



GUIDING LIMERICK THROUGH COVID-19

Transforming a challenge
into an opportunity



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae **Luimnigh**

Limerick City
& County Council

ATLANTIC EDGE
LIMERICK
EUROPEAN EMBRACE

Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has transformed the way we live our lives.

As we move through the re-opening phases set out by Government, we have explored how we can harness this crisis to bring about positive change in Limerick.

Throughout Summer 2020, we propose to re-allocate space, pedestrianise and animate some city centre streets to boost footfall and aid our economic recovery from this pandemic.

Whilst it is too early to say what the post Covid-19 normal will look like, we believe this opportunity will give Limerick city centre and its towns the edge, by making them desirable, safe and fun places to live, work, shop and visit.

The Government Roadmap has started to reopen Irish society and on June 29th Phase 3 will mark a major step in this recovery by allowing cafés and restaurants to become fully operational, providing services to customers on their premises in adherence to national guidelines around social distancing. We want to help and facilitate this progression by reallocating some public space. By facilitating some road closures in our city centre, providing parklets or widening some of our footpaths and by animating some of our public spaces, we can engage all our communities, people of all ages and abilities.

This means allowing footpath widening and family activities to take place during the summer months. Phase 3 allows for unrestricted travel within the country. Through a major marketing promotion, we will market Limerick to attract domestic visitors to holiday in our city and county as we exploit its position as a central gateway to the Wild Atlantic Way.

During our recent consultation, we have listened to our community who have made representations to us in relation to how we allocate road space. The Governments recovery plan is being accelerated to re-open our economy and compromises have to be made between competing needs. We have allocated additional space to accommodate space for pedestrians and cyclists and we will provide street furniture to allow for social distancing. This will be done while opening our city for business and supporting access as we wait for public transport to get back to full capacity.

We are introducing an advisory speed limit of 25km/h in the core city centre and in county towns to make it safer and we will bring forward by-laws for a permanent 30km/h speed limit in our city centre. We will facilitate safe segregated cycle routes in the city to encourage family and novice cyclists to come out and get some exercise.

Our small businesses and retailers have been particularly affected by Covid 19. We are facilitating retailers across Limerick to showcase their online offering and adapt to the new retail environment by offering key supports including the Business Re-Start Grant and establishing and marketing a virtual marketplace [Limerick.ie/Shop](https://limerick.ie/Shop). We will programme a series of family friendly events to help increase footfall and social activity in the city. We ask that everyone supports our retailers and hospitality at this difficult time to protect Limerick jobs.

The potential for urban spaces to support growth in the evening and night-time economy while observing social distancing is important – not just in terms of outside seating areas for bars and restaurants, but also events.

We will work with entertainment providers to host outdoor movies, drive in concerts and evening street performances. We are engaging with the local community through an open call for activity and event proposals and will work in partnership with stakeholders and in accordance with national guideline requirements. Any agreed activities or events will be managed sensitively and carefully to preserve acceptable crowd behaviour and respect public health guidelines.

Limerick will get through this current public health crisis. We will continue to engage with the public and interested groups as we move forward and we look forward to future engagement as we continue to develop Limerick.

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to review our recent plan and for their submissions.

This plan will be reviewed at the end of August 2020.



Cllr Michael Sheahan
*Mayor Of The City And
County Of Limerick*



Dr Pat Daly
*Chief Executive,
Limerick City and County
Council*

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Changing Our Public Spaces

Prior to the COVID19 pandemic, approximately 20,000 cars passed through the heart of the city on a daily basis. The 2016 Census listed the transport modal split for Limerick as outlined in the table below. The lockdown has had a major impact on all modes of transport and the journey to be undertaken on our Road Map to Recovery will result in changes to these figures as we get back to normal ways over the coming months. Based on our own and data from other urban centres on modal shift, we are making some adjustments to facilitate changes to the way we will travel around and use our city centre over the next couple of months.

