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Caring for our environment

Administered by the
Department of Rural & Community Development

Supporting the
Sustainable Development Goals

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SuperValu Tidy Towns Newsletter Issue 2021-2

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A Chairde,

Welcome to our February Newsletter for 2021. January is always a long month but there are definitely signs of spring amongst us and that is so encouraging. Snowdrops and Daffodils are beginning to peep their heads above ground and the evenings are getting that little bit longer every day. In normal times, these would be busy weeks for Tidy Towns groups across the country but sadly, these are not normal times. That being said we have heard so many stories of resilience and determination shown by volunteers of all ages, that can do approach is what will get us through these difficult times, where hopefully, our communities emerge more united and committed to making their place a better place.

We must stick to the plan though, the public health plan, we must all come together, although apart and continue to adhere to the public health advice as it emerges.

There is light at the end of the tunnel, our numbers are decreasing, the vaccine is coming and plans are progressing to hold the SuperValu Tidy Towns competition for 2021. It will be different, but we have shown in spades that we can do different. We will support you in every way possible through these different times, so as always we encourage you to keep in touch, follow us on social media, visit www.tidytowns.ie and if you have any questions, drop us an email or give us a call.

We will share the contact details for the Community Response Forum helpline that is still very much there to support you, if you need groceries or medicines collected or in need of assistance, help is there, please ask for it if you need it.

Please share these details with your wider community and know that there is help there if anyone needs it.

We need to be mindful of those most vulnerable in our community, those in remote areas, elderly residents, those living alone, and those who care for family members or people who may be concerned about being out in public due to health concerns.

If residents in your community need to talk to someone or are looking for emotional support, ALONE can be contacted on 0818 222 024. Even a phone call to these members of your community might be just the lifeline they need to keep connected and know that they are being thought of.

COVID-19 Community Call Forum - Local Authority Helpline Numbers and Email Addresses		
Your Local Authority	Number	Email Address
Carlow	1800 814 300	covidsupport@carlowcoco.ie
Cavan	1800 300 404	covidsupport@cavancoco.ie
Clare	1890 252 943	covidsupport@clarecoco.ie
Cork City	1800 222 226	covidsupport@corkcity.ie
Cork County	1800 805 819	covidsupport@corkcoco.ie
Donegal	1800 928 982	covidsupport@donegalcoco.ie
Dublin City	01 222 8555	covidsupport@dublincity.ie
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown	01 271 3199	covidsupport@dlrcoco.ie
Fingal	1800 459 059	covidsupport@fingal.ie
Galway City	1800 400 150	covidsupport@galwaycity.ie
Galway County	1800 928 894/091 509 390	covidsupport@galwaycoco.ie
Kerry	1800 807 009	covidsupport@kerrycoco.ie
Kildare	1800 300 174	covidsupport@kildarecoco.ie
Kilkenny	1800 326 522	covidsupport@kilkennycoco.ie
Laois	1800 832 010	covidsupport@laoiscoco.ie
Leitrim	071 965 0473	covidsupport@leitrimcoco.ie
Limerick City	1800 832 005	covidsupport@limerick.ie
Limerick County	1800 832 005	covidsupport@limerick.ie
Longford	1800 300 122	covidsupport@longfordcoco.ie
Louth	1800 805 817	covidsupport@louthcoco.ie
Mayo	094 906 4660	covidsupport@mayococo.ie
Meath	1800 808 809	covidsupport@meathcoco.ie
Monaghan	1800 804 158	covidsupport@monaghancoco.ie
Offaly	1800 818 181	covidsupport@offalycoco.ie
Roscommon	1800 200 727	covidsupport@roscommoncoco.ie
Sligo	1800 292 765	covidsupport@sligococo.ie
South Dublin	1800 240 519	covidsupport@sdblincoco.ie
Tipperary	076 106 5000	covid19@tipperarycoco.ie
Waterford City	1800 250 185	covidsupport@waterfordcouncil.ie
Waterford County	1800 250 185	covidsupport@waterfordcouncil.ie
Westmeath	1800 805 816	covidsupport@westmeathcoco.ie
Wexford	053 919 6000	covidsupport@wexfordcoco.ie
Wicklow	1800 868 399	covidsupport@wicklowcoco.ie

2021 SuperValu TidyTowns Competition

Following on from the commitment to hold the competition this year, the Department and our sponsors are preparing for this. It had been our intention to launch the competition in late March but timelines this year will be directed by where we are as a country with the pandemic. The health and safety of you, the volunteers is paramount to all of our decisions and we will only take steps to launch the competition when we feel it is safe to do so. We await updates due on March 5th, we will review the situation at that point and will keep you updated through the newsletter and through social media.

