



MEDIA RELEASE

CLARE 'LIVE THE LIFE' TO HELP FESTIVAL AND EVENT ORGANISERS TO RAISE THE BANNER

County Clare, IRELAND, 2nd March 2007 – Festival and cultural event organisers across County Clare will be offered expert advice during an upcoming series of complimentary workshops taking place in Ennis, Scariff and Quilty from March 12-14th 2007. The workshops, entitled '*Developing Festivals and Events*', are being organised and hosted by Clare 'Live the Life' (CANTATA) - a community initiative of Clare County Council, Shannon Development and local tourism interests, supported by the EU INTERREG Programme.

"Experts who have successfully supported festivals and events will be on hand to offer advice on how to organise a local event, or to improve one that already exists", stated Candace Ingram, Executive Planner, Forward Planning Section of Clare County Council.

She continued, "The workshops are designed for all levels of familiarity with the development and promotion of festivals and events. They will offer those in attendance the opportunity to ask questions, with the objective of making Clare the leading County for quality all year round cultural events and festivals."

Keynote speaker will be Maria Moynihan, who was Chief Executive of the Dublin St. Patrick's Day Festival during its period of highly successful development between 2000-2004. Maria is the well-respected Chairperson of the Association of Irish Festivals & Events (AoIFE).

"Other speakers will provide ideas on themes for successful festivals and will emphasise the advantages of festivals working together to provide the visitor with a rich and varied menu of cultural things to see and do when they are here. We also hope to have experts who will offer advice on financial and other supports to help festivals and events", Ms. Ingram said.

Describing the upcoming workshops, Mr. John Quinlivan, Shannon Development Regional Development Manager, Clare said, *"The workshops represent a wonderful opportunity for local communities interested in the development of small-scale festivals to get invaluable advice from a leading expert in the field of organising events. It is particularly vital that our small-scale local festival organisers understand the techniques that will make them more successful."*

The upcoming Clare 'Live the Life' workshops link back to a free seminar and workshop in November 2006, which provided voluntary and community

organisations with information on how to use the worldwide web and e-marketing to allow even remote rural areas to access the new tourism markets.

According to Mr. Quinlivan, *“The November seminar and workshop focussed on the needs of small hoteliers, bed and breakfast and guest house owners, and people running community-based tourist attractions. The events provided ideas on how smaller operators could use the Internet to win new customers and build repeat business whilst sensitively using local resource, such as festivals.”*

“Over the next year, we aim to develop and highlight the lesser-known cultural, social and environmental attractions of the county. We anticipate that this collaborative approach will encourage new visitors and experience the ‘real Clare’ in the 21st Century”, Mr. Quinlivan concluded.

The Clare ‘Live the Life’ workshops will be held at three locations around the County - Armada Hotel, Spanish Point (Monday, 12th March 7.30-10pm); The Old Ground Hotel, Ennis (Tuesday, 13th March 7.30-10pm); and McNamara’s Pub, Scariff (Wednesday, 14th March 7.30-10pm). Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

For further information please contact Clare County Council, Economic Development and Planning Department, Unit 1, Westgate Business Park, Kilrush Road, Ennis, Co. Clare. Telephone 065-6821616 (9am-5pm). Fax 065-6892071. Email planoff@clarecoco.ie.

