

Council launches Environmental Competitions and Grants Schemes for 2009

A number of competitions and grants schemes were recently launched by North Tipperary County Council in relation to improving our local environment. The grants schemes offered by the County Council include burial ground maintenance grants and tidy town's grants and to coincide with the launch of these, the Council has announced details of its Tiobraid Álainn - Pride of Place Competition for 2009. This includes the best presented shop front in North Tipperary, the tidiest school and the Tiobraid Álainn award for the best kept town or village in North Tipperary won last year by Birdhill. The grants and schemes are open to all recognised groups in the county except for those in Town Council areas, however, schools in the Town Council areas will be included.

North Tipperary County Council recently held a Tidy Towns Information Evening in Thurles and a Burial Grounds Seminar in Nenagh to create awareness to the