

SuperValu TidyTowns Entry Form 2023



THE ACADEMY
OF URBANISM



THE URBANISM AWARDS 2022
THE GREAT TOWN / SMALL CITY

WINNER

"The volunteers of the 'Tidy Town' project work well with the Council to create and maintain planting schemes around the town, as well keeping it litter-free." Extract from Academy of Urbanism Report



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About You!

Name of your Town/Area/Village/Island: Dún Laoghaire

Name of your Town/Area/Village/Island in Irish: Dún Laoghaire

County: Dublin

Region: Midlands and East

Specify your Local Authority: Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council (DLRCOCO)

Last Year of Entry: 2022

Organisation Name: Dún Laoghaire Tidy Towns Group

Contact Name: Brian Flynn Address: 60 Mulgrave Street, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin A96 E803

Location: Our area is bounded by York Road (but including Cumberland Street), the west and east piers including the Pleasure Gardens, the Baths area and the Peoples Park, (but not the Newtownsmith seafront green area), Glenageary Road Lower and Glenageary Road Upper (see map01 below)

Phone: 0871772979

Email: dltidytowns@gmail.com

Internet or Social Media address: <https://www.dltidytowns.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/3204720799548095/>

<https://twitter.com/DunLaoghaireTT>

Population Category



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7108 (electoral districts Dún Laoghaire West Central, East Central and Glenageary)
source 2016 census

Prize Category Population

Village	<input type="checkbox"/> A (Under 200)	Large Town	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E (5,001 to 10,000)
	<input type="checkbox"/> B (201 to 1,000)		<input type="checkbox"/> F (10,001 to 15,000)
Small Town	<input type="checkbox"/> C (1,001 to 2,500)	Large Urban Centre	<input type="checkbox"/> G (15,001 to 25,000)
	<input type="checkbox"/> D (2,501 to 5,000)		<input type="checkbox"/> H (25,001 and over)

By signing below, I understand and agree to be bound by the terms and conditions of the SuperValu TidyTowns Competition and consent to the personal data contained in this form being released to printers for the purpose of posting invitations, entry forms, results books or other documentation for the purpose of administering the SuperValu TidyTowns Competition and other related initiatives. I also consent to this data being released to the TidyTowns Adjudicators as part of the Entry Form upon which our adjudication is based. I understand that the printers contracted to carry out this work will be advised that all data should be deleted once the specific task has been completed. I understand that Personal Data provided in this form will be retained by the Department for a period of 3 years for the distribution of entry forms and information directly related to the competition.

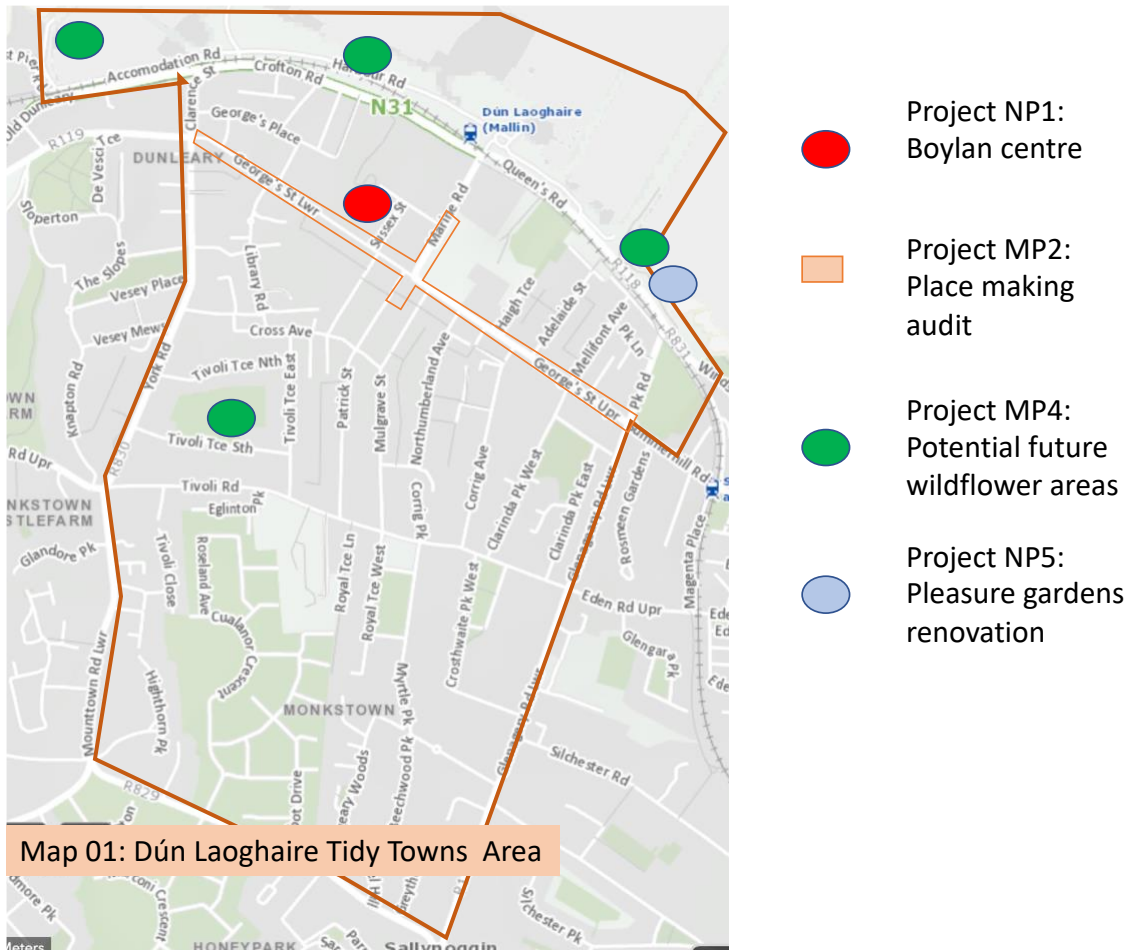
I understand that I can withdraw my consent at any time to this information being stored or used in this way by writing to the TidyTowns Unit stating I am withdrawing my consent.

Signed (on behalf of entrant)

Date: 9th May 2023

B Flynn

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Map 1: Dun Laoghaire Tidy Towns Area



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Community - Your Planning and Involvement



Please Note: Throughout this document.

DLRCOCO refers to Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council

DLTT refers to Dún Laoghaire Tidy Towns Group

DLCRA refers to Dún Laoghaire Central Residents Association

Town Team refers to a group representing various public and private sector stakeholder groups in the town.

Number of committee members: 8

Number not on committee but who volunteer: Our group has 100 registered volunteers. However, several have left the area or no longer regularly participate. The number of active volunteers (those who participate in our main weekly activity at least once per 2 weeks) is approximately 20. There has been some decline in the number of volunteers, and this is being addressed in a membership acceleration plan that is currently under active development.

In addition, we have a very successful Transition Year student volunteer program with two local secondary schools with an attendance of up to 19 students at each mid-week session during the academic year.

Level of voluntary commitment

Tidy Towns committee meetings are held bi-monthly. A public AGM is held annually each March. We publicly advertise our activities via notice boards, social media, bi-weekly mail shots and resident's association newsletters. An annual open day is held as is a lavender bouquet distribution day. We regularly seek new members via all our communication channels.

