

## Clare PPN Newsletter May 2020

Dear members,

Welcome to our May 2020 newsletter.

We hope you are keeping safe and well at the start of this most unusual summer.

As Clare and Ireland cautiously prepares to emerge from lockdown, we are at a crossroads. Clare PPN has been seeking views about what the incoming government should prioritise – getting things back to 'normal' or is this a rare opportunity for radical change? There are just two days left to send us your views and potentially win a prize. See below for more on this.

As part of this public conversation, we also commissioned a series of articles – 'Postcards from the Edge' – from people in various sectors and walks of life in Clare about what effect the pandemic and lockdown have had on them and their work and about their hopes and concerns for the future. What they wrote offers some real food for thought – and inspiration for us all.

And read on for news of funding schemes and local supports that are available.

Sarah Clancy, Sarah Ferrigan & William Hederman

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### What do we want? Two days left to submit your views

We've been sent some interesting ideas in response to our call for submissions on how Clare should move forward together in the wake of Covid-19. We will publish a selection of these next week. There are just two days left to send us your views and to be in with a chance to

win one of four €50 vouchers for a restaurant or takeaway in your part of Clare. Send us no more than 350 words, or a video of less than two minutes, to [newsletter@clareppn.ie](mailto:newsletter@clareppn.ie).

Deadline is 5pm this Friday, 29th May.

<http://clareppn.ie/what-do-we-want/>

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## Postcards from the Edge

The first 'postcard' in our series about life in Clare in the shadow of Covid-19 was from **SIOBHAIN LANDY** who co-owns Sweet N Green cafe in Ennis and also works for Aer Lingus at Shannon Airport. After Covid-19, Siobhain wondered will it be the end of over-tourism in big cities and time to promote less crowded places such as Clare and the Mid-West.

<http://clareppn.ie/postcards-from-the-edge-siobhan-landy/>



Next up was **AISLING WHEELER**, a smallholder and food producer in Kilfenora, who describes our collective loss of the skills to produce our own food. She hopes that a silver lining to the coronavirus cloud will be that the new enthusiasm for gardening will translate into more community farms, fewer imports and more people re-learning the skills to produce food.

<http://clareppn.ie/postcards-from-edge-aisling-wheeler/>

Then we heard from **AUNG MARMA**, an asylum-seeker living in Clare, who wrote about the increased risk of Covid-19 infection that comes with living in direct provision and how he stays calm by taking exercise, keeping busy and meditating.

<http://clareppn.ie/postcards-from-the-edge-aung-marma/>

Doonbeg farmer **WILLIE HANRAHAN** described how tough the closure of marts, social distancing and the drop in farm income has been, but said the pandemic has made us appreciate how fragile humanity is and that we can survive without many excesses that had become normal.

<http://clareppn.ie/postcards-from-the-edge-willie-hanrahan/>

Finally, with a book tour, live music tour and new album, **MIKE HANRAHAN** of Stockton's Wing was looking forward to a great year until the pandemic hit. So he took a leap into online performing and created a positive space for himself and others who are sailing into the unknown.

<http://clareppn.ie/postcards-from-the-edge-mike-hanrahan/>

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## Keeping an eye on our mobile phone bills



As we use technology more to stay in touch, it's important to check you are on the best plan with your mobile phone company to avoid unexpected bills. The main phone companies have agreed that, until June 30th, customers can change their plan to one with unlimited internet usage, even if they are currently under contract. Call your mobile phone provider and ask for this change. If they do not offer you a new plan with unlimited data, contact ComReg by calling 01-804 9668, emailing [consumerline@comreg.ie](mailto:consumerline@comreg.ie) or via webchat.

<https://www.comreg.ie/consumer-information/covid-19-information/consumer-commitments/>

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## Financial support available from the Community Welfare Service

Anybody struggling to make ends meet can contact Clare Community Welfare Service (previously known as Community Welfare Officers), by calling (065) 686 92 98 or emailing [clarecwsswi@welfare.ie](mailto:clarecwsswi@welfare.ie). They will send application forms by post. Or you can download application forms for Supplementary Welfare Allowance (SWA 1) from:

[www.gov.ie/en/service/ed9724-supplementary-welfare-allowance-supplements-swa/](http://www.gov.ie/en/service/ed9724-supplementary-welfare-allowance-supplements-swa/)



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## 'Better Ennis' calls for more space for walking and cycling

Better Ennis is a new local community group of health professionals, residents and business owners who live, work and shop in Ennis. They want to improve Ennis as a healthy place to live, to work, to visit. You can read the excellent open letter they have sent to Clare County Council, calling for - among other things - more space for people on foot and on bicycles:

