



MEDIA RELEASE

COUNTY CLARE POISED TO ATTRACT NICHE TOURISM DURING BUSY FESTIVAL SEASON

County Clare, IRELAND, 19th April 2007 - County Clare is positioning itself to benefit from a portion of the estimated seven million people who are expected to attend nearly 600 festivals and cultural events throughout Ireland during 2007. Clare County Council, through the 'Clare Live the Life' initiative, has arranged a series of complimentary workshops providing professional advice for festival and cultural event organisers across the County.

The upcoming workshops follow last month's successful three-day series of workshops in Ennis, Scariff and Spanish Point. Over 50 promoters of festivals and cultural events throughout Clare heard Maria Moynihan, former CEO of the St. Patrick's Festival in Dublin and current chairperson of AOIFE, advise on the different aspects involved in organising a successful event or festival. Key issues such as acquiring insurance, fundraising and sponsorship were addressed. Ger Kennedy, Rural Resource Development officer and Siobhan King, Shannon Development's Clare Tourism Officer, also made presentations on the various funding opportunities available to event organisers.

Commenting on the upcoming workshops, Candace Ingram, Executive Planner, Forward Planning Section of Clare County Council, "*The second round of workshops based on feedback from the initial series is now scheduled for the April 30th to May 2nd. Topics to be covered include Marketing and PR, as well as the best legal structure for your festival.*"

She continued, "*Well-known festival promoters from around the county will speak about their experiences and pitfalls to avoid. These workshops are a not to be missed event for all festival committees and organizers in County Clare, or indeed anyone with an idea for a festival.*"

"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”, Ms. Ingram added.

The ‘*Developing Festivals and Cultural Events*’ workshops will be held at three locations around the County - Armada Hotel, Spanish Point (30th April 2007); The Old Ground Hotel (upstairs), Ennis (Tuesday, 1st May 2007); and McNamara’s Pub, Scariff (Wednesday, 2nd May 2007).

According to Mr. John Quinlivan, Shannon Development Regional Development Manager, Clare, *“The 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. This event 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.”*

“Each of the upcoming workshops will take place from 7.30-9pm. There will be a 15 -minute break with refreshments provided. Because the seminar is free, demand is certain to be great. Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis”, Mr. Quinlivan concluded.

Clare ‘*Live the Life*’ (CANTATA) is a community initiative of Clare County Council, Shannon Development and local tourism interests, supported by the EU INTERREG Programme.

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