

Consultation On River Basin Management Plan - Ennis, Tuesday 9th October 2007

County Clare, IRELAND, 27th September 2007

A public consultation on the future management and protection of County Clare's inland and coastal waterways will take place at 8pm in the West County Hotel, Ennis on Tuesday 9th October 2007.

The consultation follows on from the introduction of new legislation requiring that local authorities in the Shannon International River Basin District (IRBD) devise a management plan for the whole of the Shannon river basin by 2009.

95% of County Clare's waters are included in the Shannon International River Basin District with the remaining 5% in the Western River Basin District, which will also be the subject of a public consultation in Ballyvaughan this November. There will be two public consultation periods before the final management plans are in place.

Mayor of Clare, Councillor Patricia McCarthy is encouraging members of the public to participate in the consultation workshops.

"Water is a fragile resource that needs to be protected. This is an ideal opportunity for people voice your views on how best to manage this important resource", she stated.

The first consultation period relates to the key management issues, which affect the water in the Shannon district. A new booklet called **'Water Matters'** sets out these issues in a very easy-to-read manner and explains how they affect water quality, what controls are in place to deal with these issues and if they are adequate to meet the required standards. The second consultation period will take place on the draft River Basin Management Plan after it is published in 2008.

Speaking at the launch of the **Water Matters** booklet the newly-elected Chair of the Shannon IRBD Advisory Council, Cllr. Albert Higgins said, *"For too long it has been somebody else's responsibility but now our Governments here and throughout the European Union have handed us all a way to get involved and have a say into what the problems are and what actions should be taken to put things right."*

The **'Water Matters'** booklet is available to download for free from

http://www.clarecoco.ie/Environment/River_Basin.html

The consultation period last until 22nd December 2007 and all comments received will feed into the draft management plan for the Shannon basin.

The Shannon River Basin District Advisory Council was established under S.I. No. 722 of 2003 (and as amended by SI 413 of 2005) to consider matters relating to the preparation of river basin management plans and other matters relevant to the

protection and use of the aquatic environment and water resources in the river basin district and to advise and make recommendations on these matters to the relevant public authorities. Membership consists of two elected members from each of the constituent local authorities in the RBD, and a number of co-opted members from various sectoral interest groups.

The Shannon International River Basin District (IRBD) includes large areas of counties Limerick, Clare, Tipperary, Offaly, Westmeath, Longford and Roscommon as well as significant portions of counties Kerry, Galway, Leitrim and Cavan. Other counties that have smaller portions in the Shannon District include Sligo, Mayo, Cork, Laois, Meath and Fermanagh, while all of Limerick City is located within it.

The local authorities in the Shannon IRBD are: Cavan, Clare, Cork, Galway, Kerry, Laois, Leitrim, Limerick, Longford, Mayo, Meath, Offaly, Roscommon, Sligo, North Tipperary, South Tipperary, and Westmeath County Councils, and Limerick City Council.