Supporting Agencies



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We are very conscious of the need to work with other organisations at all levels and have prioritized increased contacts and collaboration with all stakeholders around our town.



Funding and Sponsorship

Our main sources of funding are listed below:

- Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council grants
- POBAL Tidy Towns
- Our second annual table quiz was held on 12th April 2023. 50 local shops and businesses provided prizes and donations. The quiz is jointly organized with the local Rotary Club, and nearly 2000 euro for our projects, and 2000 euro for Rotary Club charities was raised.
- Annual Calendar. This was a co-production with the DLCRA and 1600 euro was raised to finance our projects.
- One off donations from local businesses and individuals.

Participation with stakeholders

We are active participants in several bodies.

- Dún Laoghaire Town Team – composed of business and community stakeholders of the town and DLRCOCO.
- Digital HQ which promotes the digitalisation of localities and their small businesses.
- Dún Laoghaire Central Residents Association
- Local Policing Forum
- DLR Public Participation Network PPN
- Rotary Club of Dún Laoghaire
- Lions club of Dún Laoghaire



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Photo 1: Our table quiz April 2023

BUMPER TABLE QUIZ

Wednesday 12th April 2023
The Royal Marine Hotel, Dún Laoghaire
7.30pm sharp (Doors open 7.00)

Proceeds in aid of



DÚN LAOGHAIRE TIDY TOWNS
and



ROTARY CLUB OF DÚN LAOGHAIRE
CHARITIES

Great Quiz Prizes & Raffle

TICKETS: €15.00 TABLE OF 4: €60.00

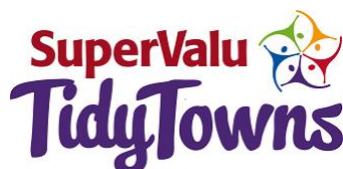
Tickets:

bridgetaylmer21@gmail.com frankiekelly00@gmail.com
cheryl.baker@ucd.ie catherine@designsecurity.ie

Mutual Support

We have established links with many community and other organisations.

- Residents' associations – joint greening, nature and biodiversity projects, clean-ups.
- Dún Laoghaire Men's Shed – Our local Men's Shed are fabricating planters, bird boxes, composters, etc. for installation in our green areas.
- St. John of God Carmona Services – Service users and their carers occasionally litter pick in the town. We provide all the equipment and work with them.
- Dún Laoghaire Further Education Institute – students have made bird boxes and bug hotels as part of their woodworking studies.
- St. Michael's church – care of green areas
- Active Retirement Association – joint visits
- Dún Laoghaire Bowling club – annual lavender harvesting



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- Coláiste Íosagáin – Transition Year Gaisce volunteer program
- Newpark Comprehensive – Transition Year Gaisce volunteer program

Communication with our community

We have active an active social media presence.

Internet <https://www.dltidytowns.com/>

Twitter <https://twitter.com/DunLaoghaireTT>

Facebook [Dun Laoghaire Tidy Towns Facebook](#)

We publish articles in each edition of DLCRA newsletter [DLCR Newsletter May 2022](#) and DLR PPN e-zine [DLR PPN April 2022 e-zine](#)

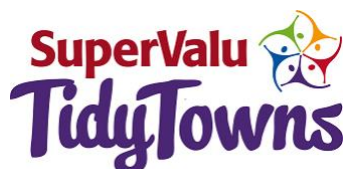
We have been interviewed on local and national radio on five occasions over the last year.

Schools and young persons

We have always welcomed transition year students on their GAISCE programme. In September 2022 we set up formal arrangements with two secondary schools: Coláiste Íosagáin and Newpark Comprehensive. Presentations were made to the schools, “as Gaeilge” in the case of Coláiste Íosagáin. The students join us each Tuesday afternoon during the academic year. A wide range of activities are carried out including litter picking, weeding, bulb planting, graffiti removal, pollinator counts, etc. Up to 19 students from the two schools have participated. Individual transition year students from five other local colleges come individually on Saturday mornings to our general clean-up.



Photo 2: Our Transition Year volunteers



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Although we have a small number of children who regularly participate in our clean-ups, we do not have a specific Junior Tidy Towns section. Parents with young children is one of target audiences of our 2023/4 short term membership acceleration plan. A summary of the draft plan is shown below.

Our membership acceleration plan has four pillars

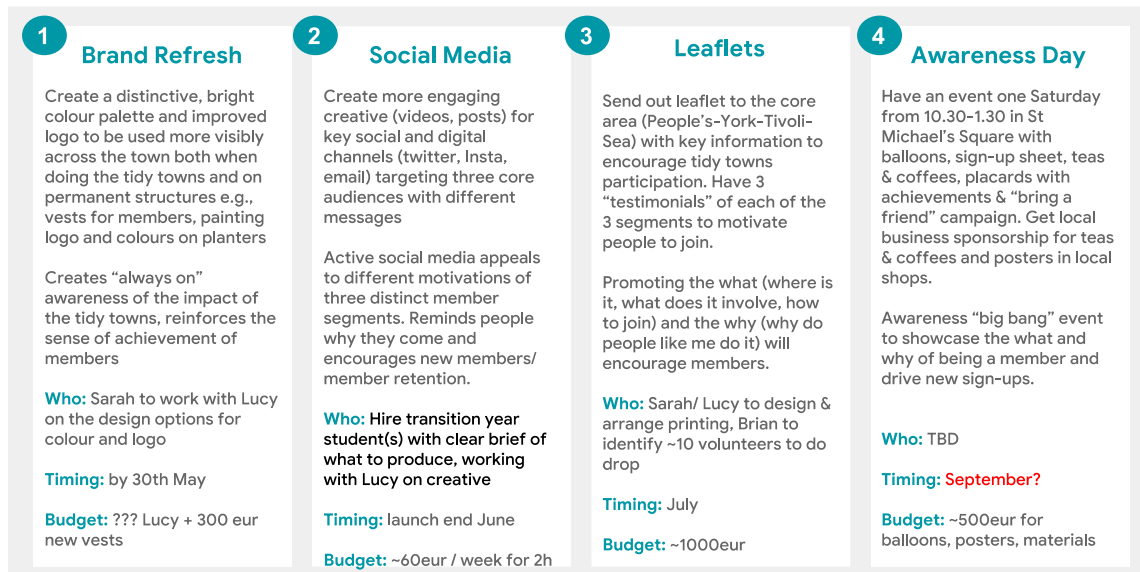


Figure 1: Draft Membership Acceleration Plan

Briefly identify **ONE** specific project where particular effort was applied since June 1st, 2022. (This can include ongoing maintenance work or new project)

Major Project

Project	Name	Commenced	Status
NPI	Boylan Community Centre Flower beds	June 2022	Active

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This significant green project started in June 2022 and was largely completed within 4 months. The work was entirely carried out by DLTT volunteers.

