Council
- Safeguard staff
- Promote high standards of accountability
- Help guard against fraud
- Promote effective service delivery
- Support delivery of corporate objectives.

The ongoing work of the Internal Audit Section involves the following activities:-

- Review and implement Audit Plan.
- Review County Checker Procedures.
- Work with external auditors.
- EU audit requirements.
- Review performance indicators.
- Co-ordinate value for money studies.

The County Checker operates within the internal audit function and carries out a continuous audit of financial transactions in areas such as revenue collection, cash receipting and motor tax collection.



Workplace partnership Logo

WORKPLACE PARTNERSHIP

A Workplace Partnership Committee is in place to handle "Significant Change Through Partnership". This workplace committee consists of Tom Lavery and James O'Rourke SIPTU, John Sheehan LAPO, Tony Storan and Aileen Dillane IMPACT, Mary Fogarty, Tom Enright, Pat Fitzgerald, Paul Crowe and Noreen Fahey Management.

Handling Significant Change Through Partnership

This document was produced in 2005 as a follow up to the Deepening Partnership in Local Government Strategic Plan 2003-2005. The aim of this document is to help managers, trade union representatives and employees, working through partnership in local authorities, to handle significant changes with confidence. It lists the types of issues that managers and trade union representatives have identified as being important to address through partnership, in the interests of improving services to the public and the quality of working life of managers and employees.

The document sets out a framework within which managers and union representatives may raise significant issues and agree on appropriate mechanisms for handling them. It also sets out a number of supports that may be called on by the parties in the event that difficulties arise.

Low Value Purchase Cards

- Successful introduction of Low Value Purchase Cards countywide in 2005.
- Significant reduction in volume of invoices to be processed.



Launch of Low Value Purchase cards in Newcastle West Area.

Mobile Welfare Units

- €6,000 funding provided by LANPAG in 2005 to the Environment Section for the purchase of a welfare unit.

Retained Firefighters

- Ongoing implementation of a revised retained firefighters report.

Return to Learning

- Return to Learning is now entering its fourth year in Limerick County Council.
- To date, over twenty staff have participated in this course with four members achieving FETAC accreditation in Basic Computers in 2005.

Machinery Yard

- Machinery Yard review group in place.
- Fifteen No. 3 tonne long wheel based vans lease/purchased for Water Services.
- Two mini velocity patchers purchased and approval for second unit.
- One 26 tonne truck, purchased.
- Five mini gritters purchased.
- One rubber wheeled roller purchased.
- One vibrating roller purchased.
- Ongoing updating of fleet management database.
- Ongoing implementation of five year machinery programme.
- Regular meetings of machinery yard review group.
- Ongoing training with a driver awareness course.
- Health and Safety ongoing agenda item for all meetings.



Staff Members in Kilmallock Area with a mobile Welfare Unit purchased with aid of Partnership Funding.

Time and Attendance Working Groups

- Seven No. working groups established to examine time and attendance under the following "Terms of Reference":-

"To review existing time and attendance systems for all staff and to make recommendations in relation to how Limerick County Council can best fulfil its obligations under the Working Time Act 1997."

- These working groups are as follows:-
 1. General Operatives and Related Grades
 2. Waterworks Caretakers
 3. Administrative Grades
 4. Craftworkers
 5. Technical Grades
 6. Arts / Library Service
 7. Retained Fire Service
- Reports completed by all working groups and referred to the Industrial Relations Forum.



Craftworkers- "Time and Attendance" Working Group.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Limerick County Council currently employs 973 staff. The remit of Limerick County Council requires a huge variety in the skill set and occupations in the workforce. These range from Scientists to Plumbers, Mechanics to Archaeologists, Horticulturalists to Accountants etc.

Payroll costs for 2005 represented 33.8% of revenue expenditure.

The Human Resources Department is tasked with the responsibility of ensuring that its operations and activities are supportive of the broader corporate objectives. The department achieves this through the HR policies it applies and the range of activities it pursues e.g.

- Recruitment and Staff Retention
- Staff Development and Training
- Staff Relations
- Work / Life Balance Initiatives
- Staff Support Service
- Equality

Staff Recruitment and Retention

The policy on recruitment is to attract and retain competent staff with the qualifications and experience necessary to provide efficient and effective service to the organisation. As an Equal Opportunities employer the Council strives to ensure that there is no express or implied discrimination against any candidate during any stage of the recruitment process.

There were 59 competitions held during the year. Outlined below is a profile of the competitions held:

	Male	Female
Number of candidates	883	1103
Number of candidates called to interview	477	259
Number placed on panels	218	144
Numbers employed	76	38
Gender make up of Interview Boards	115	43

The Council continued its association with third level colleges in the region and facilitated 24 students with work experience as part of their college courses. The colleges involved were the University of Limerick, Mary Immaculate College, the Limerick Institute of Technology and Tipperary Institute of Technology. A number of transition year students from various second level schools in the city and county were also facilitated with work experience.

Staff Development and Training

Levels of activity and expenditure in training continued to rise with the overall spend on training and development at €1.7m.

Under the terms of the Local Government sectoral plan and the Disability Act 2005, Limerick County Council received funding for its Disability Strategy from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. As part of this strategy a series of disability awareness training sessions was held for all staff members at various locations throughout the county. Furthermore, technical and engineering staff members attended a two day disability awareness course covering such issues as the requirements of the Building Regulations as they relate to disability, the carrying out of accessibility audits etc.

With the enactment of the Official Languages Act 2003, a series of Irish Language courses was undertaken by a number of staff from beginners to advanced level. Other areas of training activity during the year were Health & Safety, IS Technical Training, Customer Service, Fire Fighter training, non-national Road Worker training, Driver Awareness Training and also Personal Assistance Programme.

Work / Life Balance Initiatives

As an employer the Council endeavours to strike the right balance between work and life of its staff by operating a full range of work/life balance initiatives. In addition to operating a flexitime system, nine separate schemes are available to staff members.



Group at Retirement Function, November, 2005

Staff Support Service

2005 was a very successful year for the Staff Support Service. Medical screening for staff was introduced with an emphasis on diabetes. All staff were offered diabetes testing in the workplace and almost 200 employees availed of the facility, which also included blood pressure and weight check.

A Long Service Ceremony is held annually in the Spring, for staff who have been employed in Limerick County Council for 20 years. All staff who have reached this milestone receive a certificate honouring their contribution to the Council.

A Retirement Ceremony was held in November to mark the retirement of the sixteen staff members who retired during 2005 and a presentation was made to each by Cllr. Brigid Teefy, Cathaoirleach, and Mr. Paul Crowe, Director of Services. Each year an album is created of the Retirement Function, and these are available to be viewed in the Human Resources Department.

Free counselling service was available to any staff member who needed it for support through any personal or work related difficulty.

Equality

The Equality Action Team continued the promotion of Limerick County Council's Dignity at Work Charter. The Charter sets out the Council's policies and procedures in relation to Equal Opportunity, Bullying, Harassment, including sexual harassment, in the workplace. A staff awareness programme, initiated during 2004, continued during 2005.

SERVICE INDICATORS

C Corporate Issues

C.1	Percentage of working days lost to sickness absence through	2004	2005
	- certified leave	2.733	3.87
	- uncertified leave	0.296	0.38
C.2	Expenditure on Training and Development as a percentage of total Payroll costs	3.81	5.31

L Library Services

L.1	Public opening hours		
	- average number of opening hours per week for full-time libraries	35.7	36.5*(a)
	- average number of opening hours per week for part-time libraries (where applicable)	14.0	12.0*(b)
L.2	Number of registered library members as a percentage of the local population	15	15.5
L.3	Number of items issued per head of population (county/city wide) for:		
	a) Books	2.95	2.85
	b) Other Items	0.06	0.07
L.4	Percentage of libraries that offer Internet access to the public	41.7	70.37*(c)
L.5	Number of Internet sessions provided per 1,000 population	259	275
	*(a) Lunchtime opening was introduced in Glin and Adare Libraries in 2005		
	*(b) Includes 15 part-time, 2 mobiles and 5 centres – Note: Rathkeale library is temporarily closed due to renovations.		
	*(c) 9 New Internet sites were added in late 2005		

A&C Arts and Cultural Services

A&C.1 Arts Grants

- number of arts grants paid	32	12
- total value of arts grants paid per 1,000 population	€85.53	€131.93

R Recreational Services

Rec.1 Number of children's playgrounds per 1,000 population

- directly provided by the local authority	0.01	0.01
- facilitated by the local authority	0.01	0.01

Rec.2 Number of visitors to local authority facilitated swimming facilities Per 1,000 population (Not applicable to Limerick County Council)

0	0
---	---

CP Community Participation & Co-operation – Your Local Authority

CP.1 Percentage of local schools involved in the local Youth Council/ Comhairle na n-Óg scheme

9.5	67
-----	----

The 2004-2005 Comhairle na n-Óg was held in March 2005.

