



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Administered by the
Department of Rural and Community Development

Tidy Towns Newsletter

Issue 2020-2

In this Issue;

- Welcome
- Coronavirus (Covid-19)
- 2020 Competition
- Sustainable Development Goals
- Entente Florale 2020
- Ireland's Best Kept 2020
- Communities in Bloom 2020
- Pollinator Conservation Conference
- The Shoe Corner
- Kilbride Tidy Towns
- Placemaking Award 2020
- Green-winged Orchid
- Community Response Forum
- Use of Pesticides & Herbicides
- Social Media

WELCOME

Dear Tidy Towns Committee,

Welcome to our second newsletter for 2020, what a strange couple of months it has been since we were *in touch with you last*. As a result of the Coronavirus (Covid-19), which has very much been part of our lives for the last 2 months, the SuperValu Tidy Towns competition has, unfortunately, been cancelled for the first time in its history.

Coronavirus (Covid-19)

COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. A virus, called coronavirus, causes it. Coronavirus is spread in sneeze or cough droplets. To infect you, it has to get from an infected person's nose or mouth into your eyes, nose or mouth. This can be direct or indirect (on hands, objects, surfaces). The current public health advice is to stay at home and to protect ourselves through proper hand hygiene, sneeze and cough etiquette and in cleaning surfaces regularly. Further information on the virus can be found by visiting www.hse.ie.

2020 Competition

On April 21st, Minister for Rural and Community Development, Michael Ring T.D. issued a statement cancelling the 2020 competition due to Coronavirus (Covid-19). In the statement, Minister Ring said, “For over 60 years the SuperValu TidyTowns competition has captured the imagination of communities the length and breadth of the country. Generation after generation of local volunteers have given their time generously to make the SuperValu TidyTowns competition the success it is today”, he went on to say, “For me, the health and welfare of the volunteers on the TidyTowns Committees is paramount. Given the current restrictions around public gatherings, travel, and adherence to social distancing, it would not be appropriate to ask voluntary groups to work on SuperValu TidyTowns projects in their communities at this time”.

Martin Kelleher, Managing Director of SuperValu, who have been sponsoring the competition for 29 years said, “Having supported the SuperValu TidyTowns competition for almost 30 years to date, we know how disappointed committees around the country will feel as they learn that this year’s competition is cancelled. Rest assured, TidyTowns’ volunteers’ relentless efforts are now being enjoyed by many as they safely explore the two kilometres around their homes. I would like to publicly thank all of the volunteers for always standing tall and working tirelessly to make our towns and communities flourish”

The full statement can be viewed by visiting www.tidytowns.ie

Sustainable Development Goals



Although the competition for this year will not now go ahead, once restrictions are eased, we can all start to play our part in assisting with the Sustainable Development Goals. The TidyTowns competition categories has links to many of the goals and we would welcome any attempt made by TidyTowns groups to highlight these goals and raise awareness of them throughout their communities.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) cover the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic growth, social inclusion and the protection of the environment. There are 17 SDGs, with each goal having a number of sub-targets whereby TidyTowns groups can align their projects or initiatives to one or more specific goals.

Entente Florale 2020



The Executive Committee of Entente Florale met to discuss the 2020 competition and how the Coronavirus (Covid-19) might affect it. Given the Europe wide participation and the Jury visits, it was decided to cancel the competition entirely for 2020. Carlow Town and the village of Keadue in County Roscommon were our Irish entrants for the 2020 competition. These two centres will now represent Ireland in the 2021 competition and we wish them every success in their entry.

Ireland's Best Kept Competition 2020



Ireland's Best Kept competition is a North-South initiative and is in place since 1995. This year, 2020, we were to celebrate the 25th anniversary of this all-island competition. The awards ceremony was scheduled to take place in Belfast on June 23rd and we were delighted to put the following centres forward for the 2020 adjudication; Abbey, Co. Galway, Inistioge, Co. Kilkenny, Abbeyleix, Co. Laois, Birr, Co. Offaly, Raheny, Co. Dublin, Tramore, Co. Waterford, Athlone, Co. Westmeath and Dundalk, Co. Louth. Whilst these towns and villages did not get the opportunity to impress the judges this year, we are delighted to say that they have all agreed to represent their categories in the competition next year. Good luck everyone.

Communities in Bloom 2020

Like so many other events, not only here at home but worldwide, the Communities in Bloom competition for this year has too been cancelled as a result of the pandemic. Ireland's Tidiest Town for 2019, Glaslough in County Monaghan were to represent their country in the 2020 competition. They will now go forward in 2021 and we wish them every success with their entry.



