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Supporting the Sustainable Development Goals
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**Administered by the Department
of Rural & Community Development**

SuperValu Tidy Towns Newsletter

Issue 2022-6

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Hi everyone,

Welcome to the June 2022 SuperValu Tidy Towns Newsletter. June is a busy month, Students doing exams, hope they are went well for you all, others finishing school, plenty to be done in the garden and on the farm if you are rural based and on the Tidy Towns front, well, as you all know the Adjudicators are out and about. It is great to have them back on the streets again this year after the alternative approach last year as a result of the pandemic.

We also have a very busy month with our associated competitions, the awards ceremony for Ireland's Best Kept Towns was held recently in Belfast and later this week the communities in Bloom Jury arrive in Glaslough with the Entente Florale Jury arriving next week to Keadue and Dalkey, so it really is all go!

Whether you are holidaying away or at home this year, remember to do your best to support local, many of our local suppliers and businesses have had a very difficult period in recent years, so try to remember the value of a few Euro spent in your local economy, it circulates and generates and sustains economic activity and employment which is essential for our towns and villages to survive.

We are delighted with the response to this year's competition and we have beaten our entry record from last year. Over 870 towns and villages have entered this year's competition and again this year we welcome some brand new entrants and welcome back some old friends who like the "Kit-Kat" advert, were taking a break, we all need a break some times and perhaps you decided to sit this year out, if so, we fully understand, rest assured, we are here in the Tidy Towns unit to support you in any way we can and will welcome you back when you are ready.

Results of this year's competition will be announced later in the year, but for now, we wish you all well, we hope you have a very pleasant summer, hope the sun shines and the green spaces and the planting schemes are looking their best for you all.

Good luck to all out 870+ entries, the competition would not be what it is without you all, so from all of us Thank You!.

Make sure we received your 2022 Entry!!!

All entrants must visit the link below to ensure that the entry from your town or village has been received and registered. If your entry is not listed, please give the TidyTowns unit a call immediately and we will assist you.

<https://www.tidytowns.ie/competition/registered-entries/>

My Little Library

The Department of Rural and Community Development in collaboration with the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and the Local Government Management Agency is funding the First 5 My Little Library initiative.



Welcoming the Initiative, Minister for Rural and Community Development Heather Humphreys T.D., said:

‘As Minister with responsibility for public libraries, I am delighted to support this initiative. Libraries offer access to worlds of creativity, imagination and fun. This delivery of the First 5 My Little Library initiative through the 330 public libraries around the country will open these worlds up to every family with a child starting school. It will also promote early language and literacy development which is crucial for children’s success at the start of their education journey and beyond.’

My Little Library, a special project for all children starting school.

The First 5 My Little Library initiative will offer a book bag with books and resources to every 4 and 5 year old going to school in September.

The children will be invited through their ECCE service to visit their local library and pick up a bag of books and join the library.

The objective of this action is that all children starting school in September 2022 will have story books in their home and be members of their local library.

If your child is starting school and hasn’t received an invitation, that’s no problem. Pop down to your local library with some I.D. and tell the librarian your child’s date of birth and you can your book bag and special library card. Happy Reading everyone.

Poet’s Corner

We love to receive your stories and articles for the newsletter and in particular we love to get your poems, we now have a couple of, shall we say, resident Poets in the house, this month we bring you a piece from two of those ,

Here is a piece by one of our esteemed Poet’s Denis Heffernan from Emly TidyTowns.

Wear a Smile

There is nothing more important than a smile upon your face,
In any town in Ireland or village square,
You can have your pumps and waterfalls the flowers and jaunting cars,
But the best that you can give to me is the smile upon your face.

Your hotels and eating houses indeed are very grand,
Where fine food you serve in plenty and the Guinness is good,
The wine you might pour freely but if you do not smile,
My visit to your town will never be worthwhile.

Oh Ireland you are beautiful with your forty shades of green,
Your leprechauns and crocks of gold I have never seen,
But the welcome that you give to me in all the towns I've been,
The smile you wear upon your face means so much to me.

Take a trip down to Bunratty or a stroll in a county lane,
A trip on the Ring of Kerry well known for its fame,
Where they serve you Irish coffee or a sweater you can have,
To keep your body warm as the winter months go by.

Drop down to county Clare where the Burren do look great,
Where wildflowers grow in plenty and white waves wash Doolan Pier,
You can view the cliffs of Moher if the day is fine,
Or head to Lisdoonvarna where you might find a wife.

