

SuperValu TidyTown Newsletters

Issue 3-2023

The SuperValu TidyTown competition, administered by the Department of Rural and Community Development and sponsored by SuperValu, supports the Sustainable Development Goals

A Chairde,



Welcome to our third issue of the SuperValu TidyTown newsletter of 2023. We hope you all had an enjoyable Easter break and as the evenings stretch out that little bit each day, we are sure, you are all busy preparing for this year's competition.



Rialtas
na hÉireann
Government
of Ireland

May 10th is the closing date for this year's competition and all entries should be emailed to tidytowns@drcd.gov.ie to reach us on or before that date. We would advise that you check the SuperValu TidyTown website at www.tidytowns.ie to ensure your entry has been received and registered. If after May 22nd, your entry is not listed, please get in touch and we will look into the matter for you.

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040



In this issue we bring you an update from Dromiskin TidyTown on their volunteer appreciation evening, what a wonderful way to acknowledge those who support you in your cause. We also bring you a story on Bat Conservation, some images from St. Patrick's Day parades and information on this year's Special awards. We also feature some words penned by our now resident Poet, Denis Heffernan from Emly, some information to assist you in the "Sustainability – Doing more with less" category and a whole lot more, we hope you find the articles of interest.

SuperValu

In the month that saw President Biden visit parts of our country, the work of TidyTown groups in Dublin, Louth and Mayo and indeed other areas has no doubt supported the welcome that was extended to the many thousands of visitors who came out to see the American President as he toured our country. Well done to all who were involved in any way in highlighting our country on a global scale.



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

In this Issue.....

SuperValu TidyTowns Newsletter

Issue 2023-3

- Welcome
- Your Questions Answered
- 2023 Special Awards
- Sustainability Category
- Sneem TidyTowns
- North West & West Regionals
- Blackbirds – Billy Flynn
- Rush TidyTowns
- Dromiskin TidyTowns
- Carrick on Shannon TidyTowns
- Poets Corner
- 2023 SuperValu TidyTowns
Competition
2022 Cash Prizes
- Keep in Touch

Your Questions Answered...we hope!

In our last Issue, we brought you a new feature in your Newsletter, whereby you can submit questions to the wider TidyTowns family who may have the answers to need to deal with that issue that has been bothering you for a while.

Dear TidyTowns.....

A number of TidyTowns groups in our county have identified the Winter Heliotrope plant in their communities and, while it is pretty when in bloom and an attraction to pollinators, we understand it to be an invasive species. Groups have tried a number of suggested solutions but none had any effect and the plant is spreading rapidly in a number of areas. Have

other groups a similar problem and if so has a successful outcome been achieved in any area which could be shared with those currently trying to address the problem? Have any of the TidyTowns adjudicators any advice to offer in the matter?

We would welcome any advice that is out there for this group, we will share responses in upcoming issues. Thank You.



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



<https://twitter.com/TidyTownsIre>



<https://www.tidytowns.ie>



2023 TidyTowns Special Awards

The Special Awards attached to the SuperValu TidyTowns competition for 2023 bring an additional level of interest to TidyTowns groups and others who can showcase particular projects they have been working on.

This year we have 16 Special Awards on offer. These awards carry prizes of cash and support to TidyTowns groups and come with a combined value of €62,600. More information on each of these can be found by visiting www.tidytowns.ie and we would encourage all of you to consider entering some of these wonderful awards.

The closing date for the special award entries is later than the main competition and the dates range from June 2nd to June 9th, the closing date for each award is listed on the TidyTowns website. Entry forms should be returned to the sponsors email address given on the entry form. There is the possibility of picking up additional marks in the main competition for works on special award projects. So please remember to tell your Adjudicator in the main entry form if you have entered any of the special awards.



**An Roinn Comhshaoil,
Aeráide agus Cumarsáide**
Department of the Environment,
Climate and Communications

The Department of Environment, Climate & Communications are sponsoring two awards this year, these carry a combined total of €12,000 in prize money.