<https://www.activetravel.ie/openletter>

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## Town & Village Renewal Scheme to offer €15m for economic recovery

The Town & Village Renewal Scheme for 2020 will provide €15 million in funding for projects that make rural towns and villages more attractive and sustainable. This year's scheme, announced this week by Minister Michael Ring, will focus on projects that aid the economic and social recovery of towns and villages in response to Covid-19. The closing dates for applications are 3rd July, 2020 for Round 1 and 14th August, 2020 for Round 2. Full details at:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/01125e-town-and-village-renewal-scheme/>

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## 2020 CLÁR Programme to provide €5 million

Also announced this week was the 2020 CLÁR Programme, providing €5 million to help rural communities respond to Covid-19. CLÁR provides funding for small-scale infrastructural projects in rural areas that have suffered population decline. The measures being funded under the 2020 programme are: Schools/Community Safety measures; Community Recreation Areas; Community Wellbeing Supports. The deadline for applications is 28th August, 2020.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/91ba52-clar/>

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## Tips for making your garden wildlife-friendly



Have you a garden, big or small? Are you teaching children at home? There's a great new booklet packed with ideas on simple ways to help the wildlife in your garden. 'Gardening for Biodiversity', by Juanita Browne, is available from Clare County Council. Small changes can bring huge benefits for biodiversity - leaving an "untidy" corner of your garden for nature, creating a wildflower strip around your lawn or leaving roadside verges to grow naturally.

<https://www.clarecoco.ie/services/planning/publications/gardening-for-biodiversity-37876.pdf>

To get a hard copy in the post, email your name and address to [heritage@clarecoco.ie](mailto:heritage@clarecoco.ie)

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## Take part in a county-wide survey of swifts

BirdWatch Ireland, supported by Clare County Council, will conduct a survey of Swifts in Co Clare this summer. Swifts are small migratory birds that visit Ireland each year to nest, typically between May and August. Their future is seriously threatened in Ireland, due primarily to the loss of nesting sites. The good news is there is lots that can be done to halt their decline. To find out how to take part, see:

[http://www.clarecoco.ie/your-council/\[news\]/clare-swift-survey-2020-to-take-place-this-summer.html](http://www.clarecoco.ie/your-council/[news]/clare-swift-survey-2020-to-take-place-this-summer.html)

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## 'Stories from the Waterside' - storytelling competition closes this Sunday



There are just four days left to enter this national storytelling competition, which is open to all, with €4,000 in prizes to be won. 'Stories from the Waterside' / 'Scéalta Ó Thaobh An Uisce' is run by the Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO) in partnership with Inland Fisheries Ireland, Waterways Ireland, The Heritage Council and The Heritage Officers Programme. Entries are welcomed from across the island of Ireland and entries may be submitted in either in English or Irish. Stories of 600 words or less and only original and previously unpublished stories. The closing date is this Sunday, 31st May, 2020.

<http://watersandcommunities.ie/stories-from-the-waterside/>

## Protecting rivers and water bodies— online training starts tomorrow



Starting tomorrow, Thursday 28th May, a free online training programme for six Thursdays at 4pm, will support groups in the Mid-West to engage with their local rivers and other water bodies in terms of water quality, biodiversity, habitat enhancement work and ideas on funding and project planning while building community resilience. The training is aimed at community and voluntary groups, Tidy Town groups, development associations, environmental NGOs, farmers and landowners. To register please email: [roconchuir@lawaters.ie](mailto:roconchuir@lawaters.ie) or call 085 808 3715.

[www.watersandcommunities.ie](http://www.watersandcommunities.ie)

## Library deliveries for cocooning adults

Clare County Library is operating new delivery service of books and other materials to cocooning and housebound adults. This free service is part of Clare County Council's #InThisTogether campaign, which encourages everyone to stay connected, stay active and look after your mental health. Members and non-members of Clare County Library who are cocooning can call one of these five libraries from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm to avail of the service: Ennistymon (066-7071245), Ennis (065-6846353), Kilrush (065-9051504), Scariff (061-922893) and Shannon (061-364266). Non-members can also join the library online at

[www.clarelibrary.ie](http://www.clarelibrary.ie)

## Seniorline Freephone 1800 80 45 91

During the Covid-19 crisis, SeniorLine has continued its broad range of work. Established 22 years ago, SeniorLine is the national peer-to-peer and confidential Freephone service offering a listening ear, befriending and guidance support to older people. Open 365 days a year, from 10am to 10pm, this service is provided by 179 professionally trained older volunteers. Lines are open from 10am to 10pm every day. Freephone 1800 80 45 91. <http://clareppn.ie>