Removing rubble



Laying sleepers



Topsoiling



Planting



Photo 3: All hands on deck at the Boylan Centre

The Boylan Community Centre is located in a relatively run down part of the town. A number of social services are delivered at the Centre including



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Crosscare youth services and the Active Retirement Group. Littering and illegal drinking and drug taking have been prevalent around the Centre. Our Tidy Towns group launched a project in summer 2022 to renovate, expand and plant two large flower beds. Two large murals were also installed at the location. This has transformed the area. We have engaged with those who were previously drinking and littering in the area and the amount of anti-social behaviour in the area has very significantly decreased. *The project directly supports SDG 11 – Sustainable cities and communities and SDG 15 – Life on Land*



Photo 4: Boylan Centre before (2021) and after April 2023

Approximately how many years has your community entered the competition. How has your community benefited from involvement in the competition?

Dún Laoghaire entered from 2014 to 2017. The group restarted in 2020 and this is our third successive entry since 2021. The wide range of criteria in the National Tidy Towns competition requires actions and engagement by all stakeholders, (residents, visitors, local businesses, community organisations and the county council). We have been successful in obtaining the engagement and commitment of many of these stakeholder groups. Whereas the physical results; a cleaner, greener, bio-diverse

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environment, improved sustainability, extensive public realm improvements, etc. are the visible manifestations of this engagement, there is a growing sense of community in Dún Laoghaire, and this is the real value of our participation in the competition.

Streetscape & Public Places



The town of Dún Laoghaire is well known for its many heritage buildings (Mariner's church, County Hall, Oratory, Royal Marine hotel, etc.), its monuments, its seafront, and the harbour. More modern examples of excellent buildings include the Irish Lights building and the Lexicon library. Thousands of visitors come to our town each year. We are sure that the judges will admire all the above.

A major achievement for the town in 2022 was the winning of the European Academy of Urbanism Award for "Great Town / Small City". The Great Places Urbanism Awards are the Academy's primary platform for recognising and celebrating outstanding examples of good urbanism across the UK, Ireland and Europe. The adjudicators recognised the exceptional public realm works that have taken place around the town (cycle route, baths restoration, pedestrianisation trial, etc.). They met with our Tidy Towns team and were very impressed with the spirit of volunteering and community engagement. The Tidy Towns concept appears unique to Ireland and the adjudicators were very impressed by this.

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The catchment area for our Tidy Towns group is quite large and we are obliged to concentrate our main activities on the centre of our town and the seafront area.



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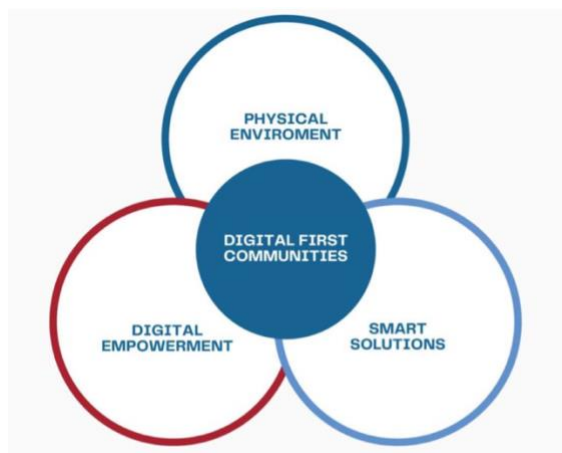
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We have launched a significant Streetscape and Public Spaces initiative in the town centre area.

Project	Name	Commenced	Status
MP2	Town centre Place making audit	May 2022	Active

The audit was carried out by Tidy Towns volunteers in Autumn 2022. It is part of a larger initiative in collaboration with Digital Dún Laoghaire and established a 'Digital First Community Benchmark 2023'. Dún Laoghaire has become the national flagship for the 'Digital First Communities' model.



This new framework for vibrant localities is directly aligned with Government policy for reimagining our towns and villages across Ireland. The physical environment of the town is one of the three pillars in building the concept of digital first communities. The benchmark was presented to a large audience of stakeholders on the 27th April 2023.

Figure 2: Digital First Communities

The audit assessed the town centre premises in several criteria:

- Overall building façade
- Shop front signage.
- Condition of pavements
- Quality of ground floor façade
- General cleanliness of ground floor façade
- Presence of weeds (façade, roof/parapet)
- Redundant signage
- Hoardings
- Building usage (ground and upper floors) including business type/ vacant/derelict/ residential
- Historic features

A small sample of the results is reproduced below.

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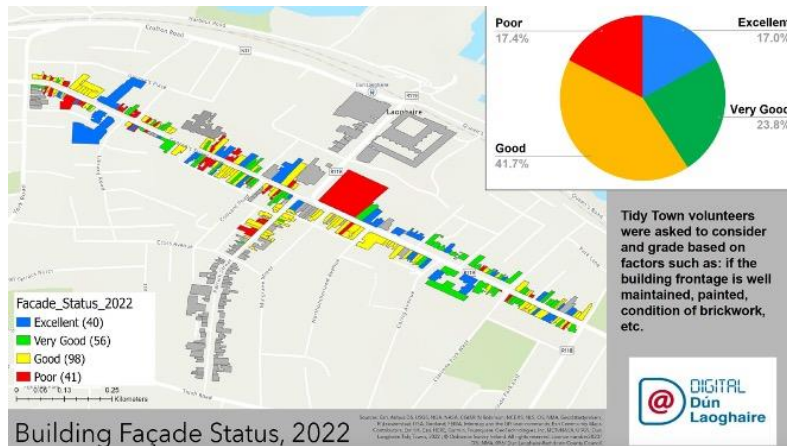


Figure 3: Placemaking audit results

The audit will be repeated on an annual basis by Tidy Towns. The results provide invaluable information in tracking the progress of our town centre, identifying improvement actions that can be actioned by local businesses, Tidy Towns and the council. For example, the council and the local business association have provided funds for the removal of weeds from the roof areas of a large number of premises in our main street. Reliable statistics on vacant premises and upper floors will allow for better identification of future mixed-use retail/residential opportunities that can not only regenerate our town but contribute to the alleviation of the housing crisis. Tidy Towns is actively supporting a petition by a local councillor to persuade a major retail chain to bring 4 vacant premises in the main street back into use.

Publication of the audit results will hopefully persuade business owners to restore and refurbish their shopfronts, perhaps availing of the 5000€ grant that is available from DLRCOCO.



Photo 5: Recently restored shop front in Lower Georges Street

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Project	Name	Commenced	Status
MP3	Heritage	May 2020	Active

DLTT established a three-year heritage plan that was included in our 2022 Tidy Towns entry. Unfortunately, progress has been somewhat slower than hoped.