As we wait for the competition to launch, these weeks can be used to work on the map of your town or village, remember a hand-drawn map is fine, once it shows the projects you are submitting in your entry form. These can be new projects, maintenance projects and of course future projects that will have been listed in your TidyTowns 3-year plan. It's a good idea to check the 2019 report that issued, maybe the Adjudicator made a comment or a suggestion regarding your map.

Bringing us on to the TidyTowns 3-year plan, this is an opportunity to review many of the projects you had identified and listed in previous years, they may not have progressed for one reason or another, perhaps lack of funding or support, perhaps it was as a result of the pandemic and that is fine, whatever the reason was. Simply note that it has not progressed and if you still intend to proceed with it when time and resources allow, continue to include it. It is also worth mentioning the maintenance projects you are working on in your 3-year plan. You do not need to go into detail on these as they will be recorded in your entry form but all the same, it is still part of your overall plan going forward to maintain what has been developed in the past.

We acknowledge that these past months have been a struggle and continue to be so. If for any reason a group feels that they cannot enter the competition this year that is fine, rest assured there will be no negative marking for not entering, we will welcome you back next year and be delighted to have you back in the competition.

We would encourage everyone to enter, we are all in this together and if you have not been in a position to progress any projects, we would still love to hear from you on how your group stayed in touch and kept the community going through the last year. A united group will emerge from this strong and will bring their community forward; you may have been instrumental in the Covid-19 community forum or checked in on elderly residents, these are the things that will keep the community united, you may not realise it but you have played a huge role in helping people through these difficult times. We want to hear from you.

The TidyTowns unit will continue to share information with you through our monthly newsletters. We are going to start a "Questions and Answers" section too, so if you have a question, send it in, maybe others are wondering about the same topic. We will feature your questions each month. We also plan on doing a webinar next month, which will be available on the website, stay, connected for more information.

Glounthaune TidyTowns - Cork

A fund to “enhance the public realm and infrastructure” of villages in County Cork was announced in 2017. Glounthaune lobbied strongly over a number of years and the €62,500 grant was eventually obtained in 2019 from Cork Co. Co., Cobh Municipal District. The previous recipients of the grant were Glenville 2017 and Carrignavar 2018. This was a 100% grant with no community contribution required as long as expenditure did not exceed €62,500 - all individual projects had to be approved in advance by Cobh Municipal District.

An outline list was developed in November 2018 and this was included for public comment in the Community Expo held in the Centre in January 2019. The very popular Japanese bridge idea (Ashbourne Pond) ultimately proved to be too expensive - the total grant could easily be spent on this one project. The walkway in the Crompane Park was under budgeted and absorbed most of the bridge grant money. The mural on Harper’s island entrance wall had to be relocated to the Railway Station to avoid having to get planning permission.

Work got underway with the townland stone markers along the old N25 in 2019. Seven townlands were designated and carved limestone were installed by Edward Sheedy, stonemason, Youghal Road, Midleton. They were erected on the roadside where the townland boundary intersected with the southern side of the road. The seven townlands from east to west are:
Killahora
Harper’s Island
Johnstown
Lackenroe
Ballynaroon,
Ballyhennick &
Kilcoolishal.