	Mode of Travel*	Likely Immediate Future Change**
Public Transport	10%	80% Capacity Reduction
Car	60%	Approx. 30% reduction
Walking	15%	Target 100% increase
Cycling	2.8%	Target 300% increase
Other	12.2%	No Change

*Based on CSO 2016 Data for Limerick

**Assumptions by National Transport Authority for Interim Mobility Measures in Dublin City

Limerick City and County Council working with the National Transport Authority (NTA) is preparing a new transport strategy for the greater Limerick Metropolitan Area that will consider the future investment in our transport system up to the year 2040. The Transport Strategy is due to commence the public consultation phase shortly. The implementation plan within the strategy will identify strategic sustainable transport and cycling corridors into the city from the suburbs creating greater connectivity between the city centre, residential and employment areas in the city. We would like to bring forward some of these schemes which are currently being planned on a pilot basis where regulations permit. These changes will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and it

is intended that they will apply until the end of August. It is intended to apply for planning permission for the following projects: LIT to City Centre Cycle Route; Quinn's Cross to Raheen Roundabout Cycle Route; Shannon Bridge to Bedford Row Cycle Route.

1. Street Changes

a. We propose to reassign road space for public use. The capacity of certain roads to accommodate additional space for pedestrian and cyclists, street furniture and social distancing is being examined. The provision of soft landscaping and seating could be a feature of the new space. A variety of different options are being proposed. (See Map). To facilitate Social Distancing the following streets are scheduled for temporary pedestrianisation: -

Catherine Street:

- From its junction at Glentworth St. to its junction at Cecil St
- Proposed to close the street to vehicular access from 11am on Sunday to 2am on Monday
- The Council will consider applications for a limited number of buildouts of footpaths to facilitate parklets.
- Closures may be facilitated on Friday or Saturday evenings for organised events.
- Provide a dedicated "Click and Collect" 15 Minute parking space

Denmark Street – Upper Denmark Street – Robert Street:

- Denmark St to be closed to vehicular access north of St. Michael's Church Car Park from 6pm to 2am on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.
- Street closure to extend to Upper Denmark St. and to Robert St. to its junction with Carr St.
- Access to public car parks will be maintained.

Changing Our Public Spaces

Howley's Quay:

- a. Proposed to close the quay to vehicular access from 11am Sunday until 2am on Monday.

Nicholas Street

- a. From its junction with Newgate Lane to its junction with Castle Street
- b. Street to be closed to vehicular access while King John's Castle is open (July/August) from 11am until 6pm daily, subject to access being provided to residents and traders during these hours.
- c. Manned barriers will be put in place to ensure access for residents and businesses during these hours.

These measures will require the removal of some parking, local footpath widening, partial road closures and temporary traffic management.

b. Reassignment of Road Space; O'Connell Street – footpath buildouts at cafes/shops.

We also propose advancing the following schemes, which will improve comfort and safety for cyclists commuting from the suburbs. We are proposing to designate a number of these routes where vehicular traffic volumes will be reduced by restricting vehicle access to these roads.

In this regard, we propose the following short-term measures on a temporary basis;

1. Extension of the Condell Road cycle paths by provision of a cycle route on the city bound lane across Shannon Bridge onto Bishops Quay down to Howley's Quay to its junction with Bedford Row on a 24/7 basis. We intend to advance the design of this cycle route through the planning process over the coming months.

2. O'Callaghan Strand- Restrict traffic by closing inbound access off the Ennis Road end to reduce traffic volume along this riverside walk and form a link to the Condell Road cycle paths.
3. South Circular Road to Upper Henry Street- Restrict traffic by closing inbound access at Ballinacurra Road to reduce commuting traffic on the route and provide an advisory speed limit of 25KPH.
4. Old Dublin Road - Access to the Old Dublin Road between Park Point and Parkway Roundabout to be restricted to inbound traffic. This will reduce commuting traffic on this route and through Rhebogoe thus creating a safer walking and cycling environment and provide for an advisory speed limit of 25KPH and linkage to the riverside cycle/walking route. This creates a link between the cycle path from Annacotty to the SMARTER Travel route from UL to Clare Street.