67% of the schools in Co. Limerick attended the Comhairle na n-Óg 2004/2005

Delegates from 14 of the 21 Post-Primary Schools, 2 Youth Clubs and 1 traveller

Training Centre attended the Comhairle. A total of 44 young people aged

between 12-17 attended.

HOUSING

The year 2005 was the second year of the 5 year Housing Action Plan and the following are the works undertaken.

A total of 139 houses were under construction in the following towns and villages at 31st December, 2005.

Location	No. of Houses
Cappamore	16
Abbeyfeale	17
Rathkeale	20
Askeaton	10
Pallasgreen	21
Croom	4
Knocklong	12
Castleconnell	8
Murroe	20
Ballyhahill	5
Kilmallock	6
Total	139

Another 4 houses in rural areas were also under construction, 17 houses were purchased and demountable type dwellinghouses were provided for 8 applicants.

A total of 106 houses were completed in the following locations and made available for letting:

Location	No. of Houses
Pallaskenry	7
Doon	13
Caherconlish	2
Ballingarry	13
Caherconlish	15
Athea	10
Ballylanders	14
Abbeyfeale Apartments	4
Rural Cottages	3
Purchases	17
Demountables	8
Total	106



Pat O'Connor
Assistant County
Manager
& Housing

Various stages of design works are ongoing on the provision of 94 houses in 9 locations for 2006. Total expenditure for the construction and purchase of houses for letting together with the provision of traveller accommodation came to over €20,800,000.

At the 31st December, 2005 the Council owned 1,734 dwellings which were occupied by its tenants.

A further 11 houses were acquired by way of the Shared Ownership Loan Scheme.

Voluntary Housing.

This was another successful year in terms of the provision of accommodation by the Voluntary Housing Sector. 69 units were completed in the following centres:

Glin:	20	Ballyhahill:	6
Croom:	17	Kilmallock:	7
Athlaca:	10	Rathfredagh:	9

Work in progress, including pre-construction was ongoing on the following Schemes:

Hospital:	8	Knocklong:	3
Athea:	2	Kilfinane:	4
Kilmeedy:	12	Cappagh:	6
Kilfinane:	4	Bruff:	5
Broadford:	2	Feenagh:	10
Doon:	8	Bawnmore:	12
Cappamore:	10	Newcastle West:	6
Daughters of Charity (Cappamore)	7		

Applications for Housing Assistance.

Scheme	Applications	Approvals	Total Value of Approvals
Shared Ownership Loan	35	11	€1,553,752
Affordable Housing	1	0	€525,238
House Purchase Annuity Loan	4	1	nil
Tenant Purchase Annuity Loan	10	7	€291,356
House Improvement Loan	1	1	€1,000
Disabled Persons Grants	271	261	€1,517,835
Essential Repairs Grants	56	54	€363,045

The Community & Voluntary Housing Forum met 3 times and discussed a range of matters relating to the Voluntary Housing Sector's activities.

A total of 70 tenancies were allocated by various Voluntary Housing Associations in the County to persons deemed by the Council to be in need of housing.

Other statistics relating to the Housing Section's activities in 2005 are:

- The Assessment of Housing Need took place at the 31st March 2005 which is an assessment of all housing applicants which each Housing Authority is required by law to carry out every three years. For the assessment 1,138 applications were considered and 693 housing applications were considered to be in need of Council housing following the assessment.
- There was 156 Housing Allocations made comprising newly constructed houses and casual vacancies.
- Rental Income for the year came to €3,561,208.45. The average rent paid by Council tenants is € 39 per week.
- The total cost of maintenance of housing stock was €851,005.
- The average all-in cost including land costs, fees, etc. varied between €120,000 for a two-bedroomed one storey house and €180,000 for a 3 bedroomed unit.
- 5 No. privately owned houses were refurbished under the Improvement Works in Lieu of Rehousing Scheme.
- 1 No. Extension was completed to a Local Authority owned house.
- 15 No. Affordable houses were provided in private developments at Caherdavin, Dooradoyle, Ballysimon and Castleconnell. These houses were provided in accordance with Part V of the Planning & Development Act 2000.
- 129 rented Local Authority Houses were included and completed in the final phase of the Window & Door Replacement Programme at an estimated cost of €550,000. A total of 697 houses have been completed under the Window & Door Replacement Programme.

- Works were completed on 172 rented Local Authority Houses under the installation of Central Heating/Smoke Alarm/Insulation Programme at a cost of over €1,000,000.
- Attic Insulation was completed in 29 No. rented Council houses. A total of 44 houses have been completed in this Installation Programme which was undertaken by the Southill Community Services Board Ltd. on behalf of Limerick County Council as part of a joint venture.



Housing Development at Turagh Crescent, Cappamore

Estate Management

Over the course of 2005, Estate Management Services hosted a total of 7 Pre-Tenancy Courses, catering for over 70 families in Pallaskenry, Doon, Caherconlish, Ballingarry, Athea, Abbeyfeale and Ballylanders. Follow-up visits took place to all these families after a settling in period. The Council actively encourages and supports tenants who wish to become involved in the management and care of their own estates and in forming Residents' Associations.

The Housing Services Officer met with various Resident's Groups and Associations throughout the county over the course of the year. In partnership with interested residents, the local elected members, horticultural services, and area office staff, improvement works were carried out in Kiltelly, Croom, Rathkeale, Abbeyfeale and Newcastle West. Under the Housing Management Initiative from the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government, a house was made available on a pilot basis for a community education initiative for residents in Cappamore with assistance from the VEC. Following on from the success of this pilot project, a further course will be undertaken in 2006. Through the Estate Management Services, a significant

plan for the refurbishment of Sharwood & Castlevue Estates in Newcastle West is progressing with the input and approval of local residents and elected members. The Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government has agreed funding of almost €2.5 million in total and it is anticipated that the first phase of these works will commence in early 2006.

Traveller Accommodation 2005

The Council continued to accommodate members of the Travelling Community and 18 families were assisted by the Council in this regard including 13 who were offered permanent accommodation. Work commenced on two Traveller Specific Accommodation projects in Castletroy and Clondrinagh Halting Sites where an overall total of 21 bays will be provided. The scheme comprising of 7 No. bays and a communal facility in Castletroy was completed in December. Emergency accommodation was also provided in Clonmacken following a tragic fire accident in April, 2005.

A new Traveller Accommodation Programme was adopted by the Council on 28th February 2005 which is in respect of the period 2005-2008. Families continued to receive support from the Council's Social Workers and other housing related services. The Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee met on five occasions during the year and considered a range of issues including the Traveller Accommodation Programme for the period 2005 – 2008.

Homeless Services

The Council in partnership with the Health Services Executive (Mid West) adopted a Homeless Strategy for the County in consultation with the voluntary sector in December, 2001. A Homeless Forum was established as a result of the strategy and is representative of all appropriate sectors and considers issues pertaining to homelessness in the county. The Homeless Forum met on 6 occasions and discussed a range of issues including the preparation of a new strategy for the period 2006 – 2008.

Another provision of the strategy is that a Homeless Persons Unit be established in the Council offices to provide supports and advice to homeless or potentially homeless persons. In 2005 this unit worked with 143 persons who were or were likely to become homeless. A large number of these people were either housed by the Council and/or voluntary housing associations or were able to source private rented accommodation with the assistance of the Homeless Persons Unit.