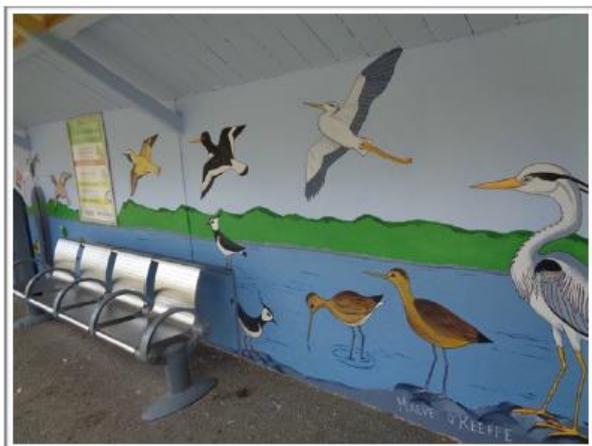
Planters were located between the Railway Bridge and Johnstown. These have added attractive and eye-catching splashes of colour.



Crompane Park was developed with a gravel pathway, three seats and lots of measures were taken to promote wildflower growth.



There was a Wildlife Mural completed inside the shelter at the Railway Station by local artist Maeve O’Keeffe. Many stone walls were renewed including a stretch at the end of Craig’s Field.



A comprehensive map of Glounthaune was designed. It has been erected near the tree in the church car park.



The striking stainless steel sculpture with the wild bird theme was erected recently near Johnstown, completing the Village Enhancement Scheme measures. The piece is by the renowned sculptor John Coll who has earlier made the iconic canal-side Patrick Kavanagh and more recently the bronze Luke Kelly statue.

The Village Enhancement scheme has made a very positive impact on the visual fabric of Glounthaune and the approaches. The project was planned and co-ordinated by Glounthaune TidyTowns who deserve the highest praise for significantly adding to the pleasant environment of Glounthaune.

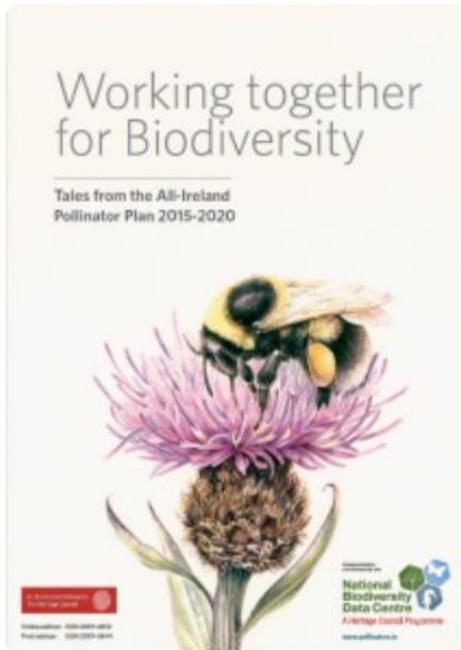
Contributed by Conor O'Brien

Thank you Conor for sharing these photographs of the wonderful projects you have been involved in, well done to all in Glounthaune TidyTowns, keep up the good work.

All Ireland Pollinator Plan – 5 Years On

Earlier this month, a new publication to mark the conclusion of the first phase of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015-2020. 'Working Together for Biodiversity: Tales from The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015-2020' was launched. It highlights positive action for nature across the island and shows the big difference that small actions can make.

The booklet brings together a selection of case studies to tell the story of how communities, farmers, schools, businesses, local authorities and many others have contributed towards the conservation of Ireland's pollinators.



The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015-2020 has achieved considerable impact:

- The last five years have seen the delivery of almost all of the 81 actions identified in the Plan
- Across all sectors, the number of engaged individuals and organisations continues to increase
- 55% of all Councils across the island have become partners
- Hundreds of local communities have embraced the initiative
- 280 businesses have come on board and agreed to take action
- A framework by which all farms can become more pollinator-friendly is currently in collaborative development

Working together for Biodiversity booklet can be viewed by visiting: <https://pollinators.ie/new-publication-celebrates-first-five-years-of-the-all-ireland-pollinator-plan/>

TidyTowns groups have been instrumental in leading with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan over the last few years and so many of you have now taken it on board and base many of your actions and projects in line with its objectives. The All Ireland Pollinator Special Award has also seen huge interest from groups each year.

