



Clár Éire Ildánach
Creative Ireland
Programme



Rialtas Áitiúil Éireann
Local Government Ireland



Culture & Creativity Strategy

2023–2027



Clare

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Forewords

Clare County Council, through the Culture and Creativity Team has worked effectively during the last five years to promote and support the concept of creativity and cultural expression in our local communities, towns and villages. The last strategy delivered on its vision “to ensure the people of Clare discover and have access to cultural expression through creativity”. It is heartening to see that a total of 317 projects were supported over the course of that strategy and feedback from public consultation has been both positive and encouraging. As a Local Authority we endeavour to ensure that there is cultural vibrancy in the places where we live and work, and that these places retain our artists and creative practitioners, who are vital to the work of the Creative Ireland Programme.

Culture 2025 is the national policy framework that defines the scope and sets the direction of Government policy for the whole cultural sector. It recognises that the Creative Ireland Programme will continue to be the primary implementation framework for the promotion and strengthening of culture and creativity throughout Ireland. Project 2040 further lists Arts, Culture and Heritage as elements which support quality of life. It is appropriate therefore that, as the closest arm of the state to our citizens, we are well placed to

engage directly with our communities and continue the work of the *Creative Communities* pillar into 2023 and beyond.

The new vision for this strategy “to embed culture and creativity into the activities, sustainability and growth of communities” is a continuum of the previous one. It encompasses further ambition in this area, seeking to create a bedrock upon which communities will flourish and grow. It is ambitious in its stated aim and will be the guiding principle for the Culture and Creativity Team up to 2027. I wish to acknowledge the success of the Culture and Creativity Team to date and look forward to another five years of growth in the creative sector in Clare.

Pat Dowling, Chief Executive
Clare County Council



The Magic of the Sea, featuring pupils from Fanore National School
Photograph: Rosaleen Marion

It is a great pleasure to see that the Creative Ireland Programme will continue in Clare for another five years. It is widely acknowledged that we have a vibrant arts and creative sector. Challenges over the period of the pandemic have de-stabilized some aspects of this but there is hope that the next few years will allow for some normality to return to our lives and our communities. I believe that the Clare Culture and Creativity Strategy will play a key role in supporting this resurgence. The core proposition of the national Creative Ireland Programme — that “participation in cultural activity drives personal and collective creativity with significant implications for individual and societal wellbeing and achievement” is needed more now than ever before.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the cross-Directorate Culture and Creativity Team and the Social Development Director who have worked consistently to deliver on the previous strategy. This new strategy prioritises a number of areas — enriching our communities; celebrating a sense of place and belonging; promoting creative climate action and biodiversity; and strengthening and developing Creative Ireland’s impact in Clare. I believe these are appropriate and responsive priorities to where we are presently in our daily lives and where we need to go.

I look forward to observing how the next five years of this strategy unfolds and how it will impact positively on our communities.

Cllr Tony O’Brien, Cathaoirleach
Clare County Council.

1 Creative Ireland 2023–2027

The Creative Ireland Programme is an all-of-government initiative committed to enhancing access to, engagement with, and enjoyment of Ireland’s culture and creativity. Within the broad range of available definitions, creativity is considered as *a set of innate abilities and learned skills; the capacity of individuals and organisations to transcend accepted ideas and norms and by drawing on imagination to create new ideas that bring additional value to human activity.*

The vision of the Creative Ireland Programme 2023–2027 is to mainstream creativity in the life of the nation so that individually and collectively, in our personal lives and in our institutions, we can realise our full creative potential thereby promoting individual, community and national wellbeing.

The Creative Ireland Programme will deliver through collaboration and partnership promoting understanding and appreciation of the value of creativity in all its forms — whether through the arts, culture, heritage, or technology.

The Creative Ireland Programme will prioritise its work around five aspects for the period 2023–2027:

1. Creative Youth
2. Creative Communities
3. Creative Industries
4. Creative Health and Wellbeing
5. Creative Climate Action and Sustainability

Through the Creative Ireland Programme, *Creative Communities* supports the partnership between the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, and Ireland’s local authorities. This partnership enables citizens and communities to explore their culture and creativity at local level and, where appropriate, leverage that creativity to strengthen wellbeing, advance social cohesion and support economic development.

Creative Communities is also innovative in deploying creativity to achieve greater integration across targeted policy priorities. This has delivered new creative engagement initiatives in relation to for example children and young people, older persons, climate action, and local economies. Individuals’ and communities’ perception about the role and value of culture and creativity as central to our wellbeing in its broadest sense is being enhanced.

