

SuperValu TidyTownns Newsletter

Issue 1 – 2025

The SuperValu TidyTownns Competition, administered by the Department of Rural and Community Development and sponsored by SuperValu, supports the Sustainable Development Goals.

A Chairde,

Welcome to a bumper issue of the SuperValu TidyTownns newsletter of 2025. Thank you to all of the groups who have submitted their entry for the 2025 SuperValu TidyTownns competition. We have over 900 registered entries, what an impressive number of villages, towns and large urban centres across the country doing their bit to make their area, a better place.

Adjudication is well under way in our towns and villages – you have been keeping the adjudicators busy with all your projects. The results will be announced in October but until then, can we once again thank each one of you and wish you all the very best of luck in this year's competition.

In this issue, we bring you a recap of various projects undertaken by TidyTownns groups nationwide. Castlebar TidyTownns celebrate 30 years of community spirit, we look at Cloontuskert Old Playground, Pride in Drumshanbo TidyTownns and The Journey of Westport Window Boxes and Hanging Baskets. Also included is Glounthaune TidyTownns Santa reindeers, Castleknock TidyTownns Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Action Group, our poetry corner and we bring you the results of the 2025 Ireland's Best Kept Town competition.

Please continue to send us in articles and news pieces for our newsletter – we love seeing and sharing the results of all your fantastic work!

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SuperValu TidyTowns Competition Launch 2025

The Minister for Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht Dara Calleary TD, in association with the Managing Director of SuperValu, Luke Hanlon, launched the 2025 SuperValu TidyTowns competition on Monday the 24th of March.

The official launch took place in Ballincollig, Co. Cork – the winners of the 2024 SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition.

The closing date for receipt of entries for this year's competition was the 12th of May 2025.



Ireland's Best Kept Town Awards

Ireland's Best Kept Town Awards this year celebrates its 30th anniversary. This is an all-island competition whereby entrants to the SuperValu TidyTowns competition compete with entrants from the Best Kept competition in Northern Ireland. The results of Ireland's Best Kept Town competition for 2025 were announced at an event in Farmleigh House in Dublin on June 17th. Doreen Muskett MBE from the Northern Ireland Amenity Council and Dara Calleary, Minister of the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht were on hand to announce the winners and to present the awards.



Ireland's Best Kept Small Town 2025 Winner Royal Hillsborough, Co. Down presented by Minister Dara Calleary and Doreen Muskett MBE.



Ireland's Best Kept Large Town 2025 Winner – Buncrana, Co. Donegal presented by Minister Dara Calleary and Doreen Muskett MBE.



Ireland's Best Kept Village 2025 Winner, Donaghmore, Co Tyrone presented by Minister Dara Calleary and Doreen Muskett MBE.



Naas TidyTowns pictured with Doreen Muskett MBE from the Northern Ireland Amenity Council and Dara Calleary, Minister of the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht. Naas took home the title of Ireland's Best Kept Large Urban Centre for 2025 and the overall title of Ireland's Best Kept Town 2025. Congratulations to you all.

Regionals Award Ceremonies 2024

The Department was delighted to hold all four of the SuperValu TidyTowns 2024 Regional Award ceremonies earlier in the year.

Midlands and East Regional Award Ceremony 2024

Minister Kevin 'Boxer' Moran and Yvonne O'Brien, SuperValu presented 2024 prizes to award winning TidyTowns groups from the Midlands and East region in the Shamrock Lodge Hotel Athlone on Monday the 10th of March 2025. MC for the night was Helen Conneely, Chair of Ballinahown Community Development.



Ireland's 2024 Tidiest Village & Regional Award winner
– Ballinahown, Co. Westmeath

South-West and Midwest Regional Award Ceremony

Minister Jerry Buttimer and Michelle Griffin, SuperValu presented 2024 prizes to award winning TidyTowns groups from the South West and Midwest region in the Talbot Hotel Ballincollig on Monday the 24th of March 2025. MC for the night was John O'Regan, Ballincollig TidyTowns.



Ireland's Tidiest Large Urban Centre Winner 2024 and Ireland's Tidiest Town winner 2024 – Ballincollig Tidy Towns, Co. Cork

2024 North-West and West Regional Award ceremony

Minister Dara Calleary and Richard Lennon, SuperValu presented 2024 prizes to award winning TidyTowns groups from the North West and West region in the Castlecourt Hotel Westport on Monday 7th April 2025. MC for the night was Dermott Langan.