A final review of the AIPP 2015-2020 has also been prepared. Groups and individuals delivered almost all of the 81 actions across the county who embraced the objectives and applied them to their initiatives. The final review can be viewed by visiting: <https://pollinators.ie/working-together-for-biodiversity/final-review/>

We want to thank all our partners involved in the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and also all of the TidyTowns groups who work to protect our Pollinators through adhering to the advice and guidelines in the AIPP. We very much look forward to the next plan and to working with you all in the future.

Clonmellon TidyTowns – Westmeath – Newsletter

We recently received a copy of a TidyTowns Newsletter from Clonmellon TidyTowns in Westmeath. This is a great way to keep your community informed on the various activities you do, give some consideration to producing a newsletter even once or twice a year, it may drum up some additional support through new volunteers or sponsorship.

Clonmellon have been very busy over recent months, here a few of the items covered in their recent newsletter.



During autumn/winter we carried on with our work in the village and all approach roads while observing the government guidelines on covid-19. Everything changed in the way we greeted each other, how we visited our parents, sons, daughters grandchildren, people in hospital, nursing homes and so on. Now that we have potential vaccines to help deal with this virus we can hope that all the government restrictions can be done away with in time. We have been working on some projects over the last couple of months and entered our community garden into the pride of place for the first time. We did some fundraising we had a draw for a week-end away for a family of 4 in the lovely Lough Eske Castle in Donegal; this was sponsored by Love Irish Tours. This was the first time we did a raffle to raise money to help with our projects and to buy new equipment.



A couple of months ago we started a project for a dedication to all our frontline essential and volunteers workers who have served our country so well during this pandemic (COVID 19) this is now finished. To mark this we had a small dedication in December with a few guests attending.

We entered our community garden into the IPB Pride of Place in association with Co-Operation Ireland. This was a first for us and it was a great achievement to be representing our county in this competition. Because of Covid – 19 restrictions the awards ceremony was a virtual awards although we did not win it was a great achievement to be nominated.





Over the Christmas Clonmellon Tidy Towns received some care packs and small food hampers from Westmeath Community Development to distribute around our community. We gave some to the Clonmellon Active retirement and we went to Dublin to give some of the food hampers to the Capuchin Day Centre for homeless people.

Thanks to all involved for the efforts gone into getting the playground refurbished. A big thank you to Westmeath County Council for their commitment to providing our community with this amenity for all our young children to enjoy.



We did a cleanup down at the kells road where all the signs are, we put in some stones and replanted this area when these plants are grown it should be nice and colourful.

The Clonmellon Arms received a welcome paint job and Tidy Towns sponsored a mural to be done and as you can see (Simon) did a great job.



Biodiversity on your doorstep – Learning from Nature Free Webinars 22 – 26 February 2021

Join Europe Direct, Waterford, Waterford Libraries and Waterford Environmental Department for a week of FREE events from 22 – 26 February. Discover biodiversity in your own back yard whether it is in your own garden, the local Nature Park or Greenway. Learn how to protect and improve our local ecosystems. All Events are online.



For more information, www.waterfordlibraries.ie/biodiversity-on-your-doorstep

The EU's biodiversity strategy for 2030 is a comprehensive, ambitious and long-term plan to protect nature and reverse the degradation of ecosystems. The strategy aims to put Europe's biodiversity on a path to recovery by 2030, and contains specific actions and commitments.

It is the proposal for the EU's contribution to the upcoming international negotiations on the global post-2020 biodiversity framework. A core part of the European Green Deal, it will also support a green recovery following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Keynote

Giving your Garden back to Nature – A Talk by Mary Reynolds

Monday 22 February 7pm – 8pm

Join Mary Reynolds, Chelsea Gold medal winning Irish landscape designer, bestselling author and nature activist who encourages us to change the way you think as a gardener. Stop fighting nature and go against the controlling instinct and instead encourage those weeds, encourage untidiness, encourage life to return. The more biodiversity you can establish in your patch of earth, the more complex a food web that is restored.

Booking:

<https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/giving-your-garden-back-to-nature-a-talk-by-mary-reynolds-tickets-140064224867>

Webinars

Bees, Birds & Trees - Biodiversity & Waterford Council

Tuesday 23 February 11am – 12noon

Join staff from Waterford City & County Council who will tell us about Kilbarry Nature Park, planting for biodiversity, actions to help pollinators, opportunities for schools and TidyTown Groups as well as the Let the Dandelions Bee Campaign and some exciting Biodiversity Projects planned for 2021.