Subject	Progress
<p>Tourism signage: The Fáilte Ireland <u>Dublin Coastal trail</u> signage exists since March 2022.</p> <p>A new <u>Dun Laoghaire Harbour Trail</u> signage project has been completed in April 2023.</p>	Very good progress
<p>Heritage Artefacts: There are twelve extant <u>historic post boxes</u> in Dún Laoghaire, ten of which are in daily use. They range in date from the late-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries and several display royal cyphers of Queen Victoria, King Edward VII and King George V. Following a full audit of the post boxes carried out by DLTT, contact was made with An Post to request a programme of painting / maintenance as many of the boxes were in poor condition. This work was carried out by An Post in 2022 resulting in a much-improved appearance for these important items of Dún Laoghaire's industrial heritage.</p> <p>Several of the <u>original tram poles</u> are still present in the town. DLTT has catalogued these and hopes to have appropriate plaques placed on each tram pole.</p>	Very good progress
DLTT continues to lobby for the role of <u>Richard Toutcher</u> in creating Dún Laoghaire harbour to be recognised by the renaming of Myrtle Square as Toutcher Square and/or the erection of a suitable monument in the Pleasure gardens on the sea front.	Will be pursued in Living Streets project
	Part of submission on Pleasure Gardens below

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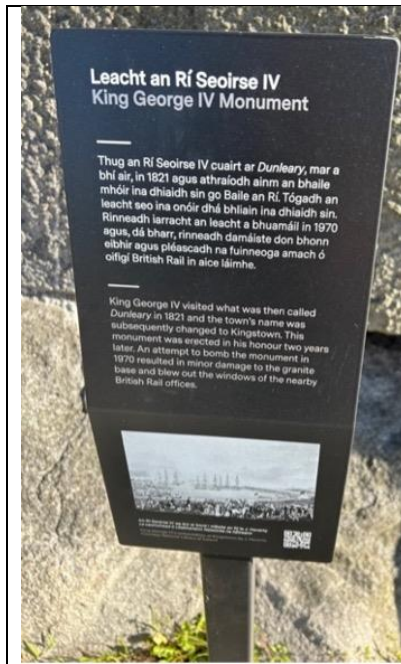


Photo 6: New Dun Laoghaire Harbour Trail



Photo 7: Crofton Road post box dating 1901-1908 with royal cypher of Edward VII, before and after restoration

Public Realm Improvements

DLRCOCO continues to invest very significant amounts of capital expenditure in improving the public realm in our town.

St. Michael's Square is entering its second full year in existence with a native Irish Oak as the centrepiece. This area provides a seating area with an attractive garden right in the middle of the town. DLTT maintains the planted area. The square should be in full bloom when the judges visit.



Photo 8: St. Michaels Square Summer 2022, Spring 2023

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Myrtle Square & Convent Lane Greening

The development of a public square and the upgrade of a prominent lane in the heart of Dun Laoghaire town is well into the construction phase. Greening is a central aspect of the project. This is seen as contributing functionally to the scheme through the ability of trees canopies, root systems and soft landscape areas to attenuate, intercept rainfall and surface run-off and reduce the urban heat island effect. The potential to provide habitat for wildlife in the centre of the town is another positive characteristic. The landmark canopy structure will act as a frame to grow climbing plants on. The project is scheduled for completion in September 2023.

Unfortunately, this will be too late for the judges to appreciate this important improvement. DLTT has agreed to look after the green elements of the square with the collaboration of the Parks department.



Photo 9: Artists impression Myrtle Square

Living Streets Dún Laoghaire is a new project that will bring sustainable mobility and public realm improvements to make the local streets safer & greener, keep our economy vibrant, and communities more connected.

Town Centre – Streetscape upgrades

Better landscaping, planting, and seating throughout the length of the town main street and side streets create a safe, welcoming, and vibrant environment.

Pedestrianisation of part of Georges Street Lower

Living Streets Neighbourhood

Reducing through traffic with enhanced planting and seating in residential areas close to centre

Sustainable Mobility Improvements



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Providing enhanced active travel options and an optimal public transport offer.

The project timeline is shown below, and the full public consultation will take place in summer 2023. DLTT is actively participating in the consultation and design process.

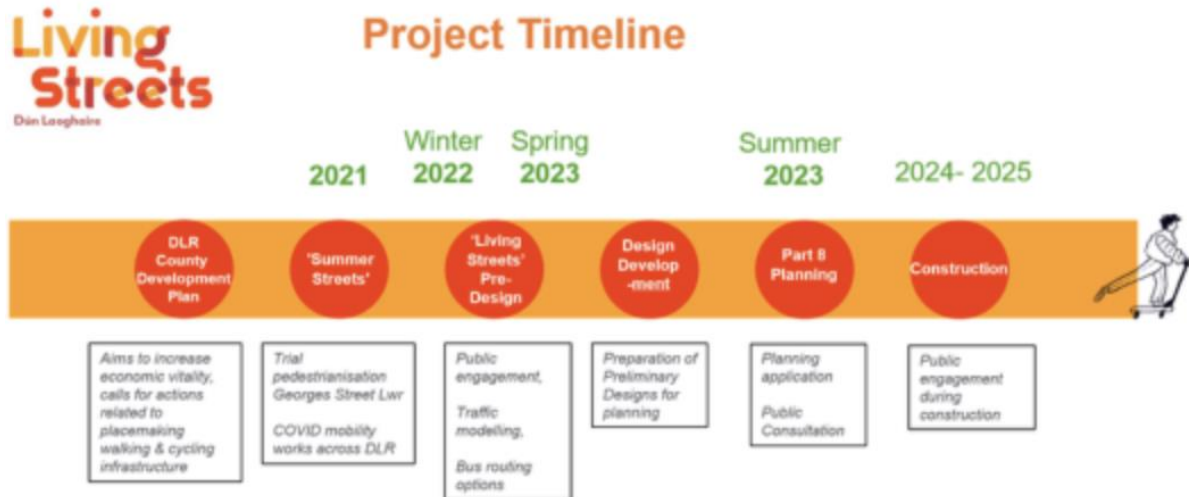


Figure 4: Living Streets Project Timeline

Street Art – Dún Laoghaire Anseo

The Dún Laoghaire street mural project, **Anseo 2022**, welcomed another ten artists to the town over the course of 12 days in August 2022. The number of large murals is now 25. The Street Artists have interpreted the very essence of what is Dún Laoghaire borrowing not just from its marine heritage, local characters, and its wildlife, but also reflecting many of the elements that give Dún Laoghaire its unique identity and sense of place. The 2022 programme included young artists from the local IADT (Institute of Art, Design and Technology) who were mentored by more experienced artists.



Photo 10: Street mural being painted

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Accessibility – How walkable is our town?

Early in 2022 DLTT conducted an informal survey of the town centre and seafront using some of the criteria in the 2015 National Disability Authority publication “How walkable is your town” NDA report. The findings were reported in last year’s entry. The results were generally good apart from some lack of public toilets, some unsheltered bus stops and need for better signage for parking. The last area is being addressed in the short term by DLRCOCO. In accordance with best urban design practices the council has since installed **red or buff coloured tactile paving** at almost all street crossings. DLTT will continue to press to the remaining improvements to be implemented.

Maritime Seascape

Our maritime “streetscape and public place” or “seascape” is unrivalled and could well merit a totally separate category.



The Dún Laoghaire marina is the largest in Ireland (820 berths). The yacht club buildings are maintained in pristine conditions by the members. One example here where the original railings of the National Yacht Club have been restored to their former glory using traditional artisanal restoration skills.

Photo 11: Detail of the restored railings at National Yacht Club

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Dún Laoghaire Baths

The Dún Laoghaire Baths re-opened in December 2022 after significant redevelopment of the facility. The works included the refurbishment of the baths pavilion, the construction of a new jetty with built in seating, the installation of the Roger Casement statue, the refurbished Edwardian gazebo in the beach garden and a new walkway from Newtownsmith.



Photo 12: Restored Dun Laoghaire Baths

Green Spaces and Landscaping



Public Green Areas

One of our best-known public spaces is the **People's Park** which is maintained to a very high standard by the Parks Department (biodiverse planting, children's playground, frequent litter collection, adequate bins).