Oh your castles are just wonderful where history unfolds,
Where red haired Irish colleens _play harp music to sooth the soul,
Where the piper plays a welcome that would waken Danny Boy,
But the smile upon you face is what catches my right eye.

Your mountains are just beautiful where purple heather grows,
Where the hares, fox and Pheasant you often see laying low,
Rhododendrons bloom in plenty in the evening sunset glow,
But the smile upon your face means so much more.

Now to conclude and finish I just would like to say,
Even though you're sad and lonely wear a smile on your face,
For when Irish eyes are smiling sure you would steal my heart away.
Here is a poem called "Tidy Towners" written by ken Duffy from Swords TidyTowns,
we hope you all enjoy it, well done as always Ken and Denis.

Tidy Towners

I write some poetry, some good some bad
It goes way back, to when I was a lad

So I write this prose, just to say thank you
For being who you are, heroes true and true

Tidy Towners, are a fantastic bunch
Dependable, when it comes to the crunch
Every year, is always a memorable year
Graffiti removing, planting, litter to clear

Friendships have blossomed, new ones made
Some may go back, for at least a decade
Much done more to do, so Ireland get set
You haven't seen the best, of Tidy Towners yet

The country looks great, it's down to the crew
Thanks to the veterans, and to members new
Looking forward, as each year reaches its end
May health and happiness, be a constant friend

Abbeyleix TidyTowns Laois Federation of TidyTowns Seminar

Abbeyleix TidyTowns have shared information with us on a recent seminar that took place. Attendees learned that the competition is no longer about hanging baskets but building a community that people are proud to be part of. The event was supported by Laois County Council and this was highlighted by Environmental Awareness Officer Suzanne Dempsey. All attendees were presented with goody bags containing local produce donated by local businesses.



The well-attended event kicked off with a tour of the village and community garden by Abbeyleix TidyTowns veteran Mary White and continued long into the night. Pizza hot from the pizza oven and African cuisine prepared by residents of the direct provision centre was served to guests from TidyTowns Committees from across County Laois.

A demonstration of Reverse Vending Machines was made by Colin from the Return for Change campaign from VOICE Ireland. These Reverse Vending Machines are due to be rolled out in supermarkets nationwide by the end of the year. They will result in a significant reduction in litter from plastic bottles and cans as these will be subject to a refund when deposited at these machines.

Speaking at the well-attended event Suzanne Dempsey, Environmental Awareness Officer, Laois County Council stated: “the turnout at tonight’s event demonstrates the huge dedication that Tidy Towns Volunteers have for their communities and they continue to make an enormous contribution to civic life in Laois and the seminar is just one way that the Laois County Council can support them.”

Debbie Nesbitt, TidyTowns adjudicator for over 14 years and expert in the Sustainability category of the TidyTowns Competition gave an update on developments in the competition and an overview of what judges are looking for in each of the eight categories. People not directly involved in the competition may not realise that the TidyTowns Competition is a rigorous competition covering a wide range of categories and groups are always looking for new volunteers to assist with projects that cover a range of interests.



Robbie Quinn from Abbeyleix TidyTowns gave an inspiring presentation and offered huge insight into how they have become one of the top TidyTowns groups in the country. They had innovative projects in every category of the competition.

Anne Marie Maher, Sports and Leisure Officer with Laois County Council gave invaluable advice into sources of funding for project they may have been inspired to undertaken after the night’s presentations.

Well done to all involved in this wonderful initiative, it seems to have been a very enjoyable and informative event.

All Ireland Pollinator Plan Flower Insect Timed Count (FIT Count)

The All Ireland Pollinator Plan will focus this year on gathering survey data to assess the impact of the good work that groups such as the TidyTowns are carrying out. They

have developed a new app to make this easy for groups. FIT Counts are very simple – you watch a patch of flowers for 10 minutes and count how many insects visit.

It is a very useful tool for TidyTowns groups to measure change in their local biodiversity. Especially when they have taken action

already for pollinators, by carrying out FIT Counts throughout the year and across future years will help track the impact of their actions on insect numbers and diversity as well as providing important data for the Biodiversity Centre.



Here is a short video to help you; [Videos » All-Ireland Pollinator Plan \(pollinators.ie\)](https://pollinators.ie/videos)

We would encourage as many of you as possible to engage in this piece of research. More information can be found by visiting the following link. There is only one app, customised for different countries. It was first developed by the UK pollinator monitoring scheme. When you first download you need to choose Ireland as the location. The data collection is identical, it's just the background information that is tailored to each country.