NorthWest and West Regional Award 2024 winners & Ireland's Tidiest Large Town 2024 winners, Westport TidyTowns, Co. Mayo

South-East Regional Award Ceremony Winner 2024 – Emly Tidy Towns, Co. Tipperary

Minister Timmy Dooley and Yvonne O'Brien, SuperValu presented 2024 prizes to award winning groups from the South East region in the Great National Ballykisteon Golf Hotel, Co. Tipperary on Monday the 14th of April 2025. MC for the night was Jonas Callanan, Emly TidyTowns.



South-East Regional Award Winner 2024 – Emly Tidy Towns, Co. Tipperary

Celebration Day, Ballincollig

A plaque has been unveiled in the plaza at Castlewest shopping centre to celebrate Ballincollig's victory in the 2024 Supervalu Tidy Towns competition. The plaque celebrates the remarkable 2024 win and honours the towns dedication to maintaining a clean, beautiful and welcoming environment. The unveiling took place on Sunday, May 18, 2025.



Communities in Bloom 2025

The Communities in Bloom jury visit took place in Abbeyleix, Co. Laois on Thursday 26th and Friday 27th June. Abbeyleix Co. Laois, 2023 winners of Ireland's Tidiest Town, represented Ireland on the International stage. Two Communities in Bloom judges Alain Cappelle and Anthony O'Neill visited Abbeyleix and were charmed by the local hospitality, innovative projects and sense of community spirit. Well done Abbeyleix – we wish you every success at the Communities in Bloom awards ceremony in Stratford, Ontario between 16th – 18th October.



Entente Florale 2025



**ENTENTE
FLORALE
EUROPE**

Association Européenne
pour le Fleurissement
et le Paysage

Entente Florale 2025 jury visit took place on the 11th and 12th July. Our entrants for the 2025 competition are Terryglass in Co. Tipperary and Maynooth in Co. Kildare. Both centres worked hard to ensure on their preparations, and we wish both centres all the best with the results to be announced at the prize giving ceremony in Velejne, Slovenia on 27th September. Both centres were featured on Nationwide on 23rd July.



Terryglass Friday 11th July



Maynooth Saturday 13th July

Midlands Sustainability & Biodiversity Network

The Midlands Sustainability & Biodiversity Network is a grouping of community organisations with a common interest in Sustainability and Biodiversity. The Network is supported by The Wheel's Training Links programme. Led by the EDI Centre in Longford, the Network includes Sustainable Energy Communities (SEC's) and Tidy Towns groups in Laois, Longford, Offaly, Roscommon, and Westmeath.

Our main objective is to develop capacity and create synergies among the extensive network of Tidy Towns groups and SEC's in Ireland – empowering them to deliver Sustainability and Biodiversity projects.

The Network will deliver a series of Sustainability & Biodiversity workshops across the Midlands in 2025 & 2026, together with SEAI County Mentors and Consultants from Woodrow Environmental Consulting. Workshops will include details of the Tidy Town's Biodiversity and Sustainability adjudication categories and visits to local sites and projects.

The first workshop will take place on 20th September 2025 – in Lanesborough, Co Longford. Workshops are scheduled for October/November in Laois, Offaly, Roscommon & Westmeath. All community organisations are welcome to attend.

For further details, please phone or email: 087 2222543
HBaxter@CereanaConsulting.onMicrosoft.com



Castlebar Tidy Towns Celebrates 30 Years of Community Spirit

Not even a wet and windy winter evening could dampen the spirits of those attending the Castlebar Tidy Towns Awards night. With standing-room-only, the community gathered to mark the group's 30th anniversary and honour the dedication of individuals and organisations working tirelessly to make Castlebar a better place to live, work, and play.

The Castlebar Tidy Towns Awards night was a fitting celebration of community pride, environmental stewardship, and three decades of dedicated effort. Photos of all prize winners on the night are included below:



Cloontuskert Old Playground

Cloontuskert village is the only original Bord na Móna village in county Roscommon and as such, is a key feature of the architectural heritage of the county. Cloontuskert's surrounding landscape is dominated by the extensive tracts of bogland located in the area. It is to this feature that the Cloontuskert housing scheme owes its formation. In 1953 the scheme was officially opened as one of the original Bord na Móna villages which catered for the families of workers who came from all over Ireland to gain employment on the bogs.