Traditional bedding plants have been replaced with more sustainable and pollinator-friendly herbaceous perennials. The park is host to a vibrant Sunday market, that also spreads along the Metals to the grounds of the Lexicon library and is visited by thousands each Sunday.



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Photo 13: Peoples Park

We have several beautiful parks in residential areas, such as Clarinda, Crosthwaite and Royal Terrace. These are well looked after by a combination of local residents, the Parks department and Tidy Towns.



Photo 14: Crosthwaite Park Spring 2023

Crosthwaite Park is an excellent example of collaboration between residents, DLTT and DLRCOCO. The young apple trees (including native heritage varieties) will soon produce edible fruits. The fruit trees are surrounded by a carpet of wild clover grown from seed. Thousands of bulbs provided by Tidy Towns and planted jointly with residents bring an explosion of colour in Springtime. Perennial shrubs supplied by Tidy Towns have been planted around the park perimeter. A bug hotel has been

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installed and the latest addition is a communal herb planter, built by the local Men's shed and financed by our Tidy Towns group.

Significant improvements have been made between the railway tracks and the harbour from the Seafront Plaza to the Irish Lights building. This has included reseeding the area, planting small trees, installing seating and tables, additional litter bins and improved signage for tourists. Plans are being developed for a children's playground and flower beds / wildflower meadows in this area. This is particularly timely.



Photo 15: West Seafront area

A large number of cruise ships visit Dún Laoghaire (outside berthing or harbour) for 24 hour periods in the months from April to October. In 2022 there were almost 80 and this is planned to rise to 100 this year. 150,000 tourists are expected during the season. The guests are welcomed into the town by a team to orientate them around the town and/or county/city.



Photo 16: MV Zuiderdam outside the harbour, and its passengers enjoying the west seafront plaza (30 April 2023)

Our Tidy Towns group is very conscious of the importance of green spaces and flower gardens in an urban environment, both to increase wildlife and biodiversity and for the physical and mental health of the human population. Our aim is to see Dún Laoghaire well provided with such spaces



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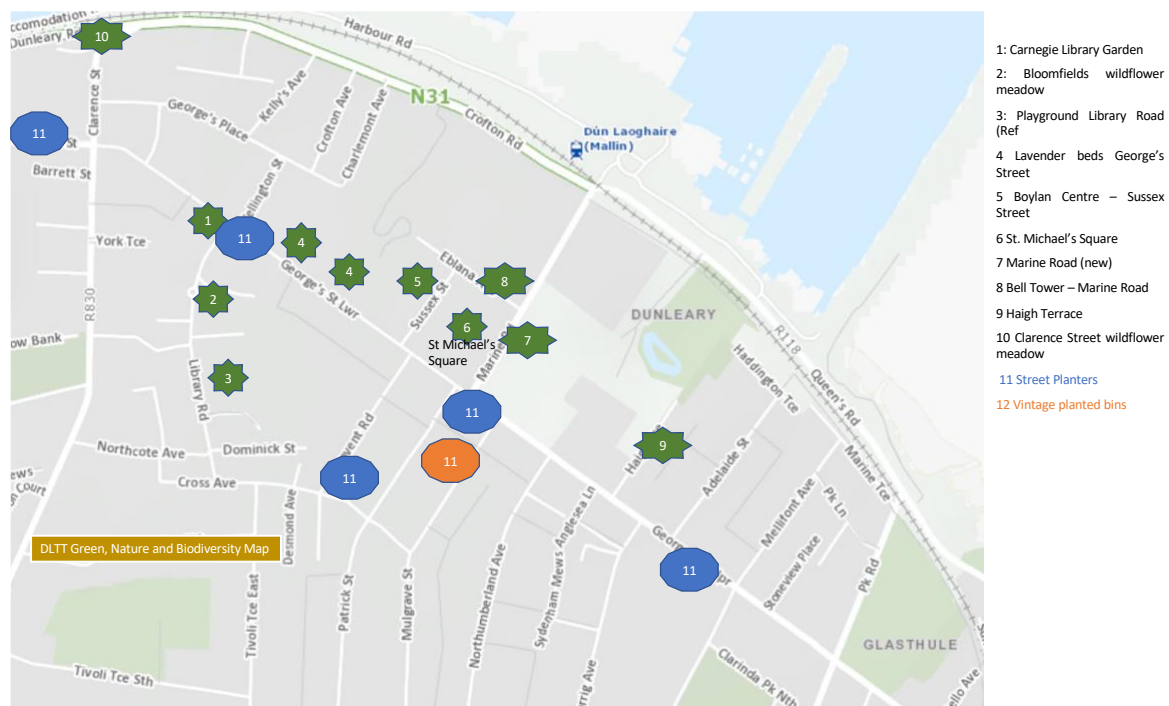
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to satisfy human needs for beauty and outdoor spaces to socialise, while ensuring that pollinators do not have far to travel to find their next meal. We are starting from a good position with some well-established parks and our seafront; we are trying to improve what is already there and to create new pollinator friendly 'pockets' in built up areas.

Last year we presented each DLTT managed green area as a separate project. Most of these are now on a care, maintenance, and renewal basis. We have therefore grouped these areas under one green project.

Project	Name	Commenced	Status
MP4	Provide bio-diverse green areas in town centre	August 2020	Active



Map 2: Green biodiverse town centre

As can be seen from the map above DLTT plants and maintains a significant number of flower bed areas including 2 wildflower meadows, 9 street planters and 4 vintage bin planters. Work starts each Autumn with the harvesting of our lavender beds in George's Street, extensive pruning, and composting where possible during early winter followed by bulb



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planting. Regular weeding and watering are carried out during the summer. Where possible water is sourced from our rainwater butts (approximately 30% of our requirements which we are planning to increase). Of course, since these green areas are in public areas with a large footfall, they are all carefully litter picked each week. The assistance of our Transition Year students is invaluable in these endeavours and the observation of the annual nature cycle is a good learning experience for them.

A full replacement program for the nine planters is in progress and will be completed in the next two weeks. This issue was suggested by the 2022 adjudication report. A selection of images from our Tidy Towns managed green areas is included below.

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Carnegie Library	Bloomfields	Boylan Centre
		
Georges Street Lavender beds	St. Michaels Square	Marine Road
		
Clarence Street		Crosthwaite

Photo 17: A selection of Spring colour from our DLTT planted areas

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Project	Name	Commenced	Status
NP5	Pleasure gardens renovation	August 2022	Medium – Long term

The much-welcomed completion of the Dún Laoghaire Baths project has focussed attention on the adjacent Lido area and the Pleasure Gardens as there is now a continuous uninterrupted walkway along the coast from Sandycove to the East Pier, leading to a significant increase in pedestrian traffic in these adjoining locations. DLTT undertakes litter-picking and weeding work in the area on a weekly basis, but it is a continuing source of frustration that it has been largely neglected over the years. We therefore compiled and submitted a comprehensive dossier to the council to turn it into a more attractive public amenity for the enjoyment of both residents and visitors alike. DLTT believes that there is an opportunity to create a unique coastal park in the timeframe of the County development plan (i.e. 5 years).



The proposal was submitted to senior management at the council and to all local politicians seeking their active support. Our proposals call for additional flower beds, a coastal wildflower area, additional seating, a public performance area, new toilets, public lighting, and the renovation of all concrete structures.