Two Storey Houses at the Forts, Doon



Art Feature at Galeside Housing Development, Athea



Housing Development at Limeyard, Pallaskenry

SERVICE INDICATORS

H:	Housing		
H.1	Housing Vacancies	2005	2004
	Total Number of dwellings in local authority stock	1734	1698
	Overall % of dwellings that are let	98.10	97.90
	Overall % of dwellings that are empty	1.90	2.10
	% of empty dwelling subject to major refurbishment schemes	24.24	16.67
	% of empty dwellings unavailable for letting	32	33.33
	% of empty dwellings available for letting	68	66.67
H.2	Average time taken to relet dwellings available for letting	4.5 weeks	5 weeks
H.3	Number of repairs completed as a percentage of the number of valid repair requests received.	85	86
H.4	Average time taken to inform applicants of local authority's decision on applications for:		
	- the shared ownership housing scheme:	14 days	14 days
	- housing loans schemes:	14 days	11 days
	- local authority housing:	34 days	-
	<i>(Not available for 2004 due to delays in EMOS System)</i>		
H.5	Traveller Accommodation		
	Total number of traveller families accommodated as a percentage of the targets set in the local Traveller Accommodation Programme	78	100*
	<i>18 families have been accommodated out of a target of 23 in the Traveller Accommodation Programme.</i>		
	<i>*11 families have been offered permanent accommodation which represents 100% of the targets set out in the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2000-2004.</i>		

FINANCE, INFORMATION SYSTEMS & MOTOR TAXATION

FINANCE BALANCE SHEET

As at 31st December 2005



Oliver Killeen
Head of Finance
& Information
Systems

	2005	2004
Fixed		
Operational	€271,343,275	€199,910,258
Infrastructural	€1,848,354,436	€1,850,866,670
Community	€552,748	€552,748
Non-Operational	€11,639,126	€11,639,126
	€2,131,889,585	€2,062,968,802
Work-in-Progress and Preliminary Expenses	€289,136,789	€299,863,253
Long Term Debtors	€27,438,318	€28,437,798
Current Assets		
Stock	€270,069	€314,020
Trade Debtors and Prepayments	€7,398,266	€6,233,974
Bank Investments	€21,138,751	€660,211
Cash at Bank	€1,307,412	€9,226,551
Cash on Hand	€13,360	€10,307
Urban Account	-	-
	€30,127,858	€16,445,063
Current Liabilities		
Creditors & Accruals	€13,785,578	€16,432,182
Finance Leases	€93,881	-
	€13,879,459	€16,432,182
Net Current Assets / (Liabilities)	€16,248,399	€12,881
Creditors (Amounts greater than one year)		
Loans Payable	€61,393,658	€55,105,372
Finance Leases	€239,607	-
Refundable Deposits	€1,138,751	€660,211
Other	-	-
	€62,772,016	€55,765,583
Net Assets / (Liabilities)	€2,401,941,075	€2,335,517,151
Financed By		
Capitalisation Account	€2,131,889,586	€2,062,968,803
Income WIP	€287,349,596	€294,282,257
Specific Revenue Reserve	€384,902	€384,904
General Revenue Reserve	€427,170	€(162,921)
Other Balances	€(18,110,177)	€(21,955,891)
Total Reserves	€2,401,941,077	€2,335,517,152

Prompt Payment of Accounts Interest

Nil payment by Limerick County Council in 2005

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT STATEMENT for the year ended 31st December 2005

The Income and Expenditure Account Statement brings together all the revenue related income and expenditure. It shows the surplus/(deficit) for the year.

	Gross Expenditure 2005	Income 2005	Net Expenditure 2005	Net Expenditure 2004
Expenditure by Programme Group				
Housing & Building	€7,350,698	€6,584,894	€765,804	€769,741
Road Transportation & Safety	€30,439,072	€18,582,267	€11,856,804	€13,740,374
Water Supply & Sewerage	€13,232,076	€5,763,685	€7,468,391	€7,499,380
Development Incentives & Control	€5,935,683	€3,380,133	€2,555,550	€1,770,214
Environmental Protection	€14,959,629	€9,259,520	€5,700,109	€3,290,787
Recreation & Amenity	€4,328,413	€489,223	€3,839,190	€3,562,668
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	€7,516,825	€6,920,535	€596,290	€811,354
Miscellaneous	€6,162,616	€1,210,398	€4,952,218	€4,796,762
Support Services	-	-	-	-
Total	€89,925,012	€52,190,655		
			2005	2004
Net Cost of Programmes to be funded from				
Rates and Local Government Fund			€37,734,357	€36,241,282
Local Government Fund			€22,513,686	€20,810,886
Commercial Rates			€22,084,226	€19,826,141
Surplus/(Deficit) for Year before			€6,863,556	€4,395,745
Transfers from/(to) Reserves			€(6,273,465)	€(3,162,696)
Overall Surplus/(Deficit) for Year			€590,091	€1,233,049
General Reserve at 1st January			€(162,921)	€(1,395,970)
General Reserve at 31st December			€427,170	€(162,921)

SUMMARY OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AND INCOME

Expenditure (Net of Internal Transfers) *	2005	2004
Housing & Building	€33,660,578	€22,400,051
Road Transportation & Safety	€48,350,841	€33,407,351
Water Supply & Sewerage	€15,412,225	€6,346,615
Development Incentives & Control	€3,092,495	€1,572,763
Environmental Protection	€2,058,831	€4,889,903
Recreation & Amenity	€108,358	€389,325
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	-	-
Miscellaneous	€2,710,723	€3,363,77
	€105,394,051	€72,369,787
Income (Net of Internal Transfers) *		
Housing & Building	€34,539,413	€26,351,542
Road Transportation & Safety	€48,425,123	€31,533,455
Water Supply & Sewerage	€17,545,457	€5,196,491
Development Incentives & Control	€14,260,424	€7,070,326
Environmental Protection	€2,647,840	€3,264,133
Recreation & Amenity	€60,000	€153,000
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	-	-
Miscellaneous	€2,146,983	€1,637,086
	€119,625,239	€75,206,034
Surplus/(Deficit) for year	€14,231,188	€2,836,247
Balance (Debit)/Credit @ 1st January	€2,805,959	€(30,288)
Balance (Debit)/Credit @ 31 December	€17,037,147	€2,805,959

* Excludes internal transfers, includes transfers to and from Revenue account

INFORMATION SYSTEMS SECTION

The main areas of activity in the I.T. section are as set out:

Council WEB Site <http://www.lcc.ie>

- Over 1.868 million hits during 2005.
- Project to make the Web site accessible to persons with disabilities, in accordance with international accessibility standards commenced. New accessible web site go-live March, 2006.
- Implemented Microsoft Content Management System which will allow individual sections to dynamically update their own web content, to facilitate the provision of timely and relevant information on the Web.
- Implemented 'ePlan' On-Line interactive Planning enquiry system.
- Implemented 'iDocs Web' enabling the viewing of Planning Application documents on-line.
- Implemented 'eReg' On-Line interactive Register of Electors enquiry system.

Systems Development\Implementation

- Payroll History Query System.
- Commenced Agresso 5.4 implementation.
- iBusiness Banking.
- Extended iDocs Document Management System to include Forward Planning Library.
- DjVu compression software integration to iDocs Document Management System.
- Upgrade Payroll PayPath EFT system.
- System to calculate Development Contributions C.P.I. increase.
- Environmental Control Officers On-Line logging system.
- iTech Helpdesk Management System Enhancements.

Wide Area Network

The Wide Area Network now comprises of HQ and 14 remote offices. A project to install wireless links between County Hall and the five area offices commenced December, 2005. This will increase the bandwidth to Area Offices from 512k to 34Mbps. Improvements were made to Members links to County Hall with 11 Members now using Broadband, and 12 using ISDN. Further improvements will be made as services become available.

Staff Development

Members of staff completed the following training courses during 2005:

Course.	No. of Participants
NUI Diploma in Computer Studies	1
A+	5
.Net Programming.	3
Microsoft Certified Applications Developer.	3
Certified Internet Webmaster.	1
Managing & Maintaining a M.S. Windows Server 2003 Environment.	3
Graphic Design.	1

Members of staff commenced the following training courses during 2005:

Course.	No. of Participants
Diploma in Project Management.	1
M. Sc. In Software & I.S.	1

I.S. Helpdesks

- Three Staff Assigned to I.S. Helpdesks.
- I.S. Helpdesk Management System 'iTech', with automatic logging of emailed calls.
- Remote Desktop Management System.
- Dedicated Helpdesk Telephone Number with Hunt Sequence on all I.S. extensions.