Other measures we are proposing include:

- Advance the design of a new cycle route from Limerick Institute of Technology to the city centre through the Part VIII planning process, which is intended to be lodged in July.
- Mungret to City Centre Cycle Route - Advance the design of a cycle route between Quinn's Cross in Mungret and Raheen Roundabout through the planning process which is intended to be lodged within the Summer months.
- Recovery of road markings and increased maintenance on existing cycle tracks.
- Provide 'Click and Collect' 15 minute parking space on Catherine Street, Roches Street and William Street.

Changing Our Public Spaces

2. Speed Limits

The introduction of a 25KPH advisory speed limit is being provided for in the core city centre and our county towns. Traffic reduction will allow pedestrians and cyclists a greater degree of safety to social distance at certain pinch points, and this will be monitored with a view to a permanent speed limit reduction.

3. Signage

Installation of physical distancing reminder signage on footpaths.

4. Bicycle Parking

We propose to increase cycle parking in the city centre to facilitate the increased volume of cyclists. In this regard, we propose;

- Michael Street - Designate an area of the current car park on Michael Street to cycle parking
- Pery Square - Designate a number of the on-street car parking outside the People's Park to cycle parking.
- Other locations are currently being identified where additional bike parking will be provided to facilitate increases in bicycle use.

5. Pedestrian Crossings

Pedestrian crossings have been optimised in the city to provide for increased pedestrian priority.

6. Licence System for Street Animation

There is a range of mechanisms by which structures on a public road can be installed, such as the introduction of on-street parklets/buildouts outside premises, as outlined below;

a. Street Furniture – Businesses may wish to place tables and chairs on a public street to facilitate social distancing. In order to meet health and safety requirements, an application for a street furniture licence will be necessary (details are available at Limerick.ie/Council). Once the requirements of the application are met (subject to consultation with Development Control, Fire and Rescue Services and An Garda Síochána), a licence will be issued as quickly as possible.

b. Public Space Licences – public space licences are granted upon an application to use one of the designated public spaces in the city.