The opportunity embraced within the Clare Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023–2027 is to support people’s participation, inclusion and expression within communities, and further strengthen local creative economies.



Quinn Abbey, Co. Clare.
Photograph: AirSwing Media,
courtesy of Clare Tourism

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Culture and Creativity in County Clare

Creative Ireland began in 2017 as an all-government culture and well-being programme with the aim of inspiring and transforming people, places and communities through creativity. This strategy marks the beginning of an additional five-year investment in the programme at a national and local level.

The purpose of the Creative Ireland Programme is to target the well-being of citizens and communities and ensure that people across Ireland have the opportunity to realise their creative potential. In Clare, the Creative Ireland Programme is delivered collaboratively by a Culture and Creativity Team of representatives from the Arts, Heritage, Rural and Community Development, Enterprise, Libraries, Archives and Museum sections of Clare County Council. Through the activities of the Culture and Creativity Team, creative engagement became a guiding principle in the last strategy and is encapsulated in this new strategy also. Cross-Directorate representation on the Culture and Creativity Team is one of the strengths of the Clare Programme. It has allowed unique and innovative programmes to be developed and has made partnerships possible between sections of our Local Authority, contributing to successful community engagement.

It is acknowledged that the first five years of the Creative Ireland Programme in Clare has contributed to a strong foundation in arts and cultural activities. Culture and community thrived with music sessions, theatre productions, heritage talks and exhibitions throughout the county. Guided by the vision “to ensure the people of Clare discover and have access to cultural expression through creative activity”, the Culture and Creativity Team worked together to develop programmes that were built on the well-established cultural and arts community in Clare, delivering projects that reached new communities and grew in scale year on year.

Some successful examples of the last five years programme include:

Cultural Companions is a cross-Directorate initiative of Clare Arts Office, Clare Rural and Community Development Office and the Clare Older People's Council. Membership has grown from 83 companions in 2019 to 241 in 2022. It is a social network for Clare's older citizens who are interested in arts, culture, volunteering and meeting new people. With Cultural Companions, individuals can gather together to enjoy the thriving social and arts scene in Clare in the company of others with similar interests.

Reading Your Local Landscape is a joint initiative of Limerick & Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB) and the Heritage Office of Clare County Council. It is a training course aimed at empowering local community members to discover, recognise, promote and conserve their rich unique local heritage. Following the success of a pilot initiative in Scariff, the course travelled to Miltown Malbay, Kilrush, Killaloe, Carron and Kilkishen with over 75 community members participating. In addition, new courses were developed that included training in iCan Software, Writing for the Web and Media Expression. Reading Your Local Landscape has been highly successful in its objectives and is now an initiative of the County Clare Heritage Plan 2017–2023. The projects and findings were shared with the community at award nights, showcase evenings and on the Clare Heritage website. It also inspired additional projects such as the production of brochures, guides, trails and films. Participants progressed on to Further Education and Training & Higher Education and Training courses and some have acquired employment.

Recovery of a Famine Village was a joint initiative of Clare Museum and Clare County Archives Department. It is a multi-disciplinary approach to research and heritage that ran from 2019 to 2022. Community groups and individuals were invited to participate in an archaeological dig located at the site of a famine-era house, led by a professional archaeologist. Discoveries included a shoe and a coin dated to the mid to early 1800s. The project allowed individuals to experience historical discovery and heritage in a meaningful way.

Creative Souls of Clare podcast is a series of online conversations led by Ruiari McKiernan, with a truly diverse group of Clare-based writers, poets, musicians, playwrights and craftspeople. Topics ranged from creative practice, influences and inspirations, to the importance of community, and their sense of connection to the county. The podcast has received international recognition and regularly has tens of thousands of listeners worldwide.

East Clare Reels on Wheels saw musicians Róisín Ní Ghallógláigh and Clíodhna Donnellan bring a series of unique tailored musical performances to gardens and outdoor spaces of people's homes. The performances were offered to people who were unable to attend live performances in venues. Each performance was tailored to the audience's interests and needs. The result was a series of very intimate concerts that established deep connections between the performers and the audiences as they were welcomed into people's homes.

Sparks Youth Film Festival is a film festival for young people that occurs annually in East Clare. The festival provides a platform for expression for young people through the medium of film. Students participate in workshops where they learn all aspects of film production. The films produced at the festival are then shown at a special screening in Scariff Library. They have been frequent winners at Fresh Film Festival, the national youth film festival.