We are pleased to say that at least one of our proposals, renovation of the old public toilets, has been taken on board and other minor improvements are in hand in the short term. We will continue to lobby hard for this proposal.

Photo 18: Pleasure gardens

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Nature and Biodiversity



Our Tidy Towns group includes nature and biodiversity in all of its green activities, which have been described in the previous section.

Wildflower meadows

We have 2 fully established wildflower meadows under our direct responsibility (Clarence Street and Bloomfields), and a further one has been developed by one of our residents' associations (Royal Terrace). Our longer-term objectives include maritime wildlife areas (see [Pleasure Gardens Project NP5](#) above)



Photo 19: Bloomfields summer 2022

Urban Orchards

There are two urban orchards now established within the town (Crosthwaite and Royal Terrace). Heritage apple trees have been planted. Although it will be a few years before significant harvesting can take place, these orchards already provide a rich pollinator friendly environment. The underplanting of the Crosthwaite orchard with wild clover further enhances the biodiversity.



Photo 20: Crosthwaite Urban Orchard

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Pollinator Friendly plantings

In all our green activities we have tried to use pollinator friendly plants encouraging biodiversity. The varieties of plants included in our successful grant applications include Cornus, Viburnum, Dodonea, Sarcococca, Cosmos, Agapanthus, Dahlia, Kosmos, Leucanthemum, Skimia as well as a variety of herbs, lavender and pollinator friendly bulbs.

Of course, our wildflower meadows are exclusively composed of pollinator friendly species.

Bug Hotels

5 bug hotels have to date been installed. These were made using only recycled materials (wood, slate, hollow blocks, bamboo canes, etc.). Natural materials collected from nearby non-protected areas (pinecones, moss, twigs, decayed fallen branches, etc.).



Photo 21: Bug hotel at Carnegie Library

Bird boxes, feeders, and bird baths

Several have been installed in the Carnegie Library Garden. We have several others ready for installation at suitable locations over the coming months.

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Photo 22: Looking after the birds

Swift calling boxes

Swift calling stations and bird boxes have been installed on Bloomfields wildflower meadow site. 18 months after installation we have noted that birds are using the bird boxes. We have two other calling stations ready for installation but are still seeking a suitable location. DLTT has established contact with Birdwatch Ireland, and we have sought their advice on developing further bird friendly initiatives and projects. DLRCOCO have installed such boxes at the County Hall and a few other locations also.



Photo 23: Swift calling box

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Communal Herb gardens



Photo 24: Communal herb garden in Crosthwaite Park

Five communal herb gardens have now been installed by our Tidy Towns group in collaboration with residents' associations (an increase of three since last year). The planters have been made for us by the local Men's shed and the Further Education Institute at low-cost using wood from sustainably managed forests.

We are collaborating with the management company of the Cualanor property management company on the installation of an herb garden and 4 mini bug hotels that we donated to them last year. This is expected to be "launched" with a gathering of residents of the Fairways section of Cualanor shortly. A few of our green fingered volunteers will give short talks to residents and their children on the care of such planters.

Bees and beehives

Although we found a beekeeper who is willing to donate and care for beehives, we continue to search for a suitable and safe location for these.

Pollinator survey

The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan sets out to make Ireland a more pollinator-friendly country by increasing suitable habitats and planting areas both in the countryside and in towns.

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DLTT is committed to doing its part in the promotion of biodiversity, creating pockets of pollinator-friendly planting throughout the town. It also intends to contribute to the related objectives of:

- Raising awareness of pollinators
- Expanding knowledge of pollinators
- Gathering evidence to track changes.

In June 2022, we carried out two pollinator counts in the form of [flower-insect timed \(FIT\) counts](#) with pupils of the Dominican Convent Primary School at the Carnegie and Bloomfield sites. We intend to repeat this around the same date this year as repeat data from the same site is invaluable.



Photo 25: Students from Dominican convent June 2022



Photo 26: Students from Newpark Comprehensive September 2022

In September 2022, we carried out another survey at the Bloomfield site with Transition Year students from Newpark Comprehensive and Coláiste Íosagáin. This will be repeated in late September 2023 to enable trend analysis over time. Data from all three surveys was submitted to the [National Biodiversity Data Centre](#).

We also take account of DLR's [Invasive Alien Species Action \(IAS\) Plan](#) and monitor sites within the town for invasive species such as Japanese knotweed. Following our reports Knotweed was successfully removed from the grounds of the disused senior school in Eblana Avenue.



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Potential Future Green area / Biodiversity Projects

DLTT has identified additional areas for potential future projects. These are illustrated on the map below.

The concept is to have a town centre with good biodiverse floral plantings and planters. This will be surrounded by a number of public green spaces (parks) outside the centre and complemented by a number of wildflower areas towards the periphery.

- The green area between the East pier and the Dún Laoghaire baths is known as the Pleasure Gardens. There is potential for a maritime garden to be installed here. We have submitted concrete proposals for this area (see project NP5)
- Wind hardy biodiversity-friendly plants could be planted along the West Pier providing additional points of interest for the pier walker as well as improving the habitat for birds and insects.
- A Maritime Coastal Garden on part of the existing green area on Harbour Road.
- A large privately owned green area is located on Tivoli Terrace South. Tidy Towns group (and DLCRA) consider that this area should be acquired by DLRCOCO and become another public park. DLTT would also be keen to play a role in the planting and maintenance of the planted areas.



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Map 3: Future concept for green / biodiverse areas

There is no current timeline available for these proposals, but they will realistically not take place before a few years considering the timescales for such projects and the amount of other public realm investment currently engaged.

In all our green spaces, nature and bio-diversity activities we are working increasingly closer with many partners; DLRCOCO, residents associations, Men's Shed, Dominican Primary School, Dún Laoghaire Bowling Club, Dún Laoghaire Further Education Institute, etc. This is directly meeting **SDG 17, Partnership for the goals.**

Our coastline and Life below water (SDG14)

A considerable amount of activity is taken up with regular litter picking along the piers and the Coal harbour, the Pleasure gardens, but also along the rocky shoreline. Large amounts of refuse dangerous to marine life are regularly removed. Extra-long pickers have been purchased to enable access to rocky areas along the seafront. This activity is supporting **SDG 14 – Life below water.** DLTT does not directly engage in marine activities as it is beyond our capacity and expertise.

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The activities of the local marine environment charity [Flossie and the Beachcleaners](#) and the Coal Harbour Summer Safety Patrol, water quality checks and litter control are other significant actions carried out by local partners that directly support **SDG 14; sustaining and improving life below water**. Our yachting, sailing and other maritime organisations are very environmentally conscious ensuring the preservation of our “blue” natural biodiverse heritage.

Sustainability - Doing more with less



On the 13th of May 2022 Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown County Council became the first local authority in Ireland to join the European wide network of like-minded and ambitious cities and local authorities working to move from a linear to a circular (sustainable) economy. The European Circular Cities Declaration requires leadership in climate action, sustainability, and resource management. DLTT is equally committed to a circular sustainable environment in our town, and we expect actions and projects in this area will gain increasing importance.

Recycling

- We segregate litter collected and bring glass bottles, plastic bottles and cans to our local recycling park using a bicycle and trailer.



