



Rialtas
na hÉireann
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of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040



Caring for our environment

Supporting the Sustainable Development Goals
Act Local – Think Global

**Administered by the Department
of Rural & Community Development**

SuperValu TidyTowns Newsletter

Issue 2022-8

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Rural Ireland – Older
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Hi everyone,

Welcome to our August issue of the SuperValu TidyTowns Newsletter. Month eight, where has the year gone to? It is hard to believe, the evenings are pulling in, Adjudication is complete and the results are in, but sadly you will have to wait a little while more to find out how you did.

The weather is still nice and while the evenings are pulling in a little, there is still plenty time to enjoy what summer 22 has yet to offer, so get out there and enjoy the fruits of your labour.

Our Adjudicators were well impressed with the quality of work presented this year so you never cease to impress with the innovative and creative projects that you work on to improve our country for all who live here and for our many many visitors.

It has been quiet in the “news room” this month so we don’t have a whole lot for you but what we have, is still worth reading, so pop the kettle on, sit back and engage with the wider TidyTowns family and see what’s happening out there.

As always we want to hear from you, this is your newsletter and we would love to hear from you all now that the pressure of the adjudication has passed, share with us what your key project was this year, perhaps you did something different, a few images even, as they say a picture speaks a thousand words. Keep the poems and stories coming in, we love to hear how creative you all are.

We wish you all the best for the coming months and in these days in particular we wish our junior TidyTowns members well as they return to school, some starting national school, a big day, some starting secondary school a similarly big day and some preparing to get results, good luck and best of luck for the road ahead, be it college, travelling or working, remember to give an hour or two back to your local TidyTowns group whenever you can. They would love to have you on their team.

Climate Change in Rural Ireland:

Older People's Perspectives

Are you aged over 55 years?

From a rural or agricultural background?

Maynooth University and Age Friendly Ireland Research Manager would like to hear your thoughts of climate change on older people in rural Ireland

If interested in taking part, please contact Adrienne at:

Adrienne.mccann@mu.ie for further information

Or

You can complete the survey here:

<https://maynoothuniversity.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/climate-change-in-rural-ireland>

We would encourage you to engage with this survey and share your thoughts on climate change and how proposed changes may impact life as we know it in rural Ireland.



Research Project: Climate Change in Rural Ireland: Older People's Perspectives



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National Age Friendly Ireland Programme
A Shared Service Function of Local
Government



Dr Adrienne McCann is a researcher and part-time farmer, concerned with how climate change will impact older people living in rural Ireland or from traditional agricultural areas.

This study aims to explore the older person's perspective of climate change, and how proposed changes may impact life in rural Ireland, particularly on agricultural practices and rural living.

If you wish to request a hardcopy of the survey please contact Adrienne at 087 335 4932



comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council

Public Consultation on Digital Public Services

Have your say!

Our colleagues in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform are conducting a survey on Digital Public Services in Ireland and they would welcome the thoughts of members of TidyTowns groups and volunteers.



They are looking for your help on how we can improve Irish public services by making it easier for you to use public services digitally.

- **Do you have ideas for improving public services as we put them online?**
- **Are there reasons you don't use public services online?**
- **Are there public services you think should be available online?**
- **If so, then this consultation is for you!**

Rather than making assumptions about your experiences and preferences, this consultation aims to understand what your priorities are in terms of what services should be put online first and what features, supports or assistance you would like to make digital public services easier and more efficient to use. We want to hear your views on how you access and engage with public services - these can include services that are already available in person at an office, online, by paper-based application, over the phone, etc.

The questions will take 10 - 15 minutes to answer.

The consultation is now open and due to close at the end of September 2022.

Click on the following link to access the survey;

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/CG2030Survey1>

Ta Leagan Gaeilge ar fáil anseo

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/CG2030Survey1?surveylanguage=GA>

Here again we would encourage as many of you as possible to engage with this survey. It is only when we get everyone's opinions and concerns that we can do our best to ensure that any changes are done in a way that assist you and cause minimum disruption to how you engage with public services.

TidyTowns Volunteers

In an age where we have so many devices and gadgets that save us time and get jobs done in super-efficient times, we seem to be short on time itself, we are always in a hurry and always have so much to do, such is life.



Caring for our environment

It is therefore a wonderful gesture when people offer to give freely of their time and their skills and volunteer with a community group and hopefully, in our case with a TidyTowns group.

We are all different and don't they say 'it would be a boring world if we were all the same', but different we are, some are good at front of house and keeping all in order while others are happy to work away in the background and get the work that needs to be done, done.