The awards are;

- Climate Action Award €6,000
- Sustainable Development Goals €6,000



We are delighted to be working again this year with the Tree Council of Ireland who will again this year sponsor the Tree Award with a cash prize of €1,000.

The Department of Rural and community Development with a prize fund of €5,000 will again this year sponsor the Young Persons in TidyTowns Awards. The Department will also sponsor the Island Award, which is worth €1,500.



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

The logo for the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI), featuring the letters 'RIAI' in white on a dark blue background.

The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland continue their support for the competition and this year bring us two awards with a combined prize fund of €5,500. The awards are;

- Town Challenge Award €5,000
- Good Windows Award €500



**An Roinn Turasóireachta, Cultúir,
Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spóirt agus Meán**
Department of Tourism, Culture,
Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media

The Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media continue to sponsor the Gaeltacht Award with cash prizes worth €2,500.

Leave no Trace Ireland continue with their sponsorship of the Leave No Trace Award and this year the award carries a prize worth €1,100.



An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council



This year the Heritage Award carries a cash prize of €3,000 and is sponsored by the Heritage Council.

The Gum Litter Taskforce Award aims to increase awareness around the area of chewing gum litter and carries a cash prize of €5,000. The Gum Litter Taskforce sponsors this award.



The Waters and Communities Award is sponsored by Inland Fisheries Ireland, Waterways Ireland and the Local Authority Waters Programme and carries a prize fund of €7,000.



The Tiny TidyTowns School Award carries a prize of €5,000, is sponsored by SuperValu, and aligns with the recent initiative around growing your own food.

In support with AsIAM, SuperValu continue with the sponsorship of the Inclusive Communities Award with a cash prize of €2,000.



SuperValu
Real Food, Real People

The Circular Economy award is sponsored by the Environmental Protection Agency and carries a cash prize of €2,000.



**All-Ireland
Pollinator Plan**

The All Ireland Pollinator Award has a cash prize fund of €10,000 and is sponsored by Heritage Offices & Biodiversity Offices of Local

Authorities across Ireland, in partnership with the National Biodiversity Data Centre

More details on each of these awards can be found by visiting www.tidytowns.ie. We would encourage you all to give some thought to these awards and take note of the extended closing dates. Wishing you all the best of luck and thank you to all our special award sponsors.

REMINDER

All entrants must visit the link below to ensure that your entry to the 2023 SuperValu TidyTowns competition has been registered. If by May 22nd, your entry is not listed, please give the TidyTowns unit a call and we will assist you.

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

SUSTAINABILITY – DOING MORE WITH LESS

This category has been evolving in keeping with current EU and government policy as well as 'best practice' guidelines. It encapsulates how we try to minimise our use of all resources within the community so that we reduce our environmental impact. It is a broad category so you may be surprised at how many of your existing community initiatives are relevant! Read on and find out.

Here we bring you some information on the “Sustainability- Doing more with less” category. This information has been taken from the SuperValu TidyTown's handbook section on this category which in addition to the other sections can all be found by visiting this link; <https://www.tidytowns.ie/competition/handbook/>

What the Adjudicator considers

- Describe how your activities help to make your community more environmentally sustainable. Not just your own direct activities but those of local business, schools, community buildings and community gatherings and events etc. Remember it's a very broad area: water, transport, waste, energy, and climate action.
- Show an understanding of what this category means and awareness of the move towards a Circular Economy and implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (which you are probably doing anyway!)
- Provide evidence of how you as a Tidy Towns group reduce your environmental impact: reduce paper usage; zero waste or plastic free committee, car-pooling or walking to meetings
- How you use resources for projects you are involved in (i.e. methods or materials you use), e.g. Reusing salvage materials for landscaping or biodiversity projects. Removing the use of pesticides as well as water conservation in landscaping projects.
- Awareness raising activities carried out across your community – workshops, demonstrations, information days, stalls at farmers markets, joining with the school.
- Awareness raising campaigns using local newsletters, noticeboards, local media, social media.
- Are you linking with other groups in your community? Sharing ideas and information or doing joint initiatives? e.g. Cub Scouts & Brownies look for environmental projects and can earn badges and Men's /Women's Sheds or Active Retirement groups enjoy upcycling and repair projects.

WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT?

A surprising number of things come under the broad title of resources. We tend to think of our various waste bins and what resources could be saved there. It is also important to think about other important resources such as water, energy, transport, food and 'food miles', equipment, and reusable items. TidyTown's Committees can take many steps to reduce the level of resources used and to become more efficient at using resources, while at the same time reducing waste generation. These range from basic, easy-to-do steps to more creative activities. TidyTown's Committees can encourage the community to think about small behaviour changes such as bulk buying, avoiding disposable products, using local libraries and repairing goods. This is known as resource efficiency.

WHAT IS CIRCULAR ECONOMY?

Our world is showing the stresses and strains of this “take, make, waste” model so we’re moving towards a Circular Economy to preserve precious natural resources, protect habitats and reduce pollution. Circular Economy systems; • Keep the added value in products for as long as possible and aims to eliminate waste through renewal, reuse, repair, upgrading or refurbishment. • Keep resources within the economy when a product has reached end of life, so that they can be productively used again and again, creating further value.

Quick Tips for Sustainable Transport

- Green Schools Travel Theme - www.greenschools.ie
- Promote Walking – Walkability Survey, Get Ireland Active, Operation Transformation, Healthy Heart Walks
- Cycling – Safe cycle routes, cycle –skills local cycle clubs, family fun cycles
- Park’n’ride – Park’n’Stride
- Car Pooling
- Using Public Transport

COMPLETING THE SUSTAINABILITY CATEGORY - WHERE DO WE START?

Knowledge Sharing:

Work with your Environmental Awareness Officer in relation to sharing knowledge on the correct use of bin systems in place and the emphasis on materials being clean, dry and loose. Some people need reminders on using receptables correctly such as food caddy / bin-systems / home composting. There are master composter courses available also.

Surveys:

Conduct a survey to give your group a starting point in terms of waste prevention. This could be carried out in direct conjunction with householders or via the local school (they may be conducting surveys as part of their Green Flag programme). Very simple surveys might include the number of households that have compost bins or that have water conservation measures such as rainwater harvesting.

Surveys can be as simple or as complex as you like but the point is to establish your starting point so that you can measure progress. There are several online surveys to make this job easy!

Get involved in online surveys:

TidyTowns groups could avail of online surveys such as An Taisce’s www.greenhome.ie, which looks at waste, energy, water and transport – all relevant to this category. There is a special section for TidyTowns groups. Get your local householders or a pilot area to complete the simple online ‘before’ and ‘after’ survey – report findings in your Entry Form.

THE FOOD WASTE CHALLENGE: WHAT CAN TIDYTOWNS GROUPS DO?

- Promote any campaigns included in the National Food Waste Prevention Programme.
- Create awareness of the carbon footprint of food waste.
- Show the link between food waste and single use plastic. Encourage reduction of both.
- Promote proper brown bin usage and segregation.
- Highlight & encourage social enterprise e.g. Food Cloud.

Find out how much food your community wastes in a typical week! Check out the 'Food Waste Challenge' on www.foodwaste.ie for free resources and tips on how to reduce food waste (better planning, buying, storage, cooking). Your Environmental Awareness Officer can also advise you. This could also come under a 'household budgeting' project as there are cost-savings to be made! You might have a local Resource Centre that would be interested in hosting such an event. Organise a cooking demonstration to show how to make the most of leftover food. (e.g. through a local group such as ICA, Active Retirement etc. or in conjunction with a local chef).

If food waste were a country, it would be the third largest emitter of greenhouse gases after China & the U.S. 8% of global greenhouse gases comes from Food Waste. In Ireland, we produce one million tonnes of Food Waste per year, 60% of this comes from household and commercial waste. The EU Circular Economy Action Plan requires EU-wide Food Waste reduction of 30% by 2025 and 50% by 2030.