<https://biodiversityireland.ie/surveys/fit-counts/>

In the garden: capacities that contribute to community groups establishing community gardens

Dr Gerard Doyle, Assistant Lecturer and Programme Chair of MSc Local Development & Innovation at TU Dublin has been in touch to share with us a paper he has prepared looking at Community Gardens.

Based on case studies in Dublin, Ireland, this paper examines the motives for individuals to establish community gardens therein. The paper also outlines the factors (capacities) required for community groups to successfully establish and sustain community gardens in Ireland. These capacities include the involvement of individuals with a range of expertise, the presence of supportive community groups/organisations and state agencies, and access to resources, including land. The research findings, detailed in this paper, indicate that community gardens in urban settings encounter a number of challenges, including the absence of a mechanism for community groups to access land. The article provides a framework for community groups and community organisations to develop community gardens.

Please see paper here; <https://doi.org/10.1080/19463138.2022.2045997>

Ennis Welcomes Uachtarán na hÉireann

Ennis, Co. Clare won the title of Ireland's Tidiest Town in 2021. To mark this achievement President Michael D Higgins and his wife Sabina accepted an invitation from the TidyTowns Unit of the Department to unveil a plaque to commemorate their wonderful achievement.



This fantastic celebration took place on Saturday, 28th May 2022 in St. Flannan's College in Ennis. The sun shone bright as children from the many sporting groups in Ennis lined the driveway of St. Flannan's to give the Presidential party a very warm Clare welcome. Traditional music which Co. Clare is famous for, was played by some junior members of Ennis TidyTowns as the Presidential party made their way in to the packed hall. Over 300 guests were in attendance to hear the wonderful speeches from President Higgins, Cormac McCarthy Chairperson of Ennis TidyTowns and Carmel Kirby, Clare County Council who was MC for the event.



The President and Mrs. Higgins were presented with the following gifts, a signed book of poetry by Doreann Ní Ghriofa presented by a member of the Direct Provision Centre. A sustainable handmade bouquet, created by the service users of the HSE Dulick Centre and honey products by a local beekeeper.

Once the plaque was unveiled, refreshments were served in the canteen in St. Flannan's. President Michael D Higgins and Sabina met many of the guests and kindly