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- A number of local cafés use coffee cups that can be recycled and also recycle their coffee granules. Several offer a 20 eurocents reduction for those who bring their own container.
- DLRCOCO have installed several segregated litter bins around the town to facilitate recycling.
- One of our Supermarkets (Tesco) provides a recycling facility for all soft and hard plastic packaging.



Photo 27: Tesco recycling

Avoidance

- DLTT uses paperless methods of communication (emails, texts, social media).
- A Water Bottle Refilling Station has been installed in Myrtle Square (*This is currently withdrawn from service due to works in progress at the square*).

Reuse

DLTT uses recycled materials in building bug hotels, composters etc.

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Dún Laoghaire has become a mecca for second-hand shops with 6 charity shops selling second-hand clothes, furniture, books, etc.



Photo 28: Charity shop Lower George's Street

There is one commercial second-hand shop and 3 vintage shops. Not only do the charity shops raise much needed funds for worthy causes (**contributing to SDG1 'Zero poverty'**), but they make a large contribution towards a circular economy.

The "Bike Hub" is a social enterprise located on the seafront along the cycleway. The objective is to help make cycling accessible to as many people as possible in the local communities. It is a not-for-profit organisation staffed mainly by local volunteers. Used bicycles are repaired and put back into service.



Photo 29: The bike hub, Dun Laoghaire Harbour

Reducing our environmental footprint.

- We have installed 2 water butts (capacity 400 litres), and this minimizes our use of tap water.
- We use hand trolleys to transport gardening equipment for weeding/planting, rather than cars.
- All our volunteers walk, cycle, or use public transport to travel to our activities and meetings, a key element in delivering **SDG11 'Sustainable cities and communities'**.
- DLRCOCO and DLTT do not use any pesticides in weeding. This obviously makes our job more labour intensive.



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- DLRCOCO are transitioning their entire vehicle fleet to be electric powered. Their public buildings are also being upgraded to be more energy efficient.
- Two initiatives – the coastal cycle route and the future pedestrianisation of Lower George's Street – have and will increase walking and cycling, reducing our environmental impact.
- The local Dominican Primary School is very active in the green school's programme and has achieved 6 green flags. There is a green school committee composed of children from each class, and a green code focusing on sustainability. DLTT collaborates with the school and has provided planters and compost for wildflowers. The children have participated in our pollinator surveys.

Digital Dún Laoghaire

@DigitalDunLaoghaire is a local, volunteer driven initiative. Its mission is to help attract and grow new businesses, to help businesses and social enterprises in our town transition to the digital economy and, in order to fill empty buildings and increase footfall with a high capture rate, project Dún Laoghaire Town through digital channels as a great place to shop, work and spend time.

The organisation promotes a shop local initiative, co-working and shared office spaces and digital business solutions. All these initiatives progress towards the 15-minute city and a circular economy providing a much more **sustainable** model than the traditional suburban <> capital commuting model.



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Tidiness and Litter Control



The annual An Taisce Report – IBAL Anti-Litter League, Round 2, 2021 found Dún Laoghaire to be 6th out of 40 towns / cities surveyed and **cleaner than European Norms**. This was very significant progress from 2019 when the town was found to be in 24th place. The town was not surveyed by IBAL in 2022 but we are confident that we would have achieved similar results.

The DLRCOCO Cleansing department carries out great work cleaning our town. Staffing was increased substantially to the extent that the town centre and seafront is cleaned twice daily, seven days a week. The Parks department litter picks the Seafront pleasure gardens daily.



If you take a walk around central Dún Laoghaire between 7 in the morning and mid-afternoon you are likely to see a member of the council cleaning staff litter picking, sweeping, emptying council bins etc. Christopher Byrne is a long serving member of the Council cleansing department. He is a quiet and unassuming man who carries out his work efficiently in all weathers without complaint.

Photo 30: Our local hero - council employee Christopher Byrne

Christopher and his colleagues continue to make a huge contribution to maintaining our town in an excellent condition. For this reason, Dún Laoghaire Tidy Towns Group nominated Christopher as our Local Hero for 2022. The tribute to Christopher was published in the December PPN E-zine online magazine.

Additional large bins are placed around the town for the entire summer period. This has had a great impact. The amount of litter

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collected by our group has substantially decreased and we are able to concentrate on particular areas that need attention.

DLTT current clean-up activities can be summarised as follows:

Saturday morning 10h30 to 12h00:

Main clean-up. We collect 5 to 10 fifty litre bags of litter each Saturday, which is collected by DLRCOCO from our three collection points, normally within 24 hours. This is a reduction of 50% in the amount of litter compared to the previous 12 months.



Photo 31: Typical Saturday morning litter "haul"

In addition to extensive litter picks (cigarette butts, food and other packaging, cans, bottles), deep cleaning (sweeping, weeding, removal of large items) is carried out in one of our laneways or other problem areas by one group. We split our volunteers into several groups to ensure an efficient operation.

Tuesday afternoon: Each Tuesday afternoon senior volunteers and Gaisce Transition year students carry out a range of gardening (weeding, pruning, bulb planting), litter picking and graffiti removal tasks.



Photo 32: TY students with their magic broomstick on a Tuesday afternoon

Individual clean-ups: Clean-ups are carried out by individual volunteers each week. The areas concentrated on include the



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harbour area, east and west piers, seafront outdoor dining areas, George's Street and Marine Road.

Community Clean-ups: Several residents associations organise bi-annual clean-ups including Royal Terrace, Crosthwaite Park, Cualanor, Clarinda Park and Northumberland street.



Photo 33: Community clean-ups

Friday Express clean-up: A quick clean-up of the main street normally takes place on Friday at 4pm during summer months.

Waste segregation

We have equipped ourselves with the means to ensure that most litter collected is segregated and brought to our local recycling centre by bicycle and trailer. Where possible green waste from weeding and pruning is composted at the Bloomfields wildflower meadow site.

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Composition of litter

Cigarette butts continue to be the most problematic litter issue. The Lower George's Street shopping area, outside St. Michaels Hospital, bus stops and the area around the DART station are the worst affected areas. We have sampled several litter sacks and found the following approximate quantities.

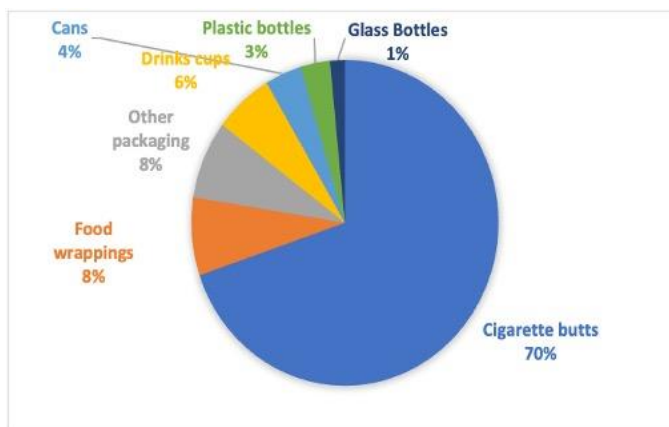


Figure 5: Composition of litter

The latest item that is becoming prevalent are vaping cannisters and associated packaging (included under other packaging above).