In response to community engagement in the programme, Creative Ireland Clare also conducted a community call-out annually over the last five years which resulted in over 150 community projects being funded to date. The projects encompassed all aspects of arts, heritage and culture including musical performances, theatre productions, radio production, creative writing, dance and filmmaking.

In order to advance our understanding of what we need to achieve in the next five years we have reviewed the broader socio-economic context, with a view to guiding the focus of this strategy. In this context, it is acknowledged that Clare is renowned for its natural heritage with the rugged landscape of The Burren, a coastline that boasts the dramatic Cliffs of Moher, and the mudflats of the Shannon Estuary. It is noted for its agriculture, tourism and beauty, while also being a fast-growing area of economic development; Ennis and Shannon towns are key areas of development on the West coast that attract major industrial investment for the Western region.

In the 2022 Census, the population of Clare was 127,419. This reflected an increase of 7.2% since 2016, making it the second fastest growing county in Munster. Despite this increase, some areas of rural Clare are experiencing a decline in population, with the majority of population growth occurring in Ennis and the South East of the county. The present spike in population resulting from the war in Ukraine in some towns and villages in the county is for now, regarded as temporary in nature. In addition to the widening gap in population figures between urban and rural, there is also a difference in age ranges; rural Clare contains 40% of the county's population aged 65+ and only 26% of the county's young (<15 yrs). Latest figures indicate that 25% of jobs in Clare exist in rural communities and are highly dependent on the traditional sectors such as agriculture, forestry and fishing. These figures also indicate increased instances of isolation amongst Clare's older population, long commutes for skilled workers and lack of family supports in rural areas.

Reflecting on the changing socio-economic basis of the county there is an abundance of strategies that now prioritize elements of well-being

and social cohesion. There has been renewed focus at local, regional and national level on policy and investment in Clare for the purposes of revitalization, community wellbeing and economic development. This focus recognises the role that culture and creativity plays in the successful growth of communities.

Within the Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES), the Southern Regional Assembly (SRA) seeks to map areas of culture, heritage and tourism of regional significance and scale for economic development. It also seeks to promote the region with a strategy that has an international focus building on heritage and culture, and sees diversity, language, culture and heritage enhancement as core to improving well-being and quality of life.

Clare County Council was the first Local Authority to establish a Rural Development Directorate. *The Clare Rural Development Strategy 2026* calls for a new approach that “identifies opportunities for economic, social and cultural growth”. In addition, Clare County Council, through the development of the Ennis 2040 Economic and Spatial Strategy, has prioritized the attraction of inward investment, spatial planning, and the preservation of heritage and the establishment of cultural facilities for community enhancement.

The Draft Clare County Development Plan 2023–2029 has also stated a vision that makes County Clare a “national leader in climate action, creativity, culture, heritage, tourism and environmental management”. Clare County Council’s own Corporate Plan 2019–2024 further references culture not only in areas such as tourism, but as contributing to social inclusion, regeneration, quality of life, climate action and economic development.

Within the cultural sector, the Clare Arts development plan *Flourish 2019–2023* acknowledges “the unique creativity that we have in our communities as we endeavour to strengthen our collective creative capacity”. The Library Development Plan *Charting the Future 2 2016–2021* specifies as a strategic objective “the need to support cultural and community expression”.

Lastly, in the 2016–2022 Local Economic and Community Plan — there is a call for a society that is culturally rich with strong identities amid themes of quality of life, health and wellbeing.

It is evident from this, that investing in culture and creativity at local level within communities has become an integral part of public policy and is recognized as a contributing factor in achieving growth and sustainability. It reaffirms Creative Ireland’s own principles and values and further strengthens our aims and objectives as set out for the next five years.

The procedure for developing this strategy included some reflection on the Clare Culture and Creativity Strategy 2018–2022; what was learned and whether or not objectives were met. In the lifetime of the strategy, Creative Ireland Clare funded 317 projects that were either initiatives of the Culture and Creativity Team, Cruinniú na nÓg, or funded through the annual Project Award fund, with a total investment of €854,823. Projects covered a broad spectrum of genres including film, music, research, genealogy, architecture, Irish language, street art, folklore, oral heritage, dance, spoken word, biodiversity, literature and creative development.

In preparation for this new strategy a public consultation was carried out by means of a survey and a series of focus groups. When asked “Have you/your community been supported by Clare’s Creative Ireland programme”, 83% responded “yes” and 17% responded “no”. A further query on “how important the Creative Ireland Programme in Clare is to an individual or organization” — 60% of respondents said “extremely important” or “very important” and 17% said “somewhat important”. When asked how well did the current strategy deliver on its priorities, one survey respondent commented “The strategy ensured accessible opportunities to culture based programmes and projects for all and offered a highly collaborative approach in its work.”

