

■ Aid worker asks for local support

Petula Martyn

A LIMERICK aid worker has made an impassioned plea for support from the people of his native city in the aftermath of the Government's budgetary cuts for overseas aid.

David Dalton, CEO of Plan Ireland, said it was outrageous that the aid budget should be cut more drastically than other sectors.

"This will have drastic consequences for people who have lived with poverty, hunger and disease for many years.

"We promised them some light at the end of a very long tunnel but now that light has been extinguished. We have turned our backs on them," the Raheen man said.

Irish Aid, the Government's aid wing, is now based in Limerick under Minister of State for Overseas Development, Peter Power, has had to face cuts of €255m.

As a result, all the development organisations have had their allocations for 2009/10 cut, and in Plan Ireland's case of €550,000.

"In the communities where Plan Ireland works, money goes a long way. When €10,000 suffices to build two classrooms in Guinea Bissau, or drill a borehole to bring clean water to a community in Uganda, it's easy to see just how many people will be impacted by Plan's €550,000 cut, let alone the overall €255m in cuts," said Mr Dalton."

"Plan Ireland has hundreds of supporters in Limerick and the Mid-West, and I am appealing for help to continue with as much of this work as possible by making a donation or sponsoring a child to make up some of the shortfall caused by the Irish Aid cutbacks," he said.

Clancy Strand opens

■ Robert Byrne Memorial Park opened in €2.1m redevelopment

David Hurley

THE redeveloped Clancy's Strand was officially re-opened on Friday following the completion of multi-million euro restoration works, which have been ongoing for over a year.

The works, which cost €2.1 million to complete, include widened and re-surfaced footpaths, defined parking bays, riverside railings, information signage, new lighting and modern street furniture.

A special Bronze artwork has been erected at the base of the historic Treaty Stone and another feature of the project is the creation of panoramic signs and plaques commemorating the Second Siege of Limerick and the Flight of the Earls.

Eoghan Prendergast of Shannon Development, which part funded the project, said: "We are delighted to have worked with Limerick City Council to bring this exciting new project to the people of Limerick and visitors to our city.

"With the €1.6 million in grant funding, and the contribution from the City Council, we have been able to bring back to life one of the great landmarks of Limerick City.

Another major feature of the completed project is the new Robert Byrne Memorial Park, which is located on the banks of the Shannon. The new park on Clancy's Strand is dedicated to the memory of Robert Byrne, a republican and trade union-



Mayor John Gilligan and Tom Mackey, City Manager, at the opening of the Robert Byrne Park on Clancy Strand

(LL)

ist whose death sparked the Limerick Soviet on April 6, 1919.

The Limerick Soviet ran for 12 days when the workers of Limerick took control of the city and its operation from running the public transport system to printing its own money.

Speaking at the official opening of the redeveloped Clancy's Strand

Mayor of Limerick, Cllr John Gilligan, said the new park is a fitting reminder to Ireland's first and only Soviet enclave.

"This year sees the 90th anniversary of the Limerick Soviet," he said. "It's an event that is one of the most momentous events in Irish labour history and achieved international fame.

It deserves to be recognised." Commenting on the completion of the refurbishment works Vincent Murray of Limerick City Council said: "These riverside improvement works give Limerick City a fantastic riverside environment and a much improved leisure and tourist amenity in the city centre."