We believe that the importance of the architectural, industrial and cultural heritage of the Bord na Móna villages in Ireland is a key part of our national story. Cloontuskert Tidy Towns has completed much work in recent years in promoting our home village and bringing its importance to a wider audience, which was advanced through our collaboration with the wonderful Irish Architecture Foundation and Creative Ireland in the form of the Reimagine Workers' Villages project which began here in Cloontuskert in 2021, a programme funded by Creative Ireland's Climate Action Fund.



A recent publication "Irish Housing Design 1950-1980" sets out the extent of the number of references in contemporary writing to the architectural, historical and social significance of the Bord na Móna villages. The Bord na Móna housing schemes were designed by the architect and visionary, Frank Gibney. We have been in contact with the author of "Ambition and Achievement: The Civic Visions of Frank Gibney", Fergal MacCabe, Tullamore born architect and town planner, who recommended in his book that all Frank Gibney's villages should be designated as Architectural Conservation Areas.

A key design feature that Bord na Móna provided during the early days of their seven villages was a playground

for the children of the Bord na Móna workers. We have been kindly provided with these amazing photographs of Cloontuskert's 'Old Playground' dating to circa. the 1970s by Cloontuskert native, Ruth Trimble (Malone). Perhaps these images will bring back some nice childhood memories for your readers around the country, particularly those who may have grown up in a Bord na Móna village themselves".

Pride in Drumshanbo Tidy Towns

Our committee decided to install art on the electrical boxes in town and invited local young woman Shona Grunewald to be the first artist to create this work. Shona is a 25-year-old, she is part of our autistic community and has an honour degree in Graphic Design from Athlone. We went step further and arranged to have Shona's very first art exhibition at our Drumshanbo Credit Union. She exhibited a range of work for sale, as well providing prints and stickers promoting herself & Tidy Towns. Next year we have a series of artwork from our secondary students as well as out national school children. It's all part of our future "Heritage & Art Trail".

Look out for bright, inventive and youthful touches throughout Drumshanbo in 2025.



Westport TidyTowns - The Journey of Westport Window Boxes and Hanging Baskets

In this issue, I thought we would look at our window boxes. They do not just appear overnight, and so I thought I would share the process with you.

Firstly, meetings with Westport and Belmullet Municipal District, The Westport Chamber, and the DSP and a meeting with the County Council to get permission

for flower displays and assistance with maintenance. Then we must get quotes from our suppliers making sure all baskets are as biodiversity friendly as possible. A letter is sent out to all Westport businesses that have supported the scheme previously from our Tidy Towns Office. New businesses or those who wish to get involved in future, should send an email of interest to chamber@westportireland.com

A small extract of the letter is as follows.

“Westport Tidy Towns Committee, in association with Westport and Belmullet Municipal District, The Westport Chamber, and the DSP will be continuing its Floral Display Project in the town centre this year.

The visual effect of the window box displays has been a contributing factor to Westport’s success in previous years in the National Tidy Towns Awards.

Window boxes will be erected for the ground and first floor only.

Westport and Belmullet Municipal District Council has agreed to water them on a regular basis over the summer months ensuring continuous flowering.”

When we have received paid requests, we order from two local garden centres, they will plant them up and keep them for a month to nurture them.

The suppliers then deliver the boxes to The Octagon where teams from the TUS and Ce Schemes, West Mayo Municipal Council and The Westport Tidy Towns team unload the lorries and place in front of the relevant business. All the other boxes are taken to the Council depot and with the help of workers, cherry pickers and ladders are distributed and the baskets are put up whilst always adhering to strict safety precautions. There are at least four hundred window boxes and baskets, so you can imagine how big a task it is. All of this takes at least two weeks and co-ordination between all parties is done by Elsie Higgins and Liam Campion.

The floral arrangements are watered every week by council staff and one dedicated Tidy Towns person, a feeding schedule is also organized and administered as well.

Boxes are taken down at the end of September and Elsie also organizes repairs of the boxes and baskets and reuses the compost and bulbs in planters around town where possible. The boxes are then stored by Elsie until the following year.