The Creative Ireland Programme has reached hundreds of individuals in County Clare, young and old, in the past five years. Reflecting on what the Creative Ireland Programme meant to them, the following comments were recorded:

“The cultural vision presented by Clare County Council has enabled initiatives such as East Clare Reels On Wheels to bring music and song to people on their own doorsteps. Creative Clare’s commitment to community well-being through the arts, their support and encouragement behind all forms of cultural heritage and traditions has allowed us to bring art to people who may not have otherwise been able to access it.”

Dr Róisín Ní Ghallógláigh
— Project Award recipient

“The people of County Clare have an innate appreciation for its cultural heritage. This is reflected in the different adaptations of what culture means though the Creative Ireland Projects. In the Archives for example, an immense appreciation for Clare’s historical sources left by our predecessors is evident. There exists a constant search to find the narrative of our past in order to have an understanding of our present.”

Rene Franklin
— Clare County Archivist

“The support of Creative Ireland has helped Music Generation Clare bring music education to the children and young people of Clare in recent years. Because of this, we have witnessed an enormous jump in creativity through music and in particular a larger number of young learners engaging in performance music education. It has helped a new generation of young musicians create their own unique approach to music from the ground up.”

Pádraig Rynne
— MDO of Music Generation Clare.

“Curating Cruinniú na nÓg for County Clare has been a wonderful and inspirational experience. This Creative Ireland Clare programme gives children and young people the opportunity

to express themselves through a specifically curated programme of cultural and creative activities. The initiative creates an opportunity for artists and creative people to showcase their talent and inspires and encourages young people to enjoy, experience and participate in a range of creative activities, opportunities and events.”

Sheila Quinn
— Curator, Cruinniú na nÓg

“Reading the Local Landscape was designed to empower local community members to discover, recognise, promote and conserve their rich unique local heritage. We are delighted and privileged to be engaging with Clare County Council on these joint initiatives which help us engage our learners including the most difficult to reach learners. Culture is a wonderful means of engaging and motivating learners and we employ it any and all chances we get. By far the initiative’s biggest achievement has been the feelings of happiness and contentedness emanating from connecting people, place and past to find one’s “Pride of Place” in their own community.”

Margaret Lynch
— Reading the Local Landscape, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board

“The various events which took place with Cultural Companions helped move me completely out of my comfort zone. I was quite isolated pre-covid but being part of Cultural Companions was a complete game changer for me. I so enjoyed our trip to Scatterry Island and met so many interesting people. All of the above has given me the confidence to join many other interesting groups such as crafts, sing-alongs, poetry and book clubs.”

Cultural Companions member

3

The Creative Ireland Vision for Clare

Our vision for Clare’s Culture and Creativity Strategy is to embed culture and creativity into the activities, sustainability and growth of communities.

The objective of the Creative Ireland Programme is to facilitate participation in culture based activities for individuals and groups across all sectors of a community. It recognises and supports the potential for culture and creativity to act as a catalyst for well-being, social cohesion, innovation and growth. *Creative Communities* (Pillar 2) is a key pillar of the Creative Ireland Programme with a strategic focus on collaboration and placing creativity at the centre of public policy. Local Authorities play a leadership role in integration and collaboration across a variety of sectors due to its organisational structure, expertise and links with the community at local level. By utilising Local Authorities to deliver the *Creative Communities* pillar, culture and creativity is integrated into all sectors of a community through policy, practice and participation.

The vision and priorities set out in this strategy will steer the actions of Clare County Council and its Culture and Creativity Team as it meets the objectives of the Creative Ireland Programme and the *Creative Communities* pillar during the next five years. Through public consultation, new directions and areas of need were identified which in turn have shaped the vision and strategic priorities for 2023 onwards.

Clare County Council will build on the strengths that have emerged from the first strategy to achieve its objectives over the next five years. One such strength is the Culture and Creativity Team, which comprises of representatives from the Library, Arts, Heritage, Archives, Museum, Local Enterprise and Community and Rural Development sectors. This cross-Directorate collaboration enables the Culture and Creativity Team to deliver programmes that are strategic and integrated in practice and align with multiple public policies.