Nappy Waste Campaign:

Ask your Environmental Awareness Officer for advice on organising a demonstration on reusable nappies, maybe for an appropriate target group in your community (e.g. parent & baby group)

Community Gardening:

There are lots of examples of community/communal gardens or allotments. Gardening encourages good environmental behaviour and reduces packaging, chemical use and food waste. It reduces our carbon footprint because the food is grown locally - not travelling thousands of miles from farm to fork. Communities can plant fruit trees and bushes for everyone to use that would be just as attractive as many 'ornamental' varieties. One community organised an 'Incredible Edibles' initiative whereby window boxes outside shops on the main street were planted with edible herbs and locals were encouraged to help themselves. In another small village park, the school children made a sign encouraging people to take herbs and even provided recipe suggestions!

Home and Community Composting:

TidyTowns groups can compost grass cuttings and make leaf mould from fallen leaves (a valuable soil conditioner). Show that your TidyTowns committee is using your own compost in your planting and landscaping activities. Encouraging locals to compost at home is a great way of minimising waste and reducing our carbon footprint (less energy used than using organic brown bin). If there are brown bins for organic waste available, are they being used properly or is an awareness campaign required? The information is easily available – just use it for your local campaign.

Quick Tips for Water Conservation

- Fix leaks or drips
- Monitor meter readings – graph
- Install flush/flow control devices
- Green Schools – water saving actions
- Install auto-shut off or push taps
- Rainwater harvesting
- Gardening/planting to conserve water

You can find so much more information on this category and indeed the other categories by referring to the Handbook, all of which are available to download from the website. Thanks as always to the national panel of TidyTowns Adjudicators who monitor the information in the Handbooks to ensure it is up to date.

Sneem TidyTowns – Bat Conservation

Jane from Sneem TidyTowns tell us that they their group were delighted to win the Bat Conservation Special Award last year for the South & Mid-West Region.



Jane informs us that the bat mural has now been completed and can be seen in it's perfect home in the front of the crèche.



2022 Regional awards Ceremonies

The first of our regional award ceremonies covering the West and North West region took place last month in Keadue in County Roscommon. A very warm Roscommon welcome was afforded to all in attendance.

Kilronan Castle was a wonderful setting for the event, which was attended by TidyTowns volunteers from Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo, Galway, Mayo and Roscommon.

Pictured here are the group from Keadue who celebrated being Regional winner in the 2022 SuperValu TidyTowns competition.



Frank Feighan TD who deputised for Minister Heather Humphreys TD presented the awards with Mr. Richard Lennon, Regional Manager with SuperValu who are the main sponsor of the competition.

Here are a few more images from the night, congratulations once again to each of our winners in the North West and West region.



We are working on finalising dates for the remaining regional awards ceremonies at which we will present all of our winners with their certificates and medals following the 2022 SuperValu TidyTowns competition.

Once we have more details on the remaining events, we will let you know.

Blackbird

As the author starts to write this, it is not long after dawn. Having (as usual) left finishing an article until the last minute, an early start is required. That's no great hardship at this time of year, to be honest. The weather is mild enough to have the window open and allow the birdsong flood in. International Dawn Chorus Day was only one day ago (7 May) and this most amazing natural phenomenon is just about at its peak.

If you've not experienced the Dawn Chorus recently, I highly recommend it. You don't have to know which bird is which (although when you do, it's even more wonderful), just get out there and let it wash over you. Wash isn't a bad verb for this. You may have heard of 'forest bathing,' well this is like Nature's Power Shower. You don't just feel refreshed, you feel positively alive and alert in ways you hadn't anticipated when you dragged yourself out of bed as the first fingers of dawn crept over the eastern horizon.



It's that same first daylight that gives the cue for the chorus to begin. This is the new day tapping its baton on the stand and clearing its throat. If you step out for a quick rinse in this chorus at around, say 6am (these days) all the players will be in full flow. But every symphony has to start somewhere and only one musician can start this one - the Blackbird.