Waterford City & County Council Panel: **Ella Ryan**, Environmental Awareness Officer, **Bernie Guest**, Heritage Officer, **Eoin Dullea**, Horticulturist.

Claire Hartley, Head of Communications (Chair)

Booking: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/bees-birds-trees-biodiversity-waterford-council-tickets-140106740031>

Discover the new Digital Wildlife of Ireland Map! Wednesday 24 February 11am – 12noon

Neil Tarrant, along with Mairéad Ní Chiaruáin, is the co-creator of Ireland's first Digital Wildlife Map! This new online learning tool has been created especially for primary school students to help them and their families learn about the wildlife they can help protect in their communities. The interactive map is a fun way to learn all about the birds, mammals and fish native to Ireland. Children can explore the island of Ireland at home on the phone, tablet or computer, learn about which species are native to which areas, and test their knowledge with quizzes as they complete activities.

With everyone staying home during the current restrictions, and home-schooling ongoing, the Digital Wildlife of Ireland Map offers another resource for parents to engage children in learning and is accessible to anyone with an internet connection and a device. The map can be accessed on the Libraries Ireland website at www.nature.librariesireland.ie.

Booking: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/discover-the-new-wildlife-of-ireland-map-tickets-139955642093>

**The Birds, the Bees, the Flowers and the Trees
Biodiversity - from Brussels to your Doorstep!**

With Ecologist / MEP Grace O'Sullivan

Thursday 25 February at 11am on www.facebook.com/eudirect and Europe Direct Waterford YouTube Channel.

Learn how to spot Spring Flowers and become a Citizen Scientist with Oisín Duffy from the Waterford's National Biodiversity Data Centre

Friday 26 February 11am – 12noon

Discover how to spot 20 easily identifiable spring flowers and how you can become a Citizen Scientist and learn how to record your findings and contribute to furthering plant conservation in Ireland. Also find out more about the National Biodiversity Data Centre which is based in Waterford and how Biodiversity data is a key requirement for understanding our natural surroundings.

Booking: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/learn-how-to-spot-spring-flowers-and-become-a-citizen-scientist-tickets-139945491733>

2021 A New Year

2020 is now truly gone,
But in 2021 Covid goes on,
Oh now I wish we could put it to sleep,
And get on with our lives like it used to be.

Still we know we must soldier on,
And in Tidy Towns we are all so strong,
So upward and onward with no excuse,
We had a rest, now the test is yours.

To be a member you don't have to be smart,
Check in with Tidy Towns and they will give you the start,
You might be surprised with the joy,
You will get while helping others and doing your bit.

If you can dig a flower bed or paint a wall,
Wash down a sign or cut a lawn,
Pick up litter that's on the street,
Or spread some chippings it would be a treat.

A must for every town starting anew,
A simple plan of what you intend to do,
A few photographs of before and after,
And a few short lines with the entry form.

Good luck to you all and do keep safe,
In taking part you are all so great,
The future of Tidy Towns depends on you,
Your community will benefit too.

Denis Heffernan
February 2021

Thank you Denis for putting pen to paper and for sharing your wonderful creations with us again for the Newsletter. The future of TidyTowns depends on us all to work together. We really appreciate all the work and dedication of all the volunteers across the country put in to improving their place.

Pollinator Award

We are delighted to have the Pollinator Award as part of the 2021 SuperValu TidyTowns competition

The sponsors of the award have passed on some information that might assist you in preparing an entry for this year's Pollinator Award in the form of 10 Tips to help your entry for the Pollinator Award.

- Please fill in the proper application form completely
- Make sure your planting follows our Pollinator-friendly Planting Code
- Try to adopt a whole-town approach to your Pollinator Award entry
- Remember to protect what you have
- Nesting habitats
- Don't forget to protect your hedgerows
- Don't forget that hanging baskets or planters can also be planted with pollinator-friendly plants
- Please include a map and captioned photographs with your application.
- We have some new tools to help create awareness of pollinators
- Make sure you tell us about your good work— log your actions for Pollinators on our online mapping system

For more information on these tips or to find more information on Pollinator friendly plants and how you can do your best to help our Pollinators, please visit the following link.