Intranets Project

Continued emphasis on Knowledge Management using the Council Intranet by:

- Publication of all Circular letters.
- Publication of Policy Documents.
- Publication of Training Documentation.

MOTOR TAXATION SECTION

The Motor Taxation Section of Limerick County Council is responsible for a wide range of activities and services such as:

- Issuing of Vehicle Licences
- Issuing of Driving Licences
- Recording of Driving Licence Endorsements and Disqualifications
- Processing of Pre-January 1993 changes of vehicle ownership
- Issuing of Certificates of Roadworthiness for Heavy and Light Goods Vehicles.
- Issuing of Trade Plates to Motor Traders

In addition to the above, the Motor Taxation Section facilitates other Government Agencies by providing members of the public with information on the National Car Test (N.C.T.): The Driver Theory Test and the Driving Test. The office liaises regularly with the Gardaí, the Revenue Commissioners and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Department of Transport regarding Vehicle & Driver Licensing issues.

The Motor Taxation office headquarters is located at Lower Mallow Street, Limerick. In addition, customers have the option of taxing their vehicle at the Motor Tax Office located at Limerick Co. Councils Newcastle West Area Office. We wish to advise our customers that the Newcastle West Motor Tax office, deals solely with the issuing of motor tax discs.

The Total number of transactions carried out by the County Limerick Motor Taxation Office during the Year 2005 was 136,314, an increase of 331 transactions on 2004 figure.

The total receipts were €21,851,837. Of this, 34,323 transactions were carried out in Newcastle West, representing 25.12% of the overall business of the motor taxation office.

Taxes 2005

Vehicle Licences (Tax Discs) are issued by the Motor Taxation Section for persons wishing to tax their vehicles on a quarterly, half yearly or annual basis. The total number of taxes issued for all categories of vehicles (i.e. private, goods, motor cycles etc) was 103,442. The number of vehicle arrears receipts amounted to 7485.

*The total number of new Vehicles Registered in County Limerick was 5,670 representing an increase of 11.4% on the 2004 figure of 5,091.

*Information supplied by the Revenue Commissioners.

Other Transactions 2005

The total number of Driving Licences issued was 17,268. Other miscellaneous transactions, such as replacement registration books, vehicle testing, trade plates, miscellaneous receipts etc amounted to 8,585 bringing the total number of transactions carried out by the Motor Taxation Office to 136,780.

Online Taxing

The Motor Tax online facility issued 21,483 tax discs in 2005, accounting for 20% of the total number of tax discs issued by Limerick Co. Motor Tax for the same period.

The Motor Tax classifications which are eligible to avail of the online service are: Private Cars, Agricultural Tractors, Excavators, Motor Cycles, Exempt (Disabled Drivers), Vintage/Veteran and Motor Caravans. The service is managed and operated by the Vehicle Registration Unit in Shannon, Co. Clare, who issue a unique pin number with the Motor Tax Renewal Notice, thus, allowing access to the service. After the online transaction is completed the tax disc will be issued by the VRU directly to the applicant. The website is www.motortax.ie or www.motarchain.ie (as Gaeilge).

SERVICE INDICATORS

M:	Motor Taxation	2005	2004
M.1	Number of Motor Tax transactions which		
	- are dealt with over the counter	93,286	-
	- are dealt with by post	39,410	-
	- are dealt with in other ways (e.g. online, by telephone) <i>*Supplied by VRU</i>	-*	-
	Percentage of Motor Tax transactions which		
	Are dealt with over the counter	70.43	62.4979
	Are dealt with by post	29.57	37.5021
	Are dealt with in other ways (eg.online, by telephone) <i>*Supplied by VRU</i>	-*	0
M.2	Number of postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc/driver licence issued) from receipt of the application		
	(a) on the same day	35,586	44,093
	(b) on the third day or less	2,676	957
	(c) on the fifth day or less	697	0
	(d) over 5 days	451	0
	Percentage of overall postal applications which are dealt With (i.e. disc/driver licence issued) from receipt of the application		
	(a) on the same day	90.88	98.7996
	(b) on the third day or less	6.45	1.2004
	(c) on the fifth day or less	1.64	0
	(d) over 5 days	1.04	0
M.3	Public Opening hours		
	Average number of opening hours per week	30	30

SERVICE INDICATORS

REV: Revenue Collection	2005	2004
REV.1 House Rent		
(a) Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due	96.72	94.57
(b) Percentage of arrears:		
(i) 4 – 6 weeks old	13.00	8.00
(ii) 6 – 12 weeks old	20.00	18.00
(iii) more than 12 weeks old	42.00	57.00
REV.2 House Loans		
(a) Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due	76.00	75.00
(b) Percentage of arrears		
(i) 1 month old	3.00	2.00
(ii) 2 – 3 months old	2.00	3.00
(iii) more than 3 months old	93.00	94.00
REV.3 Commercial Rates		
Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due	98.00	98.00
REV.4 Refuse Charges		
Percentage of households paying refuse charges at year end	0	0
REV.5 Non Domestic Water Charges		
Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due	87.00	87.00

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

The principal objectives of the Planning & Development Section are:

- to plan for and ensure, that all developments permitted in County Limerick are designed to the highest quality standards thereby providing balance and sustainability within the County;
- to provide an efficient assessable, and transparent service to all out customers

In order to achieve our objectives the Planning and Development Section divides its resources amongst three main areas:

- Development Management
- Forward Planning
- Enforcement

Development Management

The Development Management Section processes all planning applications for the County in accordance with the Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2004 and the Planning and Development Regulations of 2001- 2005

During 2005 the Planning Authority processed a total of 3723 applications, in excess of 70 applications per week.

The number of applications granted was 2004 and the number of applications refused was 327 giving a refusal rate of 14%

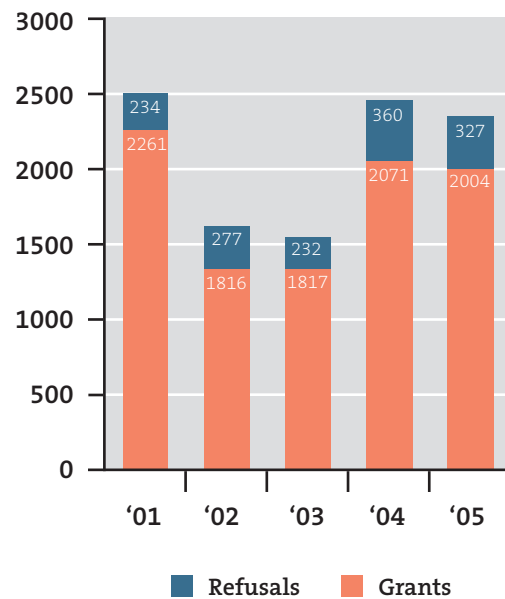


Castletroy continues to attract considerable attention for development. The photograph displays a recently developed creche at Newtown



Jimmy Feane
*Director of
Planning &
Development*

The graph below, illustrates the number of applications received over the last 5 years, while also illustrating the number of grants and refusals within each year's total.