What is so special that sets the Blackbird apart from the rest of the orchestra? The answer is somewhat prosaic – it's the size of its eyes. Having bigger eyes than any of the other choristers, it can detect daylight soonest and thus gets the nod from the conductor to begin. This blindingly obvious fact - if you'll pardon the pun - was imparted to my classmates and me by the great Éanna Ní Lamhna, my former supervisor (she has warned me of the consequences of ever referring to her as 'my old teacher'). The size of the lens receiving the light is crucial here, just as it is when you are choosing a pair of binoculars or telescope. Picture an owl. The outside eyes are wonderfully adapted for gathering every scrap of light for hunting at night when your ability to use those photons puts little mammals in mortal danger. So why don't we hear owls hooting or screeching at the dawn chorus? Why is it the much smaller-eyed Blackbird that begins the first movement? It's all about territory.

For our songbirds, territory is quite simply life or death. If you're a songbird, defending and holding your patch is critical to not just your survival but that of your genes too. This area that you stake a claim on is where you will live, feed and if you're successful, breed. As with lenses and light, size matters when it comes to territories.

If you're one of our birds of prey (like an Owl) then your territory may be measured in square kilometres. If you're a diminutive songster like the ubiquitous Wren, then it may be measured in square metres (although the male Wren may have numerous breeding partners in that wee patch, the bold lad that he is) as it makes no sense to defend a territory bigger than you need. Owls, like our local Long-eared Owl, quietly hoot in the defence of their territory but in the dusk of the evening before they start their shift, safe in the knowledge that they can see better than anything else out there, By the time the dawn chorus rolls around, they've clocked out.

Yesterday evening, I was surveying a town for urban habitats and this included a football pitch. Around the edges of this, no fewer than four male Blackbirds were foraging. Blackbirds are ground feeders so they were easy to pick out in their glossy black against the recently cut pitch. They didn't venture far from the touchline as close to this was the dense treeline where their nests are or soon will be. Nor did they veer much up or down the pitch as this would have them crossing the border of another male bird's territory, rather like a series of managers' technical areas that no referee is needed to enforce.

The Blackbird's song isn't for our delectation. It's the first line of defence of this little bit of garden, woodland, hedgerow or even football pitch to which the male has committed every ounce of his energy. If he doesn't sing, and sing well, he will lose it and any chance of his genes ever expressing themselves in dawn choruses yet to come.

The song of the Blackbird may be about the raw business of survival, but what a song! Growing up in rural Ireland and living here again, I'll confess that I've allowed Blackbird song to merely be background noise. Broadcaster and author Simon Barnes – no stranger to the touchline himself - describes this phenomenon as like our hearing of magnificent baroque pieces in lifts or when we're (yet again!) 'on hold' so often that we forget what fantastic music this is.



Bird guides do their best with describing the sounds that we hear from birds. My 'always in the van' bird book describes the Blackbird song as '...clear and loud fluting (almost in the major key) at slow tempo...' However, returning to Mr Barnes for a moment, he describes it more plainly: 'Blackbirds whistle. They whistle almost like a man whistles, ...with his hands in his pockets, not too stressed about his next appointment.' He's right too and not being a male chauvinist either. If you've ever worked on a building site you'll know the sound of workmen whistling as they go about their work. This isn't what the great Mr Barnes means.

Just as the Blackbird has a loud, urgent clacking alarm call, workmen on site tend to whistle to the rhythm of their work. No, he means the 'nothing to do and all day to do it' whistle of the blissfully idle. Go outside just about anywhere the morning after you read this and you'll see what he means. There'll almost certainly be a singing Blackbird. The idle man won't be up yet, though.

Blackbirds have inspired the most wonderful music in humans. Our older boy chose The Beatles Blackbird for his Leaving Cert practical and the accordion in Sharon Shannon's song of the same name will be familiar to most of us of a certain age. Poetry too, owes much to this bird. If you've not read anything by Francis Ledwidge (1887-1917), start now. Please also go and see the amazing murals to this 'Poet of the Blackbirds' by the TidyTowns groups of Slane and Wilkinstown and you'll appreciate how much this little bird has given to us all.