<https://www.pollinators.ie/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Tips-on-entering-Tidy-Towns-Pollinator-Award.pdf>

Contact Us

See our website
www.pollinators.ie for
more information

**National Biodiversity
Data Centre**
Beechfield House,
West Campus,
Carriganore, Waterford

(051) 306240

Email: Pollinators
@biodiversityireland.ie

NEW VIDEOS AND ANIMATIONS

With the support of the Heritage Officers of Kildare, Tipperary, Wicklow, and Waterford County Councils, we have produced some videos and an animation to help explain the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

Please help to show/share these in your community and through social media. See www.pollinators.ie or <https://www.youtube.com/user/biodatacentre>



Ballyheigue TidyTowns - Kerry

The Press Officer from Ballyheigue TidyTowns Committee recently contacted us with regard to their recent litter picks. Well done to all involved on the litter picks.

The group have had many successful Litter Pick competitions, while adhering to Covid restrictions that has made a huge difference to the village and surrounding areas and would love the opportunity to highlight these efforts nationally. The following photographs show some of the wonderful efforts shown by those who were involved.



TidyTowns Grant Funding 2020



Caring for our environment

On December 24th last, Minister For Rural and Community Development Heather Humphreys announced funding of €1 million for TidyTowns groups to help them to prepare for the 2021 SuperValu TidyTowns competition. This allocation will provide €1,000 for every eligible TidyTowns group in the country.

We are very aware that so many groups have suffered financially during the pandemic. Not being able to hold your normal fundraising events has been very difficult and the generous sponsorship given by local businesses has in many cases not been there as many of these business themselves are struggling to keep going, also greatly affected by the pandemic. We need to keep our towns and villages in business by keeping our business in our towns and villages. Remember; Stay Local, Search Local and Shop Local.

The funding announced by the Minister is in addition to €1.4 million allocated to these groups at the end of 2019. This funding will help to prepare for the 2021 competition.

In total, there are 987 eligible TidyTowns groups registered across the country. Pobal will be administering the payment of this grant on behalf of the Department of Rural and Community Development. In light of the current restrictions as a result of COVID-19, Pobal will be communicating where possible with eligible groups via email. It would be desirable therefore, if groups could submit their form electronically rather than going to a post office.

As the closing date of February 28th is fast approaching, we would encourage all groups who are eligible for this funding and who have not yet sent in their application form to submit an application immediately.

This announcement brings the total amount of funding issued to TidyTowns groups by the Government of Ireland, through the Department in recent years to €5.2 Million.



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



<https://twitter.com/TidyTownsIre>



<https://www.tidytowns.ie>



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

Keep in Touch

Thank you as always for reading our newsletter, we hope you find the articles and stories both interesting and informative. Thank you to Denis for sharing his talents with us through his poetry, Emly are very lucky to have you. We would once again encourage those of you who have not yet applied for the TidyTowns funding to do so in the coming days as the closing date is February 28th.

We will continue to share stories with you all so please keep telling us what you are doing and how you are staying strong during the pandemic, it may be the case that your actions and stories will help others through these difficult weeks ahead.

Remember help is there if needed and if you have any concerns or questions around the competition for 2021 please send them into us and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

Our sponsors **SuperValu** who have been sponsoring the competition now for 30 years are so encouraged by the articles and stories being submitted by Groups that they have decided to sponsor **SuperValu** Gift Cards as they did last year. We hope to present some of these in time for Easter so keep those stories coming in.



The Newsletter issues to close on 1,000 groups every month, we encourage you to share it further in your communities through notice boards, WhatsApp groups etc. We also share it with all our sponsors, the national panel of TidyTowns Adjudicators, Heritage Officers, PPN's and a range of other bodies who have expressed an interest in it, not to mention the TidyTowns website, Facebook and Twitter. So you can see by sharing your activities with us, the potential for getting your message out there is endless.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to the SuperValu TidyTowns competition.

Anne, Helen, John and all the team in The TidyTowns Unit

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