Under the Planning & Development Act, the Planning Authority has a statutory period of eight weeks within which to make a decision on an application

Timetable for processing an application

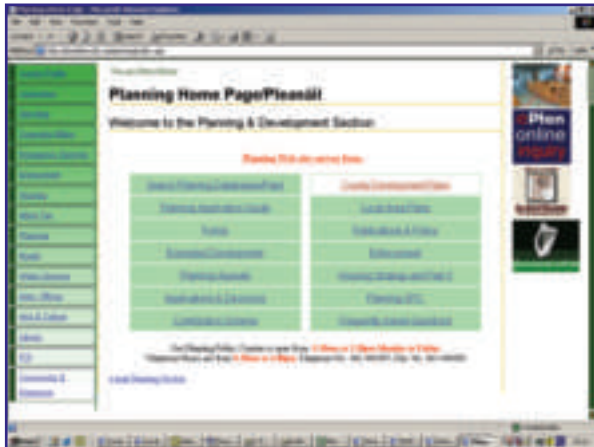
Week 1-5

- Receipt of an application
- Validation of an application
- Acknowledgement of receipt of application
- Referral to other bodies
- Site visit
- Submission /Objections received

Week 5-8

- Decision is made - Grant/Refuse/Seek Further Information
- Within 1 Month of the decision the applicant or third party can appeal that decision to An Bord Pleanala

Website



Once again the Planning Section of the website has proven to be very popular with a record number of visits for 2005. The most popular areas of the site included:

- Planning Applications and Decisions List
- Local Area Plan
- County Development Plan
- Your guide to making a Planning Application
- Application Forms

Our aim is to ensure that all information is presented in a user-friendly manner and is easily accessible. Why not visit our site on www.lcc.ie/planning. We would welcome your comments and suggestions as to how we can improve the site

E-plan

This year, the Planning Authority also launched an important update to the website entitled E-Plan. This facility allows users to view the full contents of each planning file including maps and drawings of each proposed development. Again this has proven to be a very popular facility for members of the public and means that people can now monitor applications from their own desktop.

Forward Planning

The County Development Plan for 2005-2011 was formally made on the 28th February 2005. It was prepared over a two year period in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

It is a six year development plan that sets out as concisely as possible, Limerick County Council's planning policy for that period.

Local Area Plans were also adopted for Cappamore, Caherdavin and the Southern Environs

Enforcement

The main purpose of the Enforcement Section is to secure compliance with the Planning Code in accordance with the statutory requirements under the Planning and Development Act 2000

During 2005 the Council continued to take a very active role in this area. A total number of 340 cases came to the Council's attention in 2005 and this resulted in 212 warning letters and 128 Enforcement Notices being issued. The Council also brought 22 successful prosecutions for unauthorised developments.



Unauthorised Extension before enforcement action



Unauthorised extension after enforcement action

Registration of Quarries

Section 261 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 was enacted on 28th April 2004. This section required all quarries operating in County Limerick, except those that received planning permission in the last five years to register with Limerick County Council before 27th April 2005.

The Council received 53 applications for registration and these applications are under consideration at the present time.

Information Seminars

In March at the Southcourt Hotel, Raheen, an Information Seminar for agents and architects was held with 120 people attending. The objective of the seminar was to explain to agents the main changes in the County Development Plan adopted in February 2005.

Also in September 2005 a seminar on Rural House Design was held for agents in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Dooradoyle. Speakers at this seminar included Mr Mike Shanahan, Architect and Co-Author of the Cork Rural Design Guide and Cllr. Alan Coleman Cork County Council.

Agents were also briefed at this seminar in relation to the high numbers of applications being invalidated (approx 25% during 2005). Agents were appraised on the most common reasons for the invalidation of applications and advised on the resource and time implications both to the applicant and the Planning Authority and the importance of making every effort to ensure that applications are formulated in accordance with the regulations prior to submission.



County Development Plan

Finger Post Licences

Under the Planning and Development Regulations a Finger Post Licence is required if you wish to place or maintain a finger post sign on a public roadway. The purpose of the licence is to regulate the amount of directional signs being erected on our public roads.

During the year 6 new applications were received and 48 existing applications renewed.

Conservation

By the end of 2005 there were 1,421 entries in the Record of Protected Structures maintained by this planning authority. During the course of the year under review the County Development Plan 2005 - 2011, in which Architectural Conservation Areas were established for the first time, was adopted. Over 25 different places, around significant sites such as Adare Manor, and in many of our towns and villages, are protected from insensitive development by this measure.

There were 90 applications for assistance under the provisions of the Conservation Grant Scheme for Protected Structures. 62 Certificates of Provisional Approval were issued and, by the end of the year a total of 52 payments, with a combined value in excess of €380,000, had been made. This exceeded the previous year's disbursement by over €220,000. Sums awarded ranged from €900 to augment grant aid being received from another grant awarding authority to €25,000 for major conservation works on the roof of a parish church.



Works in progress on terraced thatched house at Kilfinny

Housing Strategy

Part V Social and Affordable Housing

Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), establishes the provision of social and affordable housing as an objective of the planning legislation and introduces a mechanism whereby the developers of residential development may be required either to cede land at its existing use value to the planning authority for the purposes of social and affordable housing, or to make alternative provision equivalent in monetary terms to the value of the land that the planning authority would otherwise have received.

In accordance with the 2000 Act a Housing Strategy was prepared by the Council in October 2001, which established a requirement that 20% of eligible sites which are zoned for residential development, be set aside for the development of social and affordable housing.

In 2005, five agreements were finalised with developers under Part V, which will provide for the provision of 10 affordable houses, and the payment of financial contributions of €968,134 in lieu of the provision of social and affordable housing on site. A number of other agreements are at the final stages of negotiation. This is an area of activity that has expanded significantly over the past two years and should yield a significant number of units in the coming years.

Work is ongoing at the present time on the revision of the Housing Strategy to take account of the changing circumstances in the housing market and some revisions to legislation since the adoption of the current strategy in 2001.

Heritage

In relation Heritage issues in the county 2005 saw the adoption of the Heritage Plan which is a series of actions designed to raise awareness of and preserve the best features of Limerick's varied heritage. The Golden Mile competition in cooperation with the Roads section also had a successful year with its aim of promoting the value of local features and the attractiveness of bye roads of the county.

The Heritage Officer also continued to fulfill his role as support to the Planning Section when dealing with heritage and environmental issues.

Site Assessors

The process for assessing trial holes for one off rural houses for percolation has been revised in light of EPA guidelines published in 2004. In June 2005 a list of private site assessors were approved. Applicants for one off rural houses can now select an assessor from this approved list if they wish to have soil suitability for percolation assessed.

Development Contribution Scheme 2003

- Monies Received in 2005 in accordance with Development Contribution Scheme 2003: €8,665,585
- Actual Monies Outstanding in 2005 in accordance with Development Contributions Scheme 2003: €3,348,347

Development Fund Allocations 2003 Scheme

Category	Allocated 2005
Matching Funding	€m
Transportation	€1.15m
Playgrounds	€0.060m
Water Services	€0.276m
Small Towns & Villages Initiatives	€0.5m
Enterprise Support	€0.06m
Broadband	€0.01m
Tourism Projects	€0.06m
Development Support	
Transportation Supports	€1.5m
Sewerage Treatment Plant Upgrades	€0.08m
Water Supply Upgrades	€0.159m
Other Supports	
Community Sports & Cultural Grants	€0.50m
Public Parks	€0.150m
Taking in Charge of Estates	€0.3m
Community Radio	€0.03m
TOTAL	€4.835M

SERVICE INDICATORS

P: Planning and Building Control

P1 Planning Applications – Decision Making

Individual Houses	2005	2004
- No. of applications decided	1033	1480
- No. of decisions which were decided within 8 weeks	358	-
- No. of decisions which required the submission of further information	596	-
- No. of decisions where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34 (9) of the Planning and Development Act 2000	69	-
- Average length of time taken (in days) to decide a case where further information was sought	80	79.48
- % of grants	77.44	79.59
- % of refusals	22.56	20.41
- % of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without variations, by An Bord Pleanála	82.86	-
- % of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanála	17.14	30
 New Housing Development	 2005	 2004
- No. of applications decided	144	107
- No. of decisions which were decided within 8 weeks	37	-
- No. of decisions which required the submission of further information	103	-
- No. of decisions where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34(9) of the Planning and Development Act 2000	6	-
- Average length of time taken (in days) to decide a case where further information was sought	82	77.54
- % of grants	77.08	82.24
- % of refusals	22.92	17.76
- % of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without variations, by An Bod Pleanála	73.33	-
- % of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanála	26.67	62.50
 Other: Not Requiring EIA	 2005	 2004
- No. of applications decided	1125	829
- No. of decisions which were decided within 8 weeks	763	-
- No. of decisions which required the submission of further information	319	-
- No. of decisions where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34(9) of the Planning and Development Act 2000.	19	-
- Average length of time taken (in days) to decide a case where further information was sought	82	77.29
- % of grants	94.76	95.54
- % of refusals	5.24	4.46
- % of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without variations, by An Bord Pleanála	71.43	-
- % of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanála	28.57	32