It is the intention of the Culture and Creativity Team to continue to nurture and develop the creative capacity of communities across the county through cultural and creative programmes and projects that support well-being, quality of life and resilience. Work will continue in supporting individuals, communities, towns and villages to develop creative projects and programmes that are shaped around their needs and interests and create space for engagement, connection and collaboration. We will build on the solid foundation that has been achieved over the past five years to support longer-term impacts and a legacy that can be sustained into the future and in doing so, promote the value of culture and creativity as a vital part of everyday life.



Lahinch, Co. Clare. **Photograph:** Brian Morrison, courtesy of Clare Tourism

4 How The Creative Ireland Programme Works

Principles and Values of Creative Communities

Creative Communities will continue to support local authorities as a wellbeing strategy through:

- **Policy** — Working in partnership across government supporting local authorities to deliver relevant local, regional, and national policies and priorities;
- **Practice** — Flexible, cross-cutting Culture and Creativity Teams providing an agile and adaptable approach central to the delivery of *Creative Communities* as it addresses locally-relevant priorities;
- **Participation** — Providing more opportunities for people to engage with and enjoy culture and creativity at local level in ways that underpin equality of access; and
- **Partnership** — Between central and local government, and DLR County Council and our local culture and creative sectors.

This approach is based on addressing a shared, strategic agenda while delivering on the challenges and opportunities unique to each local authority area.

The *Creative Communities* partnership will be delivered in line with the following principles and values:

- i. Broaden access to, and participation in, cultural and creative activities locally.
- ii. Use culture and creativity as a catalyst for collaboration and innovation in achieving greater wellbeing, social cohesion, and economic development.
- iii. Strengthen the capacity of local authorities to integrate culture and creativity across place-making, regeneration, renewal, and the development of more vibrant, creative, and sustainable places.
- iv. Investing in culture and creativity to support environmental, social, and economic returns that help deliver local authority agendas — from local and regional, to national and international.
- v. Build on the agility and integrated approach of Culture and Creativity Teams to sustain further delivery of targeted collaborative programmes.



Fidget Feet, Co. Clare.
Photograph: Tom Micks



Fidget Feet, featuring Sara Granda Alvarado, Co. Clare. **Photograph:** Tom Micks

5

The Strategic Priorities for Clare

Our strategic priorities were identified through internal review and public consultation. The purpose of these priorities is to outline the direction that the Creative Ireland Programme in Clare will take in the next five years. They take into account present and future social, economic and environmental factors that influence how we live, work and connect with each other.

1. To Enrich Communities

The Culture and Creativity Team will continue to support culture and creativity in our communities and ensure that this support reflects the changing demographics of the people of Clare.

Creative Communities is the pillar under which local authorities carry out its Creative Ireland Programme. Local Authorities have the capacity and expertise to deliver Creative Ireland projects through a broad spectrum of services, including tourism, health, housing, arts, rural and community development and economic development. Some of our most successful projects in the past five years were developed by two or more sectors of Clare County Council. The success of these programmes is visible in the continued growth of community engagement year on year. The Culture and Creativity Team will continue to work with the principle of cross-Directorate collaboration to ensure future successful engagement with communities.

It is acknowledged that communities in Clare have faced significant challenges since the Creative Ireland Programme commenced in 2017. The impact of world events such as a pandemic, climate disasters and conflict is visible throughout the county. The community response in Clare to these events has demonstrated the need for social connection, community action and integration and the positive effects that this can have when they are supported. The Creative Ireland programme has supported projects that address these needs in the past. Looking to the next five years, the Culture and

Creativity Team will support the needs of our new and evolving communities through projects that are shaped around the needs and interests of our changing demographics.