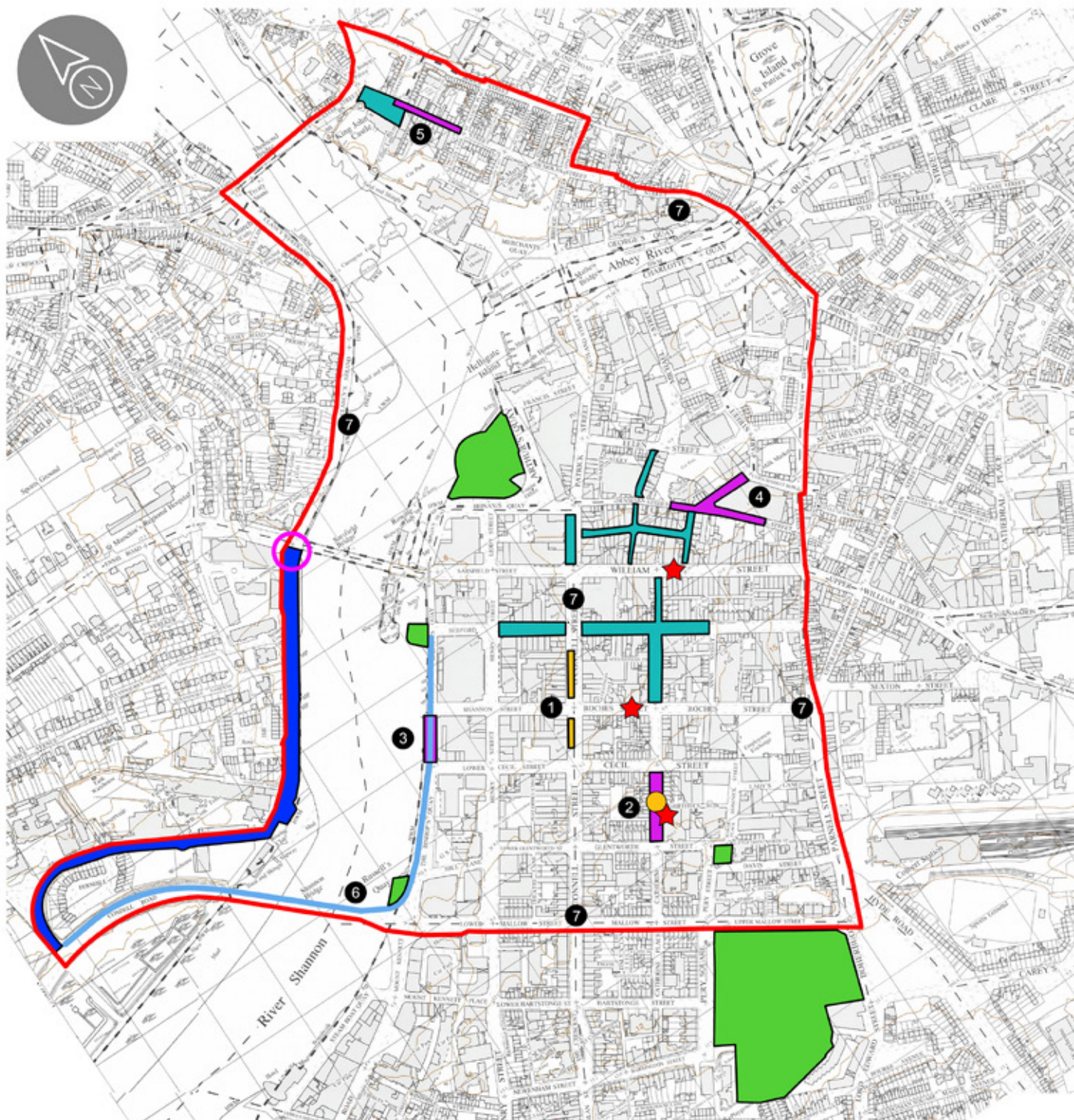
For further details contact Planning Department on **061-556000**

7. Street Cleaning

A process of intensive street cleaning has begun with a number of streets already complete. This included extensive deep clean with power washers and road cleaning machinery in the city centre.

8. Park and Walk

Identify and open suitable Park and Walk sites adjacent to the city.