Other: Requiring EIA	2005	2004
- No. of applications decided	29	15
- No. of decisions which were decided within 8 weeks	12	-
- No. of decisions which required the submission of further information	14	-
- No. of decisions where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34 (9) of the Planning And Development Act 2000	3	-
- Average length of time taken (in days) to decide a case where further information was sought	90	83.43
- % of grants	93.10	86.67
- % of refusals	6.90	13.33
- % of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without, variations, by An Bord Pleanála	100	-
- % of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanála	0	0
 P2 Planning Enforcement	 2005	 2004
- Total number of cases subject to complaints that are investigated	340	349
- Total number of cases subject to complaints that are dismissed	88	80
- Total number of cases subject to complaints that were resolved through negotiations	237	-
- Number of enforcement procedures taken through warning letters	212	221
- Number of enforcement procedures taken through enforcement notices	128	95
- Number of prosecutions	15	21
 P3 Public Opening Hours		
- Average number of opening hours per week <i>The Planning Desk at County Hall is open for 30 hours per week, which includes lunchtime opening. Planning files can also be accessed at Newcastle West and Kilmallock Area Offices during normal office hours ie. 35 hours per week</i>	33.33	33.33
 P4 Consultations		
- Number of pre-planning consultation meetings held	520	-
- Average length of time (in days) from request for consultation with local authority planner to actual formal meeting for pre-planning consultation <i>A difficulty has arisen due to the manner in which information was being input to the preplanning database, which renders the results received inaccurate. It has therefore been necessary to revert to a manual process for the calculation of this indicator. New procedures have been put in place to ensure that the IS pre-planning system is operating effectively from the start of 2006</i>	19	19*(a)
<i>*(a) The indicator in this case is not based on the full year but on the 6 month period July to December 2004</i>		
 P5 Buildings inspected as a percentage of		
- New Buildings notified to the local Authority <i>*(b) This result has been estimated on the basis of actual outturns for the period January to June 2004</i>	22.55	41.32*(b)

AREA OFFICE DEVELOPMENT

BRUFF/CASTLECONNELL

The Bruff/Castleconnell Electoral Area encompasses the urban areas of Caherdavin, Raheen/Dooradoyle and Castletroy/Annacotty plus the rural areas of north-east Limerick. It serves a population of 67,000 people from two offices in Annacotty and Croom. A total staff compliment of 118 managed an overall budget of just over €9m.

Bruff

- The Bruff Area Committee has seven members and held 11 area committee meetings during the year
- The budget managed for the Bruff Area was €2.7m
- Progress continued on the preparation of the Bruff Local Area Plan which should go on public display in 2006.
- Works carried out during the year included the following:

Traffic Calming ramps were installed at Kylefa Estate, Croom. The total cost was €7,900 and included 2 Ramps, signposting and road marking.

An amenity area was developed from a derelict area at the rear of The Grotto in Patrickswell at a total cost of €25,000. The work included levelling, topsoiling, grass seeding and the erection of boundary fences.



Amenity Area at The Grotto, Patrickswell

Castleconnell

- The Castleconnell Area Committee has seven members and held TEN area committee meetings during the year
- The budget managed for the Castleconnell Area was €6.3m.
- Progress continued on the provision of the Neighbourhood Park in Castletroy.
- Works carried out during the year included the following:

2.5km of 100mm-diameter distribution watermain was laid along the N24 between Pallasgreen and Dromkeen. This work is a continuation of works in 2004 to connect the Caherconlish Water Supply Scheme with the Pallasgreen Water Supply Scheme. The final 0.8-km section of this watermain will be laid in 2006.

2.2km of 100mm-diameter distribution watermain was laid at Carrigarreely, Caherconlish to replace the existing 50mm diameter watermain which was undersized and had been prone to frequent bursts.

1.8km of Regional Road (R513) was widened and reconstructed between Herbertstown and Ballinamona Cross at a total cost of €578,000. This work, which was funded under an EU Co-Finance Scheme, included land acquisition, surface water drainage, road widening and reconstruction.



The Clare Glens, Murroe

KILMALLOCK



A section of Kilmallock Town Wall viewed from outside the town. Still largely intact, it forms the western boundary of the town to this day. The building of the Town Walls was fully complete by the end of the 13th Century

Kilmallock Area Committee

During 2005 Kilmallock Area Committee held 7 meetings, and in July Cllr. Pat McAuliffe assumed the Chair for a period of 1 year.

At this meeting also the Committee approved plans for the new Kilmallock Machinery Yard at Gotoon, Kilmallock. It is hoped that construction will start on this early in 2006.

Housing

- Kilmallock Area Office continued to maintain an increasing Housing Stock.
- On 12th December, 14 new Social Housing units were allocated at Church Glen, Ballylanders.
- A scheme for the installation of Central Heating in Council houses was commenced in the Kilmallock Area. This will continue in 2006 and 2007.
- Work commenced on the construction of 12 Social Housing units comprising 6 family type and 6 small type houses at Knocklong.
- Under the Voluntary Housing Scheme an extra 10 units were provided at Dawn Court, Athlacca.
- Construction commenced on 8 additional units in Hospital, and on the provision of a scheme at the Old Garda Barracks in Bruff.

Roads

In the Kilmallock Roads Area the following works were carried out:

- Regional Road Reconstruction - 22,800m² at a cost of €333,000.
- Regional Road Surface Dressing - 46,715 m² at a cost of €126,312.
- Regional Road Specific Improvement - €30,000 (Advance works for replacement of Knocklong railway bridge).
- Regional Road Discretionary Improvement - €74,000 (footpaths and drainage).
- Local Roads Reconstruction - 118,096 m² at a cost of €1,549,850.
- Local Roads Surface Dressing - 180,515 m² at a cost of €433,236.
- Local Roads Specific Improvements - €20,000 (sightline improvement at Barna Cross, Galbally)
- Local Roads Discretionary Improvements - €118,800 (footpaths and drainage).

In addition a sum of €300,000 was allocated from the Development Fund for footpaths in Ballylanders, Knocklong and Kilmallock and drainage in Granagh. 4.00 km of the N20 was also overlaid with asphalt.

Water Services

- A total of 116 new Public Watermain connections were carried out by the Kilmallock Water Services Staff
- Refurbished Filter Beds were commissioned at Jamestown, Kilmallock.
- A new well was drilled for Herbertstown Water Supply.
- Exploration works were carried out for a new water source for Hospital.



Footpath Reconstruction in Kilmallock

NEWCASTLE WEST



The Square, Newcastle West

The Newcastle West Area Office provides a wide range of engineering and administrative services to the Newcastle Electoral Area. These include road maintenance, housing, water services, and maintenance of burial grounds, libraries, courthouses, planning clinics, and motor tax facility.

Area Committee Meetings

Twelve Area Committee Meetings were held during 2005, and Members received eight deputations. Liam Galvin M.C.C. is the current chairman.

Roads

Expenditure on maintenance and improvement works in Newcastle West Roads Area was €5.1m.

- Under E.U. Co-Financed Programme, major surfacing works were carried out on the R.522 Newcastle West to Castlemahon Cross.
- Strengthening works were carried out on forestry roads at Sugarhill, Newcastle West
- Works commenced on the new Cork Road Bridge in November, 2005.
- Major improvement works were carried out on the N.21 at South Quay, Newcastle West, including surfacing, drainage and resurfacing works.

Housing

The area is responsible for maintenance of approximately 550 Local Authority houses.

- Central Heating was installed in seventy houses in the area.
- Refurbishment works were carried out on 9 Houses in Sharwood Estate.
- Following a series of meetings between Council Staff, Local Councillors and Residents, agreement was reached on regeneration proposals for Sharwood/Castleview Estates.
- An allocation of €2.5m was approved by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government for the Scheme.

Water Services

In addition to general maintenance a number of Small Capital Schemes were completed during the year:

- Water Main replacement at Killarney Road, Abbeyfeale and between Mountcollins and Tournafulla
- Facilities for alum sludge treatment were installed at Newcastle West Water Treatment Plant.
- Improvement works at the stores at Newcastle West Sewerage Treatment Plant.