Glounthaune TidyTowns

Glounthaune Tidy Santa’s Reindeers located every year now at the Centenary Garden on the L3004. This is sited every year here and is an iconic part of the festive spirit in Glounthaune to all the Community. It is a combined effort by the Men’s Shed /GTT and the Transition Year Students who do hours for us each year.



Castleknock TidyTowns. Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Action Group

TidyTowns is a very well-known brand in Ireland and has been around since 1958. Its annual nationwide competition has a unique place in Ireland’s culture as it has become the country’s best-known sustainable and environmental initiative. The primary focus of TidyTowns is to encourage communities to improve their local environment and make their area a better place to live, work and visit by practical and creative ways of enhancing their towns and villages.



In recent times an increased emphasis has been placed on matters such as climate change and sustainability. In response to these challenges and to highlight Castleknock TidyTowns concentration on addressing these issues we have added a tagline in the colour of green to our logo which now reads “Castleknock TidyTowns. Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Action Group.”

We hope by emphasising our environmental, sustainability and climate action credentials we can make people aware we do much more than just enhance the appearance of our neighbourhood as we strive to address the problems that threaten our planet. By way of example over the past few years we have planted over 2,000 trees in our neighbourhood, added 12 pollinator-friendly flower beds and set up the Castleknock Community Cycle Facebook page, which has over 3,200 local members and enabled the recycling of over 7,000 pre-owned items which have been donated for free and saved from landfill. Our recent very successful Castleknock Poster-Free Zone initiative will result in hundreds of election posters

and plastic cables ties also being saved from landfill. These are just a few of the very many projects we have instigated.

Our enhanced logo with the new green tagline is intended to clearly convey our brand values, be meaningful, create a lasting impression, gain attention and support for our aims, while appealing to a younger demographic who wish to play their part in caring for our planet. It enables us communicate our mission, purpose and culture while attempting to enlist support, especially from young adult volunteers, to help us achieve our goals.

Email: castleknocktidytowns@gmail.com

Website www.castleknocktidytowns.com

SuperValu TidyTowns Survey

Watch out for our survey that will be emailed to you this week. Your input really matters and this year your community could win one of 26 €100 SuperValu Gift Cards, just by completing the survey. Closing date is Friday 29th August 2025.

Keep in Touch

As always, please continue to send us in your photos, articles and updates for inclusion. Our final issue this year will cover the National Awards Ceremony held recently in Croke Park.

Niamh, Helen, Siobhán and Chloe

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🌐 www.tidytowns.ie



Poetry corner

WINTER BLUES

Wash the winter blues away
Brighter days are on the way
A new year a new beginning
We will start again with fresh thinking.

Take a look at last year's report
See what you can do to improve your scores
A 3-year plan is a must for all
And sustainable goals are part of it all.

This time of year is great for planting
All kinds of fruit like apples and cherries
Gooseberries, currents, raspberries canes
Strawberries in June are a real treat

Summer bedding is a pretty sight
But not much good for wildlife
So permanent planting is much better
It will save you money and you will feel better.

So now take stock of what I am saying
Times moves quickly and work will be needing
So plan your work for 2025
And you won't get stressed when long days arrive.

To all our towns and villages
I wish you all the best
Keep up the great effort and you can only do your best
Keep safe and enjoy the work do
And 2025 it could be you.

Denis Heffernan - January 2025

BLOOM IN JUNE

The first day of June to Bloom we did go,
The morning it was cold the sky it was grey,
But our minds were made up to enjoy our day.

We left on the coach at 7 o'clock,
I had a pain in my stomach and wasn't feeling the best,
But with Jonas my carer for all of the day,
I knew everything would be ok.

We got to the park at 11 o'clock,
The sun it was shining the rain it had stopped,
In to the wheelchair I did go,
And there I stayed for 6 hours or more.

Jonas took me to every stall that was there,
The gardens so pretty everywhere,
We met many people along the way,
As the sun shone down on everyone there.

There were talks all around us about this and that,
But the best of all was the Tidy Towns chat,
When Christy Boylan took the stage,
You could hear a pin falling a cough or a sneeze.

He spoke from the heart in a soft calming voice,
Of what to expect when the judges arrive,
He said to take note of all you must do,
And not get stressed but enjoy what you do.

The day went so quickly and soon we went home,
Tired and weary after a great show,
Thanks to the people who make it all happen,
May God Bless you all you are one in million.

Denis Heffernan - June 2025