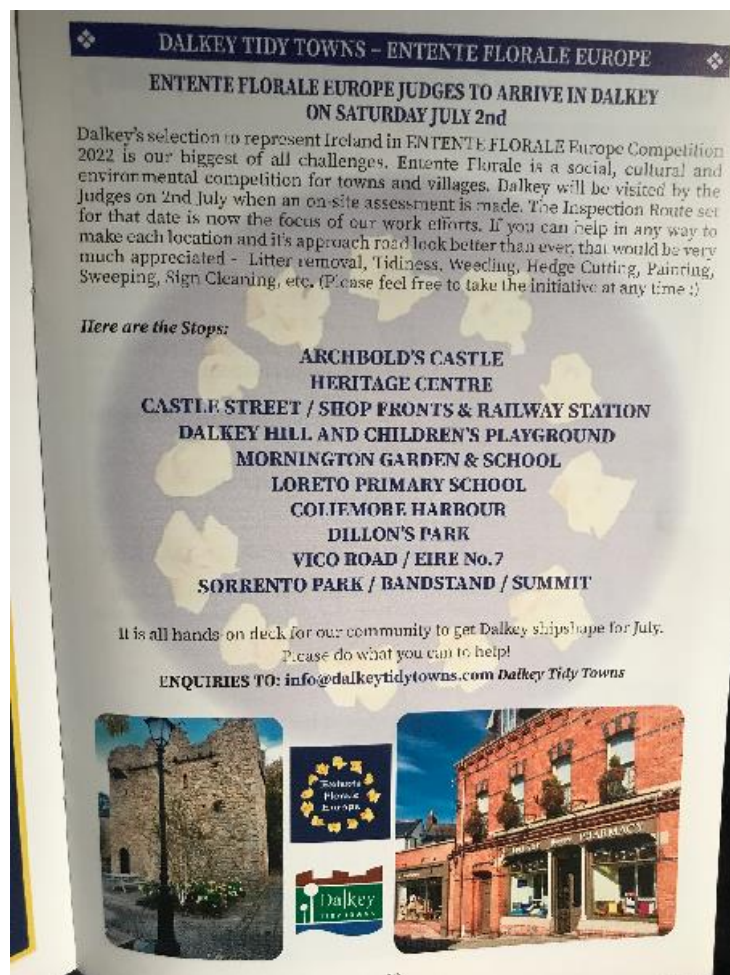
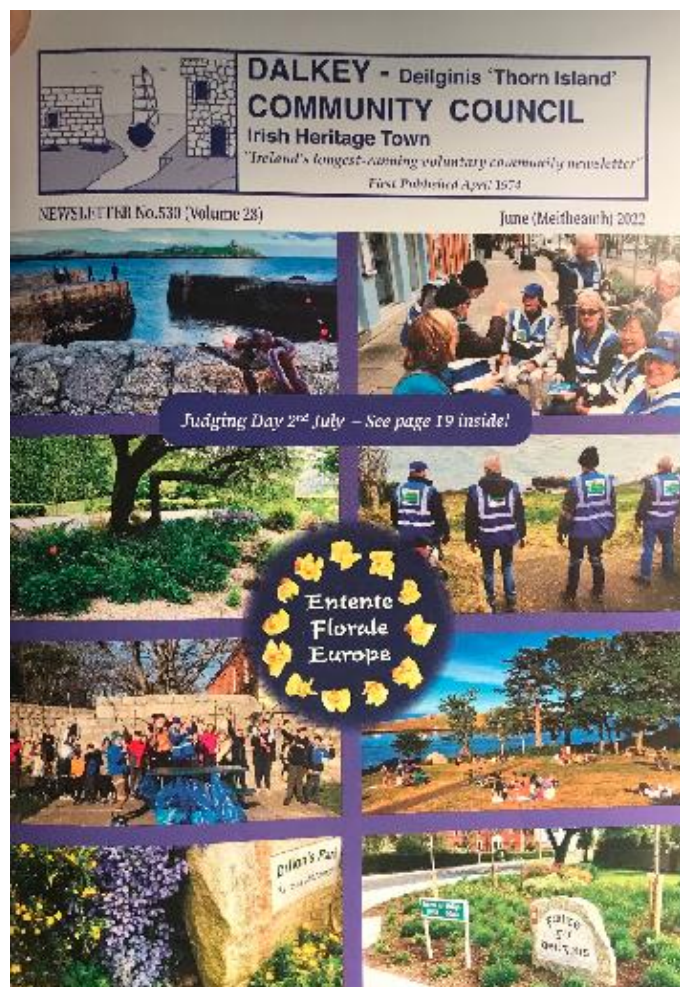
posed for photos. RTE Nationwide were also in attendance as they were filming content and interviewing the President and members of Ennis TidyTowns for a programme dedicated to the great achievement by Ennis TidyTowns and the Presidential visit, this programme aired on Monday, 30th May 2022.



Entente Florale 2022

On Thursday June 30th, the Entente Florale Jury members will arrive in Dublin and make their way to Keadue in Roscommon where they will carry out their assessment on July 1st, later that evening, they will travel to Dalkey in Dublin where the assessment will take place on Saturday July 2nd. We send our very best wishes to both centres who have in tremendous efforts in preparing for the Jury Visit.

Dalkey TidyTowns have included a piece on the upcoming visit in their own newsletter and kindly shared the piece with us.



Communities in Bloom 2022 – Glaslough

The Communities in Bloom Jury will arrive in Glaslough in County Monaghan on Friday June 24th and will carry out their assessment on Saturday June 25th. We want to send our best wishes to Louise, Concepta, Ann, Gareth and all the crew in Glaslough and wish them all the very best as they step on to the international stage in the Communities in Bloom competition.

We are delighted to have all of our associated competitions back to normal this year and well done to all involved in flying the Irish flag.

Rush TidyTowns

Brendan O'Reilly from Rush TidyTowns has been in touch to tell us about the recent launch of the Harbour Park murals. On Thursday the June 2nd, Mayor Seána Ó' Rodaigh declared the Harbour Park Murals in Rush open.

At the event we also heard from the artist Trish Traynor who talked about the journey she went through painting the flue walls. We also heard from local scuba diver Fidelma Carroll who explained the relevance of each image in the context of our own coastline.

The painting of the Harbour toilets had been an idea Rush TidyTowns had been planning for a couple of years, and after a couple of false starts, and leveraging off our experience and relationships we developed with the Ros Eó Mural Wall project in 2021, we engaged artist Trish Traynor to work with TidyTowns to develop ideas.