2 days ago I dropped my wife to the bus in Monaghan town. Beside the coach was a male Blackbird singing atop an ornamental Rowan. I was astounded by the clarity and sheer volume of the fluting element which far outdid the idling engine of the bus and rooted me to the spot for several verses (indeed the Blackbird does sing in verses which he adapts slightly if you listen carefully). I could feel the stares from the other side of the tinted coach windows but I couldn't have cared less. It was magnificent. Despite probably raising yet more speculation on my sanity, I thanked the Blackbird before I went about the rest of my day.

Laugh if you will, but in the 'day job' I've often murmured apologies to birds and other creatures as I've had to witness their homes destroyed to meet our needs for development/progress/speed. It's sad to think that they sing so beautifully and freely for us but it's all one-way traffic. What would you say to a Blackbird if you could say just one thing that it would understand? What about: Your call is very important to us. Please hold on a little longer.

Thank you for taking the time to read this article. If you've any suggestions for species or habitats to be covered by this column, then please feel free to email the author at billy@flynnfurney.com Ditto comments, corrections or complaints. The use of Blackbird images was kindly given by Birdwatch Ireland. Thank you to Niall and the hard working team at Kilcoole and indeed all over Ireland. The picture of the Slane crew and their beautiful work is mine own.

¹ Birdwatching with your eyes closed (Simon Barnes, 2011). Published by Short Books. Also available as an Audio Book.

¹ Most birds call as well as sing. Some only call and don't have a 'true' song.

¹ Collins Bird Guide (Mullarney et al, 2001) a super field guide.

¹ We're not discussing wolf-whistling here, to be clear. I've more sense than to get into that here. Real wolves, though, we may sometime discuss.

¹ A tricky enough piece to tackle and I'll confess to having fled the room a few times lest I like it less through over exposure. I'm just glad he didn't pick Songbird (Fleetwood Mac) as that's an album I'd never want to skip through

Rush TidyTowns

Rush TidyTowns have been keeping very busy. Recently several volunteers came together to edge the Harbour Park. While the effort was immense, the results were reward in themselves. They also sent green waste to local horticulturalist Tony Lowth and they will buy the compost back from Tony next year fulfilling a circular economy objective of theirs to become self-sufficient for compost produced locally within the next three years.



Several volunteers from Rush TidyTowns and Rush Clean Coasts participated in a Marran Grass planting workshop, which was facilitated by Aine Lawless from An Taisce. They went about transplanting Marran Grass from a densely covered part of the dunes on the South Beach to an area that had been stripped of Marran grass due to coastal erosion. They covered several square meters in the process and look forward to tracking the progress of the project. Next year they plan to have two Marran Grass planting sessions in the Spring.



Well done to everyone involved here from Rush TidyTowns on these fantastic projects, keep up the good work.

Dromiskin TidyTowns Volunteer Appreciation Evening!

There is, undoubtedly, truth in the saying that volunteers are not paid, not because they are worthless but because they are priceless. Dromiskin TidyTowns (Co. Louth) were very happy to honour that priceless contribution to their tidy towns work programme by hosting a Volunteer Appreciation Evening as a small but important thank you for the huge commitment of their loyal volunteers.



St. Joseph's GFC Clubrooms was the venue for this gathering where the local volunteers could, for once, put on the gladrags instead of the Hi Vis and, with not a litter picker in sight, these community spirited residents could relax for an evening of good food, good company and good craic.

In welcoming guests to the event Dromiskin TidyTowns Chairman, Pat Mulligan, referred to the common bond that drew all attendees together - a love of the environment and a love and respect for community and noted that it is that bond and commitment that has seen Dromiskin rise through the ranks in the National TidyTowns Competition.

Pat noted that the committee and wider community is proud of the fact that the village is a Bronze Medal winner in the competition, an achievement that would have been unthinkable a few short years ago. It was agreed that being in the top one hundred in a competition that attracts almost nine hundred entries is hugely rewarding but what is even more rewarding is when local residents stop committee members and volunteers when out at about to say how well the village looks.