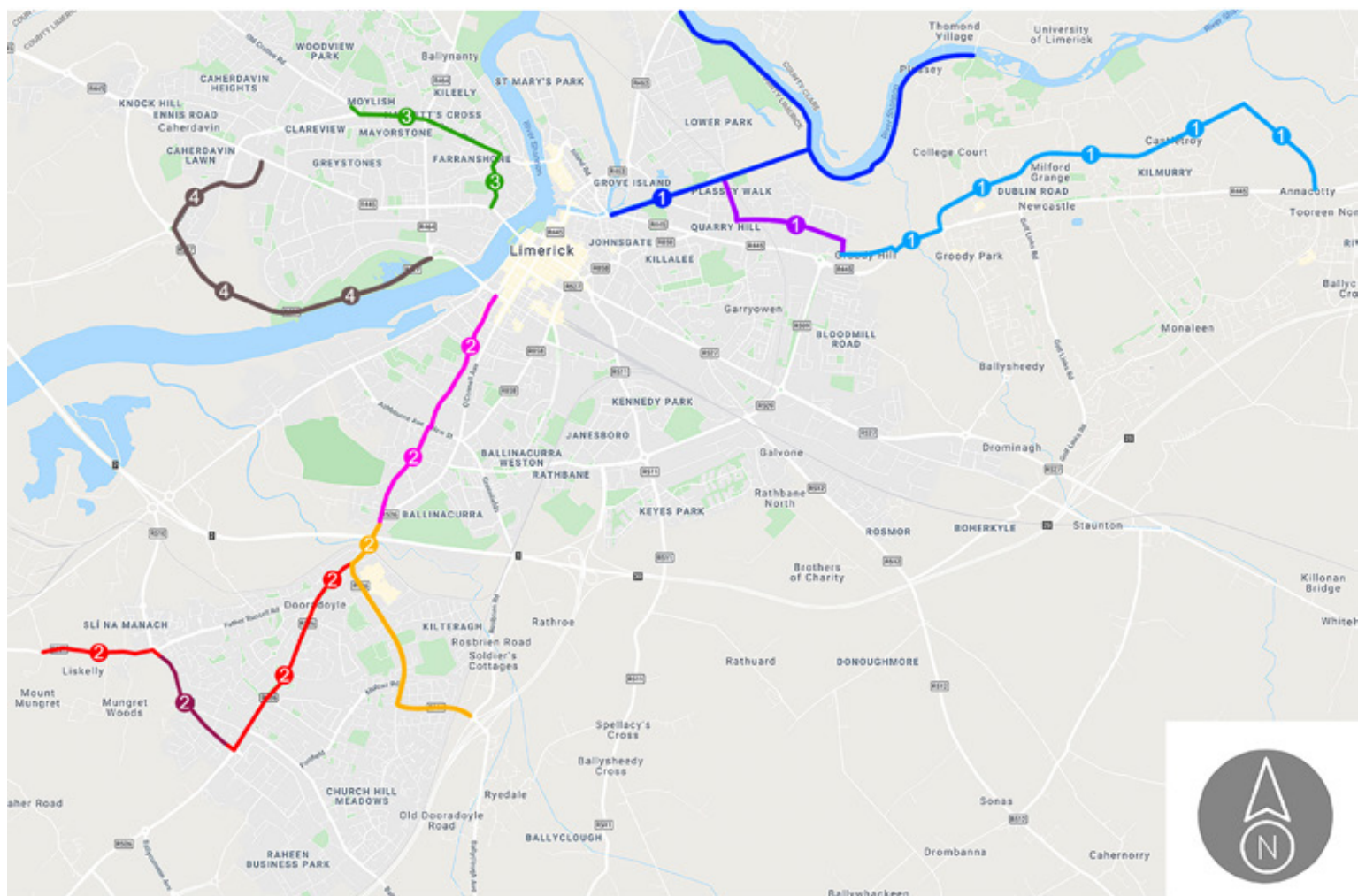
Legend:

- 1 Footpath widening to facilitate street furniture at various locations in the City Centre.
- 2 Pedestrianisation of Catherine Street between Cecil Street & Glentworth Street from Sunday 11AM to Monday 2AM. Closures may be facilitated on Friday or Saturday evenings for organised events.
- 3 Pedestrianisation of Howley's Quay from Sunday 11AM to Monday 2AM.
- 4 Pedestrianisation of Denmark Street (Part), Upper Denmark Street (Part) and Robert Street from 6PM to 2AM on Thursday, Friday & Saturday.

- 5 Supervised pedestrianisation from 11AM of Nicholas Street from Newgate Lane to Castle Street.
- 6 Cycle lane on Condell Road extended across Shannon Bridge to Bedford Row.
- 7 Reduction in speed limit from 50 & 30 km/h to 25 km/h (advisory).