President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins and his wife Sabina were to travel to Glaslough recently to unveil a plaque to commemorate the village's success in the 2019 SuperValu TidyTowns competition. As the President and Mrs. Higgins are adhering to public health advice, the event was postponed and the village will celebrate their achievements later.

Pollinator Conservation Conference

Ireland's Buzzing: International Conference on Pollinator Conservation, which was due to take place in the Strand Hotel Limerick City this May 20th and 21st, has now been postponed until 2021.

If you have already booked tickets, you will receive an email from the organisers about refunds/booking for 2021.

<https://www.pollinators.ie/conference/>

The Shoe Corner – Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo

We know we would all love to be out working on our projects at this time but since we can't, it is a time for us to savour what we have achieved and to share our achievements with others. Thank you to James and all in Ballinrobe TidyTowns in Mayo for bringing this lovely feature to us.



This project is called “The Shoe Corner”. It is an old story from Ballinrobe about the people from the countryside, who would walk barefoot to Ballinrobe



town and stop at this corner. When they reached the shoe corner they would sit and put their shoes on as you would not enter town without shoes on. On the way home, they once again would sit and take the shoes off and walk home barefoot. Ballinrobe TidyTowns decided to keep the story alive. A local artist created a beautiful pair of boots and a local historian

researched the story. The local Tús group added the stonework and a recycled plastic bench was purchased. When the project was completed, the group were delighted to welcome Michael Ring, T.D. Minister for Rural and Community Development to unveil the project.

Kilbride TidyTowns, Co. Meath


We received a heart-warming message from Denis O’ Leary and all in Kilbride TidyTowns. They, like many other groups had great plans to have a Float in the St. Patricks Day parade. After working with the local school “Scoil Bhríde” they were all ready with colourful artwork relating to the TidyTowns competition and, in particular, brightly coloured butterflies and bees in line with biodiversity messages. Unfortunately, it was not to be, due to the Covid 19 restrictions taking effect a few days before the parade.



The group decided, to place the brightly coloured butterflies around the village to brighten it up for the residents and those that were walking through for their daily exercise as the lockdown continued. This created great interest and positive comment by all in the area.

Like many other voluntary groups, Kilbride TidyTowns were not for sitting idle. They considered how they could assist their community and decided to acknowledge the huge efforts of the Frontline Healthcare workers and discovered that from their small village and surrounding area there were 16 individuals working in 8 different hospitals and in local medical centres and the ambulance services.



Kilbride Tidy Towns 

Kilbride Tidy Towns group, on behalf of all in the community of Kilbride wishes to acknowledge the selfless commitment of all frontline healthcare workers in the battle against Covid-19 and makes a small token gift to those of you from our community in Kilbride.

We hope you like our plant which should be blooming soon, (and will bloom again each year), one of our homemade brightly coloured butterflies, (which we have put up around our village to try and brighten the area at this time), a small solar light, to brighten up your patio or garden when you are on night duty, while we all sleep safely in our beds, and of course a packet of Rolos to show how much we love you.

Keep safe and thanks for everything you do.

All at Kilbride Tidy Towns



The group decided that it would be nice to treat these frontline workers to a surprise token gift to brighten up their days and to acknowledge their massive effort and commitment. They made up a gift of a Thank You card and message, flowering plant, homemade colourful butterfly, a solar light and a packet of Rolo sweets and delivered them to their doorways and gateways on the 24th April. The reaction from all was brilliant to see, many getting them just before going out on night duty, some receiving them the following day after returning from tours of duty, exhausted. The news travelled to their colleagues who sent many messages of thanks to Kilbride Tidy Towns.

What a wonderful way to turn the disappointment of the parade cancellation into such a positive and brightening up someone's day. Well done to all involved.

Placemaking Awards 2020

The 2020 Excellence in Placemaking Awards competition is open to all public and private organisations as well as community groups in each Province of the country and entry is free. The best community project and best public/private sector project in each Province will each win a prize and there will be a national prize of €5,000 for the best overall project.

Winners in the 2019 competition included, Moate, Mulranny and Ballincollig.

For further information on the 2020 awards and details on how to submit an entry, please see www.cbre.ie/uli-placemaking-awards or email excellenceinplacemaking@uli.org. Closing date has been extended to July.