Dromiskin is blessed with its volunteer base from committee members to volunteers on the organised twice weekly work sessions and from those who signed up to the Clean in 15 initiative to those who volunteer professional skills to the committee as and when required.



The Volunteer Appreciation Evening was the first time all these volunteers had the opportunity to get together to celebrate the great work that they, individually and collectively, contribute to and the event certainly served to motivate them to continue their efforts knowing that their contribution is making a difference and genuinely appreciated by the committee. With the 2023 application deadline looming on May 10th its all shoulders to the wheel but very important that we took a little time out before the major work commences.

St. Patrick's Day – Carrick on Shannon TidyTowns

Norma Duignan, PRO Carrick on Shannon TidyTowns got in touch to share some pictures from their recent entry for Carrick on Shannon St. Patrick's Day Parade.



As you can see the theme was 'Bin your Butt', to raise awareness of the problem with cigarette butt litter.

They hand painted information signs, and upcycled old tubes from a local sign place, as well as silage plastic tubes, to look like cigarette butts to reinforce the visual effects for the parade. They had one of the volunteers playing music and sitting in their trolley.



Thanks to the Ukrainian volunteers and the usual volunteers who made quite the spectacular sight and even ended up on RTE television in their round up of the parades.



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



<https://twitter.com/TidyTownsIre>



<https://www.tidytowns.ie>



I saw her today on the limestone wall,
A beak full of moss she held tightly,
As she looked all around to see who was looking,
Before through the hedge she went hiding.

Her partner jet black was high on the cherry,
Singing as loud as he could,
On this lovely spring evening with buds appearing,
On every tree in the wood.

The pigeons are cooing the white thorn blooming,
Young rabbits run wild in the glen,
Young calves calling,
Lambs bleating as they kick their heels in the sun,
Hedgehogs and field mice all out and about,
Letting all know it is Spring.

Long Winter days have now all passed by,
Forgotton like the mist in the glen,
Bluebells are flowering daffodils dance,
As they raise thier heads to the sun,
Summer in sight I am full of delight,
We thank the great god for everything.

So now to all towns and villages,
Another year has just begun,
Don't stress yourself out with worry,
Just enjoy the work you get done,
Keep your entry simple,
Just let them know what you have done,
Photos tell a great story,
And good look to everyone.

2023 SuperValu TidyTowns Competition

The closing date for the 2023 SuperValu TidyTowns competition is Wednesday May 10th so please be sure to email your entry in to us at tidytowns@drcd.gov.ie remembering that 20MB limit.

The closing date for this year's special awards will be over three weeks later, June 2nd and as always, we would encourage you all to look at the information booklet, visit the sponsors websites and entry as many of these special awards as possible, there is over €62,000 in prizes attached to this year's special awards. Thanks to all of this year's sponsors, we very much appreciate your ongoing support.

Thank you also to our main sponsor SuperValu who this year celebrate 32 years of sponsoring the SuperValu TidyTowns competition, this is a fantastic partnership and we look forward to their sponsorship and support in improving the competition in the coming years. Thanks also to their nationwide network of local retailers who give on the ground support to hundreds of TidyTowns committees across the county.

2022 Cash Prizes

We have made great progress in issuing cash prizes following the 2022 SuperValu TidyTowns competition. Over 93% of prizes have now being paid. New Revenue guidelines require all groups receiving payment to be registered. Some of our winners in the 2022 competition were not set up on our financial system, as this was their first prize. We would love to get all prizes paid out to groups as soon as possible, so if you have yet to receive your cash prize, please engage with us with regard to getting your groups set up. We have been in touch with all groups but some have yet to respond, so we will continue to work with you in the coming weeks to get the required material in order for us to process your well-deserved cash prize.

Keep in Touch

Well that brings us to the end of another issue, of the SuperValu TidyTowns newsletter. We hope you find the articles of interest and that you continue to share your stories with us, it is your newsletter after all.

Anne, Helen & John

Department of Rural and Community Development
Government Buildings, Ballina, Co Mayo F26 E8N6

Email: tidytowns@drcd.gov.ie Tel: 01 – 773 6938



Riailtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