- City Centre Public Parks & Public Spaces
- Existing Pedestrian/ Pedestrian Friendly Streets
- Proposed Footpath Widening / Parklet (Number and location to be agreed)
- Proposed Footpath Widening / Parklet (Number and location to be agreed)
- Proposed Pedestrian Streets
- Proposed Designated Bicycle Parking
- Proposed Restricted Car Zone (O'Callaghan's Strand to Condell Road)
- Proposed Restricted Access Point (Junction of O'Callaghan's Strand & Ennis Road)
- Proposed 25 km/h Zone
- Proposed Cycle Path
- Indicative Click & Collect Parking Locations

Map 1: City Centre Proposals



- 1**
 - Annacotty to Rhebogue Road - On Road Cycle Facilities
 - Rhebogue Road to Park Canal - Restricted Car Zone
 - Existing Cycle Path
- 2**
 - Raheen to The Crescent SC - On Road Cycle Facilities
 - Proposed Cycle Path
 - Existing Cycle Path
 - South Circular Road to Henry Street - Traffic Calming (Restricted Car Zone) to improve the road for cyclists and walking
- 3**
 - Part 8 Planning Application - LIT to Ennis Road
- 4**
 - Existing Cycle Path

Map 2: Cycle routes from Suburbs to City Centre

The Milk Market

Measures have been put in place to provide for a safe re-opening of the historical market and to provide a link between the Market and the shopping area of the city.



Our County Towns and Villages

Limerick City and County Council staff in area offices across the county are working with local stakeholders in our towns and villages to examine measures to make more pedestrian friendly changes and to provide spaces for local open air events across Summer 2020.

A €5 million investment programme to totally upgrade the Great Southern Greenway surface has just been announced.



Culture & Place-Making

Limerick Tourism, Culture and Arts Recovery Programme 2020

Working in partnership with local creative and community groups, and supporting local businesses in line with the National COVID-19 Guidelines we will facilitate a staggered escalation of Animation to Activity as follows:

Animations

from 4th of July taking place throughout July and August

- **3D Street Art & Games:** Work with artists specialising in 3D street art to create giant games in urban areas commencing with Arthur's Quay Park.
- **Pop up street spectacle:** Enjoy the element of surprise with large-scale street installations and fun costumed characters on the streets of Limerick during key summer weekends. Creating unexpected fun encounters which promote a renewed curiosity in our urban centre.
- **The Panoramic Wheel** will return to Arthurs Quay Park in July and August Lighting up the cityscape and providing viewers with stunning vistas across Limerick.

Activities

from 20th of July (Subject to National Guidelines and Restrictions)

- **Dolans Live at the Drive In:** 24th – 26th July welcome Gavin James and Hermitage Green to perform a unique series of outdoor concerts in drive-in experience in the heart of Limerick.
- **Summer in the City** August Bank Holiday Weekend with pop up street spectacle and colourful characters along the banks of the River Shannon.
- **Outdoor wellbeing and fitness activities** in popular local parks and public spaces working with local fitness experts and teachers.

Augmented Activities

from 14th August (All subject to National Guidelines and Restrictions)

- **The Pop Up Movie Club:** Enjoy a family friendly day out with outdoor cinema screenings in the beautiful surrounds of the Peoples Park on August 22nd.

Animate Your Street Outreach Programme

We want to encourage our communities to use urban public spaces safely and support family friendly activities this summer. In support of this a special fund will open June 25th calling for Expressions of Interest from local groups, companies, creatives and communities who would like to host activities to support the Limerick mobility plan and animate new and existing pedestrianised locations in Limerick. Applicants will be asked to indicate dates and location for proposed activities. All applications will have to demonstrate how their proposals support the mobility plan while meeting with COVID-19 National Guidelines and Restrictions. Further information is available on Limerick.ie from the 25th of June.

Business Supports

Limerick City and County Council and the Local Enterprise Office are providing a number of measures to assist business through this difficult time.