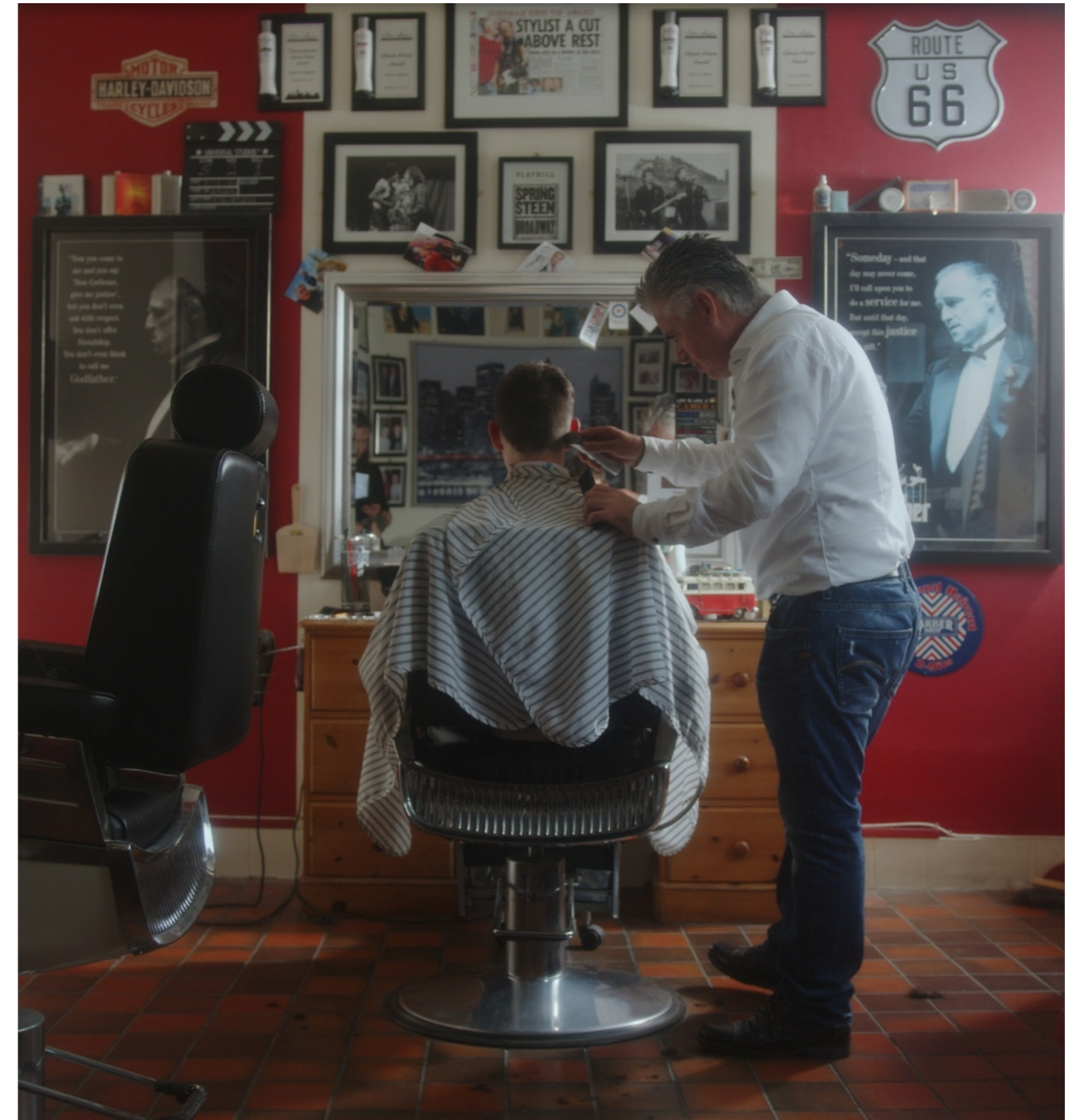
The Culture and Creativity Team will also nurture relationships between multi-disciplinary practitioners and communities. It will provide expertise and leadership to ensure that programmes that are developed are strategic and targeted and have a successful outcome with the greatest possible impact.

2. To Celebrate Sense of Place and Belonging

The Culture and Creativity Team will encourage and inspire community identity and cohesion through cultural awareness and creative expression. A sense of place develops over time. It is a feeling of belonging that comes from stories, history, family links and friendships. It is influenced by our values, personal history, where we have come from and why we are here.

Creative expression can help us to acknowledge, understand and celebrate our sense of place. By publicly expressing our sense of place, we demonstrate to others in our community what it means to be uniquely us and to be part of a community. The Strategy will support projects that promote cultural awareness and the role of creative and cultural expression in identity and belonging.

It is understood that celebrating a community's sense of place helps promote social connectivity and integration. The Culture and Creativity Team will support programmes and projects that enable communities and individuals to connect with their surroundings and each other. It will support projects from diverse disciplines that provide access to the cultural history of the county and encourage people and communities to form identities in connection to this history.



Faces of Clare, featuring Jimi Coughlan, Jimi's Barbershop Kilrush. **Photograph:** Osín McKeogh.

When we acknowledge a community's sense of place, we preserve the cultural history of a place for future generations. The Culture and Creativity Team will support projects that highlight and preserve tangible and intangible heritage, culture and history of Clare. These projects will allow opportunities for creative response to the history and heritage of a place and encourage a deeper understanding of the history of our communities and how they were formed.

3. To Promote Creative Climate Action and Biodiversity

It is recognized that the world is going through a major climate emergency and biodiversity crisis and that plant, animal and marine life is under threat, leading to habitat degradation and loss. It is understood also that the main threats arise from intensification of agriculture, poorly managed commercial forestry, peat extraction, land clearance and development, climate change and invasive alien species. In June 2019, the Government launched the Climate Action Plan to Tackle Climate Breakdown and this clearly identifies the nature and scale of the challenge to move Ireland towards the goal of net zero carbon emissions by 2050. In response to this challenge Clare County Council has adopted a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 -2024 in accordance with the provisions of The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 and the National Adaptation Framework (NAF), 2018. The challenges being presented by climate change are viewed locally as many and varied and range from longer hotter summers, increased rainfall, flooding, rising sea levels and intensified storms in winter.

In County Clare we are experiencing the effects of such climate change on a more frequent basis. Creative Ireland commissioned a report, Engaging the Public on Climate Change through the Cultural and Creative Sectors (2020), describing how the cultural and creative sectors can play an essential role in enabling people to understand, interpret, and engage with many aspects of climate change. "Culture is a powerful conduit for public engagement, with artists, cultural

and creative practitioners historically playing a crucial role in social and political transitions. Many forms of cultural expression seek to address complexity and confront challenges in ways that are provocative and engaging."

Clare's Culture and Creative Strategy 2023–2027 aims to support climate and biodiversity action at the level of communities and citizens through our open call grant scheme. The focus will be on creative responses to issues of climate and biodiversity change with the added emphasis on citizen engagement. It is envisaged that in supporting our own Local Authority's existing climate action Strategy allied to this priority, that a stronger strategic approach will be achieved.

4. To Strengthen and Develop Creative Ireland's Impact in County Clare

The local cross-Directorate Creative Ireland team comprises individuals with skills in many areas of culture and community. This team has been

on a journey for the last five years interpreting the previous strategy and actioning numerous projects and programmes that have contributed to a strong enhancement of both arts and culture in the county.

The open call grant scheme will continue in the new strategy but we will seek to broaden its remit and work with "communities of interest" – those groups in our communities who hold particular interest and skills in specific areas. These will include artists, environmentalists, heritage providers, those involved in the creative industries and in film and animation among others. We are also aware of communities who are less drawn to creative expression for various and often complex reasons. We will endeavour to reach out to these communities and ensure access remains a consistent objective within all projects and programmes developed.

Lessons have also been learned from hearing how other Creative Ireland strategies have performed and we will explore the possibility of funding larger scale projects over the next five years ensuring a level of sustainability is achieved. Ever conscious that this strategy is being drawn up against the backdrop of numerous national and world events which are proving very challenging, it is important that we endeavour if required, to pivot support to our communities in a responsive manner. Lastly, impact can often result in the sum of a number of strategies coming together – both from within our own Local Authority structure and from without. The aim of this strategy is to also support similar focused programmes and projects around Healthy Ireland, Age Friendly, the Arts, Irish language, Library and Heritage Plans.

The Cliffs of Moher, County Clare.
Photograph: AirSwing Media,
courtesy of Clare Tourism



6 Implementation by the Clare Culture and Creativity Team

Clare County Council has a Culture and Creativity Team in place to guide and oversee implementation of this Strategy.

The Culture and Creativity Teams are the cornerstone of *Creative Communities* across all 31 local authorities in Ireland. These teams bring together a significant range and level of expertise and, in many cases, include professionals from architecture, archives, the arts, climate action, community, enterprise and environmental development, heritage, information and communication technologies, Irish language, libraries, spatial planning, tourism and more. This depth of technical expertise affords each local authority a level of insight, resources and delivery experience which few other public or private sector organisations can match.

The role of this team is to:

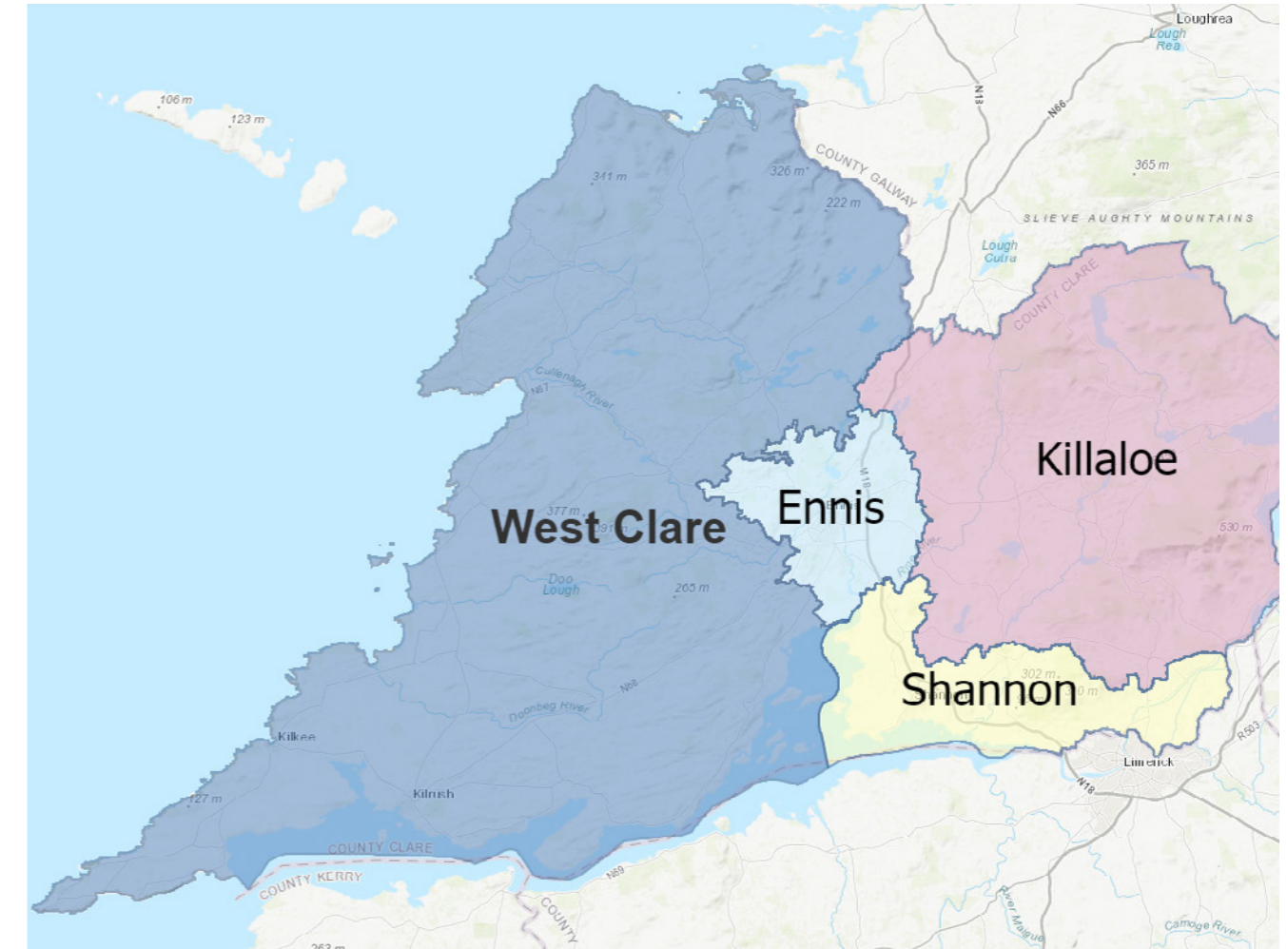
- Provide a collective forum for the ambition of culture and creativity within the local authority;
- Focus on diversity and inclusivity and enable harder to reach communities to participate in cultural and creative activities;
- Build on existing in-house expertise and strategies across areas of wellbeing, social cohesion and economic development to leverage culture and creativity to deliver on targeted local authority agendas;
- Enable a shift in how the cultural and creative sector is valued within and across local authorities and ensure that culture and creativity is embedded across local authority plans, policies and project teams;

- Drive cross-collaborative actions that support change and positive outcomes locally, and potentially between local authorities at regional level; and
- Be innovative and take risks – try new projects and new ways of working.


The delivery of the Strategy is led by the Director of Services for the Social Development Directorate. The members of the Culture and Creativity Team for Clare County Council include Anne Haugh, Director of Service; Helen Walsh, County Librarian; Siobhan Mulcahy, Arts Officer; Congella Maguire, Heritage Officer; John Rattigan, Clare Museum Curator; Sinead Dixon-Slattery, Local Enterprise Office; Niamh O'Donovan, Executive Librarian; Karen Fennessy, Rural and Community Development Office; and Rene Franklin, Clare Archivist.


These structures and processes are a critical success factor that will enable *Creative Communities* to deliver on strategic priorities for Clare.


Map of Clare County Council Area and Municipal Districts 2022



A Government of Ireland Initiative.
Tionscnamh de chuid Rialtas na hÉireann.

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