- A new water reservoir was completed in Carrickerry. A total of 114 new water connections to public mains were made in the area.

Burial Grounds

Drainage works were carried out at Feenagh and Calvary Burial Grounds.

Planning

Planning Clinics were held weekly in the office and the service was availed of by a large number of customers. The Plan Map system was also widely used.

Derelict Sites

The programme to eliminate derelict sites in the area was continued. Improvement work was carried out on approximately 32 derelict sites following communication with the owners.

Motor Tax

The Motor Tax service in Newcastle West continued to grow.

A total of €5,952,094 was collected and 34,323 transactions were carried out. This represents in excess of 25% of the overall business of Motor Tax.

Machinery Yard Depot

The Machinery Yard Section continued its policy to modernise its Plant and Equipment. During the year the following items were procured:

- a new 26,000 Kg Tipper Lorry
- two new rollers and
- a new mini Velocity Patching unit.

The Machinery Yard has also acquired fifteen high specification long wheelbase vans for use by the Council's Water Services Section.

Environmental

Demesne Woodland Park

The improvement programme was continued at the Demesne utilising grants from the Forest Service, and an allocation under the Access for All Programme.

- A new entrance was constructed at Cullinagh and a new footpath from the N.21 to the entrance was constructed.
- Four new disability friendly accesses were provided.
- New tarmacadam footpaths were constructed within the Demesne, totalling 1km in length.
- Approximately 7,000 additional trees were planted.

In September, 2005, the Society of Irish Foresters in association with the Heritage Council selected the Demesne as one of the four locations in the country for a guided walk during National Heritage week. The walk was held on 4th September and was a great success.

A Danish Forestry Study Tour also visited the Demesne in September, 2005 and were very impressed with the quality of the planting and the overall layout of the Park.



Handing over of 2 New Rollers to Machinery Yard Staff in Newcastle West

RATHKEALE

The Rathkeale Office provides a range of engineering and administrative services to the Rathkeale area, that include Road Maintenance and re-construction, Housing, Sanitary, Water, and customer services.

Area Committee Meetings

The Rathkeale Area Committee met fourteen times during 2005, with Meetings held in Rathkeale, Gortadroma, Pallaskenry, Cappagh, Shanagolden, and County Hall, Dooradoyle.

New Rathkeale Area Headquarters

In late December, 2005, the Part 8 Statutory Notice, required under the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, for the proposed New Rathkeale Area Office and Refurbished Carnegie Library was placed on display, with the closing date for submissions being the 1st February, 2006. It is anticipated construction works will commence in June/July 2006. The projected completion date for this project is September 2007.

Roads

Substantial improvement works were undertaken during the year to the Area roads network, with expenditure in excess of €4.8m. These works included road strengthening, surface dressing, macadam overlays, roadway lining, new and replacement signage, roadway drainage, and general roads maintenance.

The following works were commenced under the Rathkeale Electoral Area Development Fund Allocation:

- Upgrading and provision of new Public Lighting at Enniscoush, Rathkeale, and Shanagolden Village.
- Footpath replacement and improvements at Rathkeale, Shanagolden, and Ballingarry.

Macadam overlay works between Rathkeale/Askeaton (R518), 4 Roads and St. Francis' Ave., Askeaton, Shanagolden/Foynes, Bruff Line, Croagh Village, Kildimo/Old Kildimo, Marian Ave. Glin, Main Street Ballingarry, and Holycross Rathkeale, were also completed.

Major safety improvement works were undertaken during the year at Killeery Pier, with grant assistance received from the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources.

Housing

The following is a breakdown of Houses completed/purchased/commenced during 2005 in the Rathkeale Area:

New Houses completed:

Ballingarry:	13
Pallaskenry:	7

Houses Purchased:

Askeaton:	2
Castletown, Ballyagran:	1
Croom:	1

New Houses Commenced/ under Construction:

Askeaton:	10
Ballyhahill:	5
Croom:	4
Rathkeale:	20
Pallaskenry:	1 Rural Cottage
Rathkeale:	1 Rural Cottage

A sum of €200,000 was allocated for the maintenance of, and improvements to the Rathkeale Area's existing housing stock, and halting site. Central Heating was provided to 39 local authority dwellings in the Rathkeale Housing Area during the year, under the Council's Central Heating Programme.

Water Services

A number of Small Capital Schemes were completed and include the following:

- Water Main replacement at Loghill, and Kilcoleman.
- Provision of New Water Source/borehole at Banogue – Phase 1.
- Installation of new Alum Tank at Adare Water Treatment Plant.

Sewerage Scheme: The new Sewerage Treatment Plant serving Croagh Village was completed and commissioned.

Burial Ground Improvement Works : Improvement works were carried out at Kilcornan Burial Ground that included construction of a new entrance and roadway, gates, provision of topsoil fill to the extension.

Operation and maintenance of water schemes in the Rathkeale area, including the County's largest Water Supply Scheme at Aughinish, that operates to ISO standard.

Environmental Services

Recycling facilities are located in the following towns and villages:

- Askeaton – Arena Car Park
- Ballingarry
- Foynes
- Loughill
- Pallaskenry – Copsewood College
- Rathkeale – New Line
- Shanagolden

All these facilities provide for the re-cycling of glass, bottles and jars, food and drink cans. Additionally, some of these centres provide facilities for plastic bottles, newspapers and magazines.

Local Environmental Improvement Grants were awarded in the Rathkeale Area to: Glin Development Association, Glin Homes for the Elderly, St. Fergus' National School Glin, Loughill Community Development Association, and Cappagh, Rathkeale, Pallaskenry, Foynes & District Community Councils. Glin Development Association won the 2005 Better Environment Award for the "Adopt a Bank Scheme".

Ballyhahill and Gerald Griffin National Schools took part in the Schools Challenge Better Environment Awards – entering a school garden and a sculpture respectively. Ballyhahill National School were awarded the "green flag".

Financial and administrative support was given to the Foynes Irish Coffee Festival for the "Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Blue" parade involving students from St. Senan's National School, Foynes.

Lifeguard Service

Temporary Lifeguards and pier attendant were employed at both Glin and Kiltteery Piers during the 2005 summer bathing period.

Planning

Planning Clinic services, by appointment, operate from the Rathkeale Office on the first Tuesday of each month, between 10.00.a.m. and 12.00. noon. This service continues to be a valuable and much availed of local service for members of the public.

Foynes Irish Coffee Festival

The Rathkeale Office again provided assistance to the Irish Coffee Festival Committee in 2005, putting in place the necessary arrangements for road closures, litter control, Civil Defence, casual trading licences etc.