- 1. The Business Restart Grant** - Available to businesses with a turnover of less than €5m and employing less than 50 people the payments will be equivalent to the rates bill of the business in 2019, with a minimum payment of €2,000 and a maximum of €10,000.
- 2. Rates Deferral** - The Council will be deferring rates payments for the most immediately impacted businesses primarily in the retail, hospitality, leisure and childcare sectors for a period of three months until the end of May.
- 3. COVID-19 Business Loans** - The Local Enterprise Offices (LEO) is administering the COVID-19 Business Loan from Microfinance Ireland to support small businesses.
- 4. Trading Online Voucher Scheme** - The expanded Trading Online Voucher Scheme helps small businesses with up to 10 employees to trade online. Grants of up to €2,500 are available.
- 5. Mentoring Advice** - The LEO Mentor Programme will provide clients with an experienced mentor free of charge to identify solutions to areas of exposure within their business.
- 6. LEO Financial Supports Grants** – Grants for new and established businesses and potential start-ups that meet eligibility criteria are available including;
 - a. Business Priming Grants
 - b. Business Expansion Grants
 - c. Feasibility Study Grants
 - d. Technical Assistance for Micro-Exporters Grant
- 7. LEAN for Micro** - LEO clients can avail of consultancy support with a LEAN Expert, who will work with the company to introduce lean principles.
- 8. SHOP LIMERICK** - Limerick.ie/Shop provides an opportunity for retailers to display their online offering and trade on-line with the development of this new one-stop platform on the local authority's digital platform
- 9. Marketing promotion** for local business initiatives like Lean on Me, which allows customers buy vouchers to use at a later date, has also been provided to promote economic recovery.
- 10. Training and Webinars** - LEO has moved its free training programmes online, covering areas such as cash management and leading your business through COVID-19.
- 11. Small and Medium Enterprise Support Scheme** - This rates rebate scheme is paid as a financial support to occupiers of commercial properties with annual rates bills up to and including €25,000. The payment is set at 9% of the annual cost of commercial rates for the rated occupier up to a maximum of €1000
- 12. Business & Retail Incentive Scheme** - The Council is offering incentives to encourage new Business and Retail within the core city centre, and the centre of towns and villages. The grant is a contribution towards fit out costs subject to a maximum of 50% relief of the annual rates liability in year 1 and subject to a maximum of 25% in year 2.
- 13. Tourism Sector Support Scheme** – Aimed at businesses with a rates liability in excess of €25,000, it pays a financial support of up to 4% to occupiers of commercial properties, directly linked to the tourism and hospitality Sector.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS OF THESE BUSINESS SUPPORTS PLEASE VISIT

[Limerick.ie/business](https://limerick.ie/business)

Implementation Plan

During this time of anxiety and business interruption Limerick City and County Council recognises the need to listen to and take account of the needs of all citizens, businesses

and street users. We will endeavour to engage in effective communication by way of all media platforms and simple clear signage.

Summary	Phase 2 8th June – 29th June	Phase 3 29th June – 20th July	Phase 4 20th July
Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 25 kph speed limit• Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Animations• Changes in Catherine St., Nicholas St., Denmark St, Robert St., O'Connell St.,• Lodge Part VIII LIT to City Centre Cycle Route	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Programmed Activities
Business / City Centre Traders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Business supports• 25 kph speed limit• Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Animations• Changes in Catherine St., Nicholas St., Denmark St, Robert St., O'Connell St.,	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Programmed Activities



LEAN ON ME

Lean on Me is a Limerick volunteer led initiative that uses smart technology to connect customers who want to support their favourite local business.

The web portal allows customers to pay for a voucher for their chosen local shop/retailer during the Covid 19 crisis which is collected at a later date after the business reopens.

www.leanonme.eu

To give feedback on the proposals and changes set out in this document please email: ecdev@limerick.ie

SHOP LIMERICK, SAVE LIVELIHOODS.

Limerick's retailers need us now, more than ever.

Limerick.ie/Shop lets you connect with, browse and buy from businesses across Limerick.

Please support your local community - buy a local business voucher, find out about neighbourhood food deliveries or order a take-out from your favourite restaurant.

Follow **@limerick.ie** for unmissable offers and updates.



#ShopLimerick #EmbraceLimerick



STEP 1

Go online at
Limerick.ie/shop



STEP 2

Browse and buy from your favourite homegrown
Limerick retailers



STEP 3

Share your support using
#ShopLimerick and
#EmbraceLimerick



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