Each one of us, bring with us a set of skills that are equally valuable, in any TidyTowns group up or down the country, we have people who have as they say "green fingers" thank god for them, we have people who are a dab hand with a paint brush, we have the heavy lifters who can clear a piece of waste ground in jig time and what about the litter pickers, the dawn raiders who have the place looking spic and span while some of us are just turning on the kettle and popping down the toaster, still sleepy.

The fundraisers, the bakers, the organisers, each and everyone plays their part, and for that part we should all be grateful. These people are giving of their time, which as we said we all don't seem to have enough of, but they do it, they give of their skills, their advice, their life experience, and it should be acknowledged and applauded.

We are sure, that is indeed the case, but sometimes it might be no harm just to say it, tell your volunteers, what they mean to your group, give them that sense of appreciation and belonging that it is only when we all put our shoulder to the wheel that the cart begins to move.

So here's to our volunteers, the thousands and thousands of men, women and children who over the last 64 years have felt they have something to offer and rather than sitting on the fence, they jumped down and made that offer and we are very thankful that they did.

882 towns and villages entered the competition this year, we have over 1,000 active TidyTowns groups covering every part of the country, each one working away on different projects but all with that linking thread of making their place a better place, we can do some on our own but look at what we can do together, keep the flag flying and let your volunteers know they are welcome, they are needed and they are valued.

Kates Cottage and Garden

Oh how I wish I could go back in time, the memory of my childhood to live those glory days when I didn't have a care or a pain. Kates little house and garden has never left my mind.

The house was very small with lairs of whitewash on the front wall. Laden down with a heavy golden thatch roof a small little chimney but most of the smoke came out the brown half door. I think the chimney was for the jackdaws to hatch in. There was a small window where her daughter used to put on her makeup. The inside was very dark with little in the way of furniture, just a couple of enamel mugs and a few other bits and pieces.

Kate herself was a tall woman with a grey bun on the back of her head. She always wore black long clothes and lace boots. She was very cross so I was always afraid of her. But the pride she took in her little house and garden was something else. Now the memory of the garden.

There was a little back gate on the way in and when you got inside it exploded with colour and fragrance. The clumps of pansies with funny faces looking up at you, the white carnations with a heavenly scent took you to another world. Then there were the big red peonies propped with an older brambles while lupins, foxgloves and delphiniums stood so proudly like kings and queens in this lovely oasis of beauty.

But there is much more, I remember the big sticks of rhubarb, currants and big golden gooseberries that I ate until I was sick or had a pain in my tummy and you know the result of tummy ache. Then there was the big red and yellow broom that flowered in May and if you were an insect you would need to book a place on this shrub, biodiversity then wasn't talked about, but can I say this little bit of ground had it all. The Hedge all around it was privet a haven for all kind of birds to nest and hide in. A little patch of wild grass left untouched and field mice and frogs hopped and played in the warm summer sunshine.

Oh today we talk about saving the planet, well this beautiful garden of my memory was biodiversity at its best, while Kate and her daughter lived such a simple life may heaven give them peace. The house and garden are now just a memory, while I struggle to keep alive with medication by my side, for me those memories are a treasure and locked away in my head forever.

Denis Heffernan
August 2022

Delighted as always to hear form our resident poet and story teller Denis Heffernan, thank you as always Denis for bringing us to such wonderful places in our mind as we read your penmanship. Sending our best wishes to you.

SuperValu TidyTowns 2022

Awards Ceremony

The competition results will be announced in later October, the event will be held in the RDS in Dublin, we are still looking through the results which have only come to us in the last few days so we will be working on numbers that we can invite, more information will be in the upcoming issues of the newsletter. We hope to see as many of you there as we can.

Shortly after the awards ceremony we will be commencing the distribution of well-earned prizes, most of which consist of a cash prize. As advised previously, recent changes in Revenue guidelines require that all groups receiving funds need to provide a tax registration number. We appreciate this is an additional piece of work but one that is relatively easy to complete and once it's done, it's done.

Could we ask you all to give some consideration to this as any grant schemes that your groups may apply for going forward will most likely be governed by the same requirements. Your local Revenue Office will be able to assist you further if you have any questions on how to go about obtaining a tax reference number if you are a voluntary group.

We are hoping to return to having regional awards ceremonies again this year, we will do our very best to get some of these organised before the end of the year but some may run into January, we will keep you all updated on developments as they become clearer but again, it will be wonderful to get back out to the regions and see the groups engaging and celebrating together. We have missed you all.