Green Winged Orchid – Co Laois

Dr Mark McCorry & Dr Fiona MacGowan, BSBI Botanical Recorders for Co. Laois have some exciting news for us. You might ask, does the Covid19 lockdown have any silver linings? Well, one was seeing the motorway verges covered in Dandelions and Cowslips on a recent trip to Newbridge. The delay in routine mowing along the motorways has allowed these wildflowers to flourish providing stunning carpets of yellow – a joy to both the human eye and our hungry pollinator species.

A rare wildflower species has also recently appeared on a grassy verge in a Portlaoise housing estate. Green-winged Orchid (*Anacamptis morio*), was recently recorded by Brian Gaynor, the Laois-Offaly IWT chairperson and environmental consultant. This orchid is particularly rare, only having been recorded at three other locations in Co. Laois in recent times. To read more on this; www.biodiversityireland.ie/does-the-lockdown-bring-any-silver-linings/



Community Response Forum Covid-19

Each Local Authority (County Council) has established a Community Response Forum to coordinate COVID-19 related community supports. As part of this, each local authority has established a helpline that vulnerable people or those who are staying at home can phone if they are looking for basic services such as delivery of food, meals, medicines or transport for

essential trips. Contact numbers for each Local Authority area are listed below;

Carlow	1800 814 300	Kerry	1800 807 009	Offaly	1800 818 181
Cavan	1800 300 404	Kildare	1800 300 174	Roscommon	1800 200 727
Clare	1890 252 943	Kilkenny	1800 500 000	Sligo	1800 292 765
Cork City	1800 222 226	Laois	1800 832 010	South Dublin	1800 240519
Cork County	1800 805 819	Leitrim	1800 852 389	Tipperary	076 106 5000
Donegal	1800 928 982	Limerick	1800 832 005	Waterford	1800 250 185
Dublin City	01 222 8555	Longford	1800 300 122	Westmeath	1800 805 816
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown	01 271 3199	Louth	1800 805 817	Wexford	053 919 6000
Fingal	1800 459 059	Mayo	094 906 4660	Wicklow	1800 868 399
Galway City	1800 400 150	Meath	1800 808 809		
Galway	1800 928 894	Monaghan	1800 804 158		

ALONE, the national charity for older people, is partnering each COVID-19 Community Response Forum. If you need to talk or are looking for support, you can call them on 0818 222 024 or your call can be directed from your local COVID-19 Community Response Forum helpline.

The use of Pesticides/Herbicides

The correct and responsible use of Pesticides or Herbicides is of the utmost importance. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine have produced a very informative guide to assist with responsible pesticide use in public and amenity and garden areas. To download the guide which contains 10 easy steps ([Straight A's for Amenity](#)), please visit;

<http://www.pcs.agriculture.gov.ie/media/pesticides/content/sud/ResponsiblePesticideUsePublicAmenityGardenAreas200217.pdf>

Social Media

Can we remind you all to follow us on Facebook and Twitter for updates and information via the following links;



<https://www.facebook.com/OfficialSuperValuTidyTowns>



<https://twitter.com/TidyTownsIre>

As referenced in previous newsletters we would like to feature some of the great work you do throughout the year, so if you have any news features or projects you have undertaken and have some photographs or video clips to share with us, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please forward any items of interest to us at tidytowns@drcd.gov.ie **please note**, only forward material to us if you are happy for us to share it on our website or social media forums. We are aware of great work being done by communities in the areas of sustainability, inclusivity and biodiversity and so many of you have done great work in association with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, why not share this with us so we can tell everyone else about the fantastic efforts being put in by TidyTowns committees throughout the country.

The logo for SuperValu, featuring the word "SuperValu" in white, bold, sans-serif font on a red rectangular background.

To reward those who share their photographs or stories with us for our newsletter, our best feature in the coming months will receive a SuperValu Gift Card. Get those stories and photographs together on how your projects and initiatives are making a real difference to your area, be it in tidiness, sustainability, biodiversity or inclusivity, especially as we deal with the challenges presented to us by Covid-19. We would love to hear from you.

Wishing you all the best, please stay home, stay safe and most important of all stay strong, we will be back better than ever for the 2021 competition. We are here to help in any way we can, so please keep in touch through the website or social media or feel free to call or email the office, we love hearing from you. Keep up the good work.

Anne, Helen, John and all the team.

The TidyTowns Unit
Department of Rural and Community Development
Government Buildings
Ballina
Co Mayo

Email: tidytowns@drcd.gov.ie

Tel: 076 100 6836