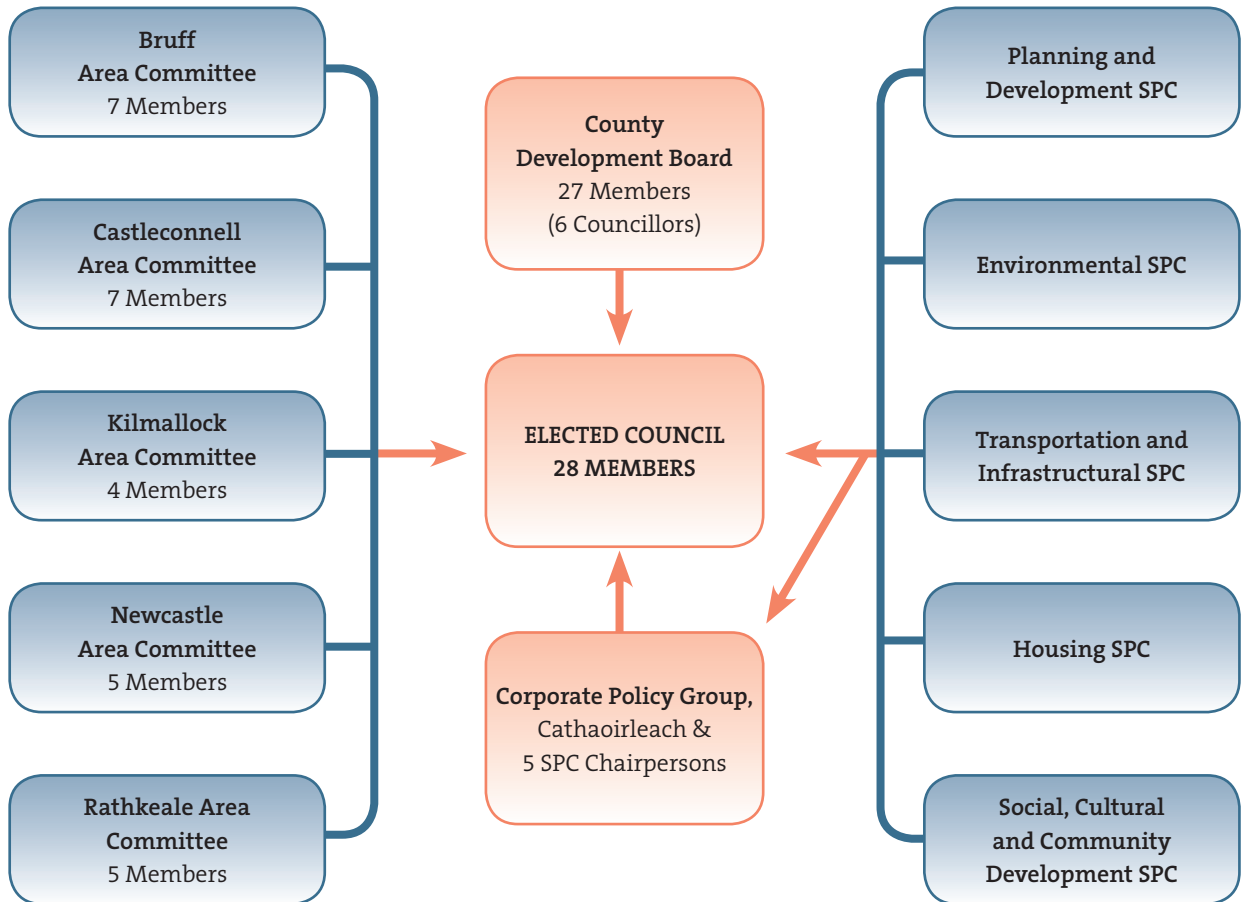
Installation of Safety Barriers at Kiltteery Pier



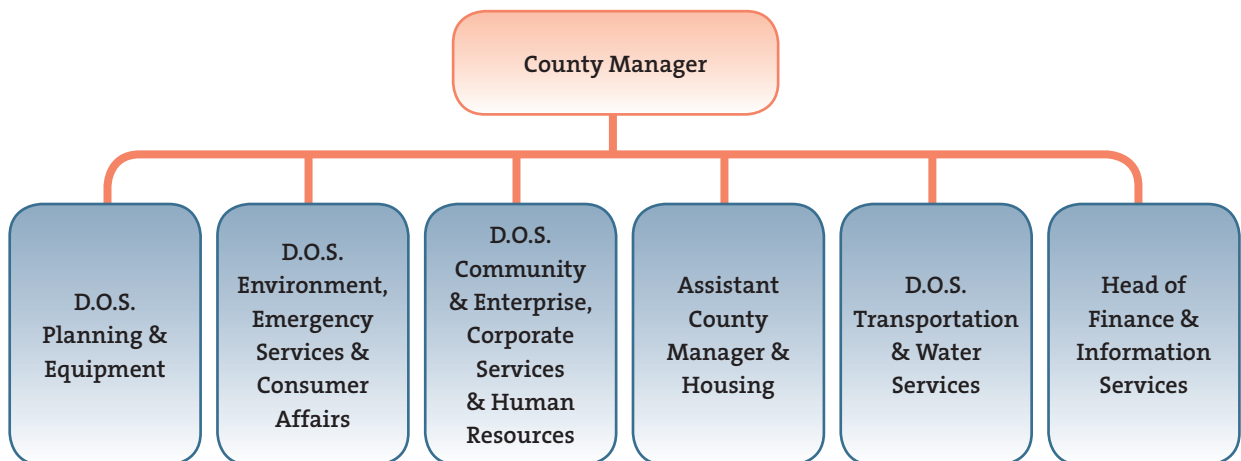
Glin Castle

LIMERICK COUNTY COUNCIL STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATIONAL CHART

ELECTED STRUCTURE



EXECUTIVE STRUCTURE



D.O.S (Director of Services)

CONTACT DETAILS FOR LIMERICK COUNTY COUNCIL

Address: County Hall, Dooradoyle, Co. Limerick.

Opening Hours: 9.30 a.m. - 4.30 p.m.

Tel. 061 - 496000 **Fax.** 061 - 496001

Website www.lcc.ie

E-mail secretar@limerickcoco.ie

Section	Telephone	Fax	Area Offices	Telephone	Fax:
Accounts Payable	061 496266	061 496013	Newcastle West Opening Hours:	069 – 62100	069 62861 9.30 a.m. – 4.30 p.m.
Arts Office	061 496498	061 496009	Motor Taxation Newcastle West Opening Hours:	069 – 62100	069 62861 9.30 a.m. - 3.30 pm
Building Control	061 496387	061 496014	Rathkeale Opening Hours:	069 – 64129	069 63188 9.30 a.m. – 4.30 p.m.
Civil Defence	061 496431	061 496014	Kilmallock Opening Hours:	063 – 98019	063 98599 9.30 a.m. – 4.30 p.m.
Community & Enterprise	061 496454	061 496011	Croom Opening Hours:	061 – 397212	061 397438 9.30 a.m. – 4.30 p.m.
Environment	061 496264	061 496008	Anacotty Opening Hours:	061 – 331544	061 336738 9.30 a.m. – 4.30 p.m.
Fire	061 496270	061 496007	Mid-West National Road Design Office Mungret Opening Hours:	061 227382	061 226259 9.30 a.m. – 4.30 p.m.
General Administration/ Higher Ed. Grants	061 496291	061 496001			
Hackney	061 496261	061 496005			
Housing	061 496293	061 496012			
Housing Loans	061 496466	061 496001			
Human Resources	061 496331	061 496004			
Rates/Water Charges	061 496360	061 496001			
Roads	061 496233	061 496005			
Water Services	061 496326	061 496010			
Planning Opening Hours:	061 496347	061 496006 9.30 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.			
Cash Office Opening Hours:	9.30 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.				
Motor Taxation Lower Mallow St., Limerick Opening Hours:	061 316444	061 318483 9.30 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.			

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF LIMERICK COUNTY COUNCIL 2005

County Manager	Ned Gleeson
Assistant County Manager	Pat O'Connor
Director of Environment, Emergency Services & Consumer Affairs	Tom Enright
Director of Transportation & Water Services	Paul Crowe
Director of Community & Enterprise, Corporate Services & Human Resources	Gerry Behan
Director of Planning & Development	Jimmy Feane
Head of Finance and Information Systems	Oliver Killeen
County Secretary/SEO Corporate Services	Anne Haugh
County Librarian	Damien Brady
Senior Engineer, Environment, Emergency Services & Consumer Affairs	Tom Tarpey
Senior Engineer, Transportation & Infrastructure	Pat O'Neill
Senior Engineer, Regional Road Design Office	Tim Fitzgerald
Senior Engineer, Water Services	Donal Brennan
Senior Engineer, Housing	Gerard Naughton
Senior Executive Officer, Housing	Mary Fogarty
Senior Executive Officer, Planning & Development	Christy O'Connor
Senior Executive Officer, Business Re-Engineering	Noreen Fahey
Senior Executive Officer, Human Resources	Pat Fitzgerald
Senior Executive Officer, Projects	Mary Ryan
Head of Information Systems	Jim Dore
Senior Planner	Gerry Sheeran
Chief Fire Officer	Carmel Kirby
Veterinary Inspector	John McCarthy
Arts Officer	Joan MacKernan
Environmental Awareness Officer	Pauline McDonagh
Chief Technician	Michael O'Leary
Freedom of Information Officer	Eugene Griffin
Partnership Facilitator	Pat Mulcahy
Civil Defence Officer	Jos Kirby
Staff Support Officer/Equality Officer	Caroline O'Kane

Limerick County Council

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