Medal Holders

This year we changed our medal holder to a more sustainable version. We still have a small number of the original holders, if any of you had one of these that perhaps got damaged or broken and you would like a replacement, please let us know and we can send one on to you.



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



<https://twitter.com/TidyTownsIre>



<https://www.tidytowns.ie>



Minister Humphreys publishes 2021 Annual Report from Department of Rural and Community Development



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development

Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, has recently published the Department of Rural and Community Development's Annual Report for 2021. The report provides a comprehensive overview of the wide range of policies, programmes and initiatives developed and delivered by the Department in 2021. Some key points from within the report include:

- The Department oversaw spending of more than €344 million in 2021.
- €169 million was invested in the Rural Development Investment Programme, including the LEADER Programme, Town and Village Renewal Scheme, the Local Improvement Scheme, the Outdoor Recreation Scheme and the CLÁR Programme.
- €171 million was provided to communities through programmes including the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP), the Community Services Programme, the Seniors Alert Scheme, libraries development and other supports for the Community and Voluntary sector.
- The COVID-19 Stability Fund supported by Dormant Accounts Funds enabled critical services to be delivered to vulnerable groups during the pandemic with funding of €7 million.
- The Rural Regeneration and Development Fund continued in 2021 with funding of €84.5 million approved for 25 projects.
- Our Rural Future, the Government's Rural Development Policy 2021-2025 was published in March 2021. The policy provides a blueprint for the sustainable development and investment in rural Ireland over five years to 2025.
- 40,897 passenger ferry sailings carrying 407,051 passengers to our off-shore islands. Cargo services carried over 38,000 tonnes of materials in the same period.
- Continued implementation of the National Social Enterprise Policy and the five-year strategy to support the community and voluntary sector in Ireland (Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities).

Welcoming the publication of the annual report, Minister Humphreys said:

"Throughout the Pandemic, the critical work of my Department helped to support communities' right across the country, ensuring that vital services continued to be delivered to vulnerable groups. I am proud to see the positive impacts the programmes and schemes under my Department are having in towns and villages."

"I would like to thank my colleague, Minister of State Joe O'Brien, for his dedicated work during 2021 and to also acknowledge the commitment and invaluable contributions of the staff and management team in the Department, particularly during, what were very challenging times. "This is one of the youngest Departments in Government. Yet, through our various schemes and programmes, as well as our rural development policy 'Our Rural Future', we are revitalising rural communities and making Rural Ireland a better place to live, work and raise a family."

The Department's Annual Report can be found by visiting;

<https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation-information/91ae40-annual-reports/>

SDG Week

Take Part in SDG week 2022!

Ireland's first Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) week is taking place this year from 20th – 26th September. It forms part of the wider European Sustainable Development Week (ESDW) which last year saw 5,440 activities taking place across 28 countries.

The SDGs belong to everyone and SDG week is open to all – individuals, groups, schools and colleges, libraries, businesses and institutions.

To take part, organize an event – however big or small – or highlight an activity or project that promotes sustainable development and join the new annual week of action for the SDGs.

1. **START NOW!**

Think about how you could promote sustainable development and plan an activity, project or event to take place during SDG week

2. **REGISTER**

Upload your idea on the ESDW website: www.esdw.eu

3. **ACT!**

Organize and promote your initiative during 18 September – 8 October 2022!

Explore which events are taking place and participate in activities near you!

For more information on sustainable development, SDG week and ideas for taking part please see www.gov.ie/SDGs



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@Dept_ECC
@EuropeanSDWeek



DeptECC
EuropeanSustainableDevelopmentWeek



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Keep in Touch

Well that brings us the end of another edition of the Newsletter, we hope that you take a few moments to engage with the surveys and consultations listed, give some thought to SDG week, you can include these activities in your 2023 entry form, we are always thinking ahead.

We hope to run our photography competition again this year, we will be announcing it next month, so while the buds are blooming and the sun is shining, get the camera out and be ready to capture that all important image, it might bring in a Euro to help with a project your group is currently working on.

We will keep you updated on all things TidyTowns in the next few issues, we will have updates on our national and regional awards ceremonies, updates on how our friends do in the Communities in Bloom and Entente Florale competitions, we once again send them all our best wishes for the awards ceremonies in Hungary and Canada in the coming months.

We want to thank our main sponsor SuperValu for their ongoing support and all our special award sponsors for their support. Thanks also to our team of Adjudicators who have been busy viewing all of your beautiful towns and villages. But most important of all, we want to thank you the volunteers for all the work you have done and continue to do in keeping our towns and villages looking their best and making them so inviting especially at this time of year when we see an increase in national and international visitors.

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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Ár dTodhchaí
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