A grant from the Environment department in Fingal County Council linked to education around ocean life was a key catalyst to enable us to get started. We engaged a painter to strip the walls and apply the base coat in late 2021. Then we set about painting the murals one wall at a time. We wanted it to be relevant and sympathetic with the immediate locality so consulted a local scuba diver to ensure our ideas for the images were relevant.



Trish Traynor began painting the first mural in November 2021 and finished up on the fourth one in late May 2022. The project was managed from start to finish by TidyTowns committee member Diana O'Donoghue who oversaw all details. We are absolutely delighted

with the finished murals, and we know already that it has become a popular feature for families who visit the harbour park.

Well done to all involved and I think you will all agree, it looks fantastic.

Ireland's Best Kept Towns 2022 – Awards

Enniskillen named as Ireland's Best Kept Town for 2022. The awards ceremony for Ireland's Best Kept Town was held in Belfast this week. Among the winners were Inistioge who took the Best Kept Village title with Abbeylisk taking the Best Kept Small Town award. Lisburn in County Antrim were named as Ireland's Best Kept Large Urban Centre. Enniskillen in County Fermanagh took the title for Ireland's Best Kept Large Town in addition to the overall prize and title of Ireland's Best Kept Town for 2022.



Speaking after the awards ceremony, Minister for Rural and Community Development, Ms. Heather Humphreys T.D. said;

“I want to congratulate all of the winners and nominees in the all-island Best Kept Town competition. In particular I would like to congratulate Enniskillen, Inistioge, Abbeylisk and Lisburn for winning awards in their respective categories. The All-island Best Kept Town Competition recognises the great



pride people have in their own communities all across the island. Set up in 1995, this year we celebrate its 25th anniversary of cross border collaboration, partnership, and most importantly, friendship. “

Congratulations to each of our fourteen finalists selected from the national competitions north and south and well done to our winners on the day.

Student Environmental Information Days Rathmullan Co. Donegal

The Royal & Prior Comprehensive School, Raphoe, Co. Donegal visited Rathmullan for two Environmental Awareness Days, as part of a joint initiative between the Rathmullan Tidy Towns Committee and Clean Coasts Group, with support from DLDC / Donegal Volunteer Centre, bringing a total of over 50 students for two days out during May 2022.



After spending time discussing Sustainability Development Goals, and how they impact all of us in our daily lives, the group then broke up into groups and headed off to do documented litter collections on all of the beaches, seafront and streets of the village, each accompanied by a Volunteer to record the data.

This information was then collated, analysed and uploaded later by the students as Citizen Scientists to the Clean Coasts website. After lunch and refreshments courtesy of the Volunteer Centre, the group had a Historical tour of the town, including historic sites such as the Napoleonic Battery, The Carmelite Abbey and Portnamurry Bay from where the Flight of the Earls departed, before leaving to return to school.



The second group's visit was a similar adventure, with some of the students choosing to assist painting activities as well as the documented litter picks. Both days were blessed with fabulous weather which made the ice cream all the more enjoyable. Plans are already in place to host more 'Environmental Awareness Days' in 2022/23 with other local second level Schools.

Well done to all involved for hosting these information sessions and here's to many more



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



<https://twitter.com/TidyTownsIre>



<https://www.tidytowns.ie>



Remember to share the Newsletter with your wider Tidy Towns group and volunteers through your own social media or through email. It's good to keep everyone in the Picture!!!

Keep in Touch

That brings us to the end of another issue of the Newsletter, thank you all for reading and for keeping us up to date with all that is going on in your community, we love to hear your stories and to pass them on to the wider TidyTowns family, the poems too, they add a very creative side to our work and sum up so well what is happening in your communities in words.

Once again congratulations to our winners in Belfast earlier this week and best of luck to the groups in Glaslough, Keadue and Dalkey as they eagerly await the arrival of the international jury members for their assessments for Communities in Bloom and Entente Florale. We hope the sun shines for your assessment visits and all goes well.

We wish our Adjudicators safe travels as they navigate across the county visiting in excess of 870 towns and villages who have entered the 2022 SuperValu TidyTowns competition. Best of luck to all our entrants and thank you for doing all you do to keep your part of the country looking so well.

If you have any questions, please drop us an email or give us a call, we are here to help in any way we can. We hope you all enjoy the summer.

Anne, Helen & John

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