Although small in size the effort in collecting cigarette butts is disproportionate.

Cigarette smokers do not seem to consider discarding butts as littering. They are difficult to pick up as they lodge in crevices between paving stones and in gullies. Even though each Big Belly Bin is equipped with an ashtray this is not deterring the discarding of butts.

Discussions have restarted between us, strongly supported by a local Councillor, DLRCOCO and a start-up cigarette butt recycling company (Filtracycle). We are hopeful that a trial installation of high vis special cigarette butt bins accompanied by a strong publicity campaign can be launched over the coming months.

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Dog Fouling

Dog ownership has increased throughout and since COVID. This has brought problems of dog fouling particularly around the seafront, but also in streets and laneways. DLRCOCO has increased the number of warning signs, carried out some additional “dog poo patrols”, placed advertisements on big belly bins and provided dog-poo bags in a number of areas. From our own observations it is very difficult to catch offenders in the act.



Photo 34: Anti dog fouling poster

Graffiti

There has been a dramatic increase in the instances of graffiti around the town (both on public and private properties).

DLRCOCO responds quickly to requests to remove graffiti from public places but has no mandate to do so from private properties.



DLTT carries out some graffiti removal. However, the size of our area and the amount of graffiti that the town “attracts” means we only can have a limited impact.

Photo 35: TY students removing graffiti in Mulgrave Street

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Luckily some local businesses also remove graffiti from around their premises. Unfortunately, not many do. Local café owner Jake is pictured here painting over graffiti on post-boxes outside his premises on Marine Road.



Photo 36: Jake from Shoe Lane coffee removing graffiti

Weeding

DLTT normally undertakes weeding of green areas and streets and laneways in the centre of our town and the seafront at our Tuesday clean-ups. This has been a very manually intensive and slow task. We have now secured a large, motorized weeding machine thanks to DLRCOCO and this is now being put to good use. Hopefully the adjudicators can note the before and after improvements.

Neither DLRCOCO nor DLTT use any herbicides for weed control.



Photo 37: Our new weeding machine is delivered



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Thanks to our excellent relations with the Operations manager of Dún Laoghaire Harbour, the cooperation of harbour users (fishermen and pleasure sailors), and the work of our local volunteers significant improvements in the tidiness of the central harbour area have been achieved over the last year.



Photo 38: Coal Harbour

Dún Laoghaire Tidy Towns maintains regular contact with the Harbour Operations Manager regarding bin collections and ways to improve the waterfront amenities for the public. We are also in consultation with the proposed National Water Sports Campus and Sailing Clubs to include biodiversity and integration with Dún Laoghaire town.

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Residential Streets & Housing Areas



Dún Laoghaire is a large suburban town with a mix of business and commercial (town centre), residential (old town streets, Victorian streets and squares, in-town apartment developments, mixed apartment / housing developments such as Cualanor), and public areas (harbour, Lexicon, parks).

There are several excellent examples of well-maintained small and larger residential areas.

Crothwaite Park, Royal Terrace Park, Clarinda Park are all excellent examples of well-maintained squares of Victorian houses surrounding delightful parks.

The mixed apartment/ housing Cualanor development is a valuable addition to the town's modern architecture. The area is very well maintained under private contract and there is a substantial park and a smaller park / children's' play area.



Photo 39: Cualanor

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In addition to a range of residential housing from Victorian Squares, mixed modern apartment/ housing developments and modern social housing Dún Laoghaire has a number of quiet streets with clusters of modest red brick houses. This area is being classified as a **Living Streets Neighbourhood** in the **Living Streets project** where it is proposed to reduce through traffic with enhanced planting and seating in residential areas close to centre.

Photo 40: Desmond Street

There are a number of apartment blocks within the town boundaries. Thankfully most of these are 4 to 5 stories maximum and do not interfere with the traditional skyline. These include Pavillion, Crofton, Anchorage, Adelphi. The grounds are generally very well kept under private contract. Two additional apartment blocks have recently been completed (Cumberland Avenue and Eblana Avenue) the former with retail on the ground floor. Both are in what were previously considered as partially run down areas. Such developments will bring additional residents to the town centre helping to regenerate it.

An excellent example of using current properties is the restoration of four vacant granite 19th century coastguard cottages in Dún Laoghaire harbour for social housing. Work is due to be completed by the end of 2023.



Photo 41: Restored cottages for social housing

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Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes



There has been significant investment in cycleways (Blackrock – Sandycove), cycle parking stands and street furniture over the last years. The pedestrianisation of part of Lower George's Street will become a permanent feature as part of the Living Streets Project following the trial conducted in 2021. Traffic management and access issues are being addressed before the pedestrianisation become permanent. The coastal mobility route continues to increase in popularity. It runs for 4.5km from Blackrock Village to Sandycove, with 3.6km on a segregated cycle path. A report from the Technological University of Dublin concluded that Dún Laoghaire's coastal mobility route it is the most successful cycle route in Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown and one of the best performing in the Dublin region. Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown County Council received the first Cycling Infrastructure Award 2022 for the Coastal Mobility Route (CMR) from the European Cycling Federation.

Generally, approach roads are in a good state and resurfaced where necessary (e.g. Tivoli Road in 2021).

Threshold Signage: Dún Laoghaire Tidy Towns have been working collaboratively with Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown County Council Heritage, Architects and Economic Development sections to mark and celebrate key arrival points to the town. A number of threshold locations were identified. Three approach routes have been celebrated with well-designed and located banner signs incorporating a sailing motif which welcome visitors in Irish and English to Dún Laoghaire from the north, from the harbour area and when approaching the main street travelling up Marine Road. Other locations have been identified on Cumberland Street and at York Road where attractive thresholds to the town can be incorporated into public realm and active travel projects in progress (Living Streets project and proposed cycleway extension to Sallynoggin).



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Photo 42: Welcoming signage

A considerable amount of available DLRCOCO resources have been assigned to increased cleansing and public realm works (e.g. the coastal cycle lane, outdoor seating, planters, widening footpaths). These are very welcome additions but have inevitably meant that there is less effort available for improving and maintaining approach roads, verges and boundaries.

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Concluding Remarks

We are a young organisation, having only reformed in 2020. Our organisation and number of volunteers quickly grew during the COVID epidemic enabling us to rapidly expand our activities. Over the last year the number of volunteers has fallen off somewhat. This has naturally led to a decreased ability to take on new ambitious projects and sometimes even to maintain our current level of activity.

For this reason, our number one priority for 2023/4 is to increase the participation of all residents, see our "Membership Acceleration Plan" above. We have not yet described this as a project as it is still in draft stage. However, we look forward to demonstrating positive results next year. Our town has enormous advantages; physical location, exceptional landside and water side public realm resources, excellent transport links, high volumes of tourists and day visitors, rapidly expanding population of young "hi-tech" workers, etc.

The challenge is to bring it all together, make being from, living in, working in, visiting Dún Laoghaire a unique shared experience. **"Dún Laoghaire for all, and all for Dún Laoghaire".**

Ó 2020, nuair a bunaíodh ár ngrúpa Bailte Slachtmhara, tá dul chun cinn iontach déanta againn. Tá go leor le foghlaim agus le déanamh fós.

"DL dúinn uile is sinn uile do DL"

Ar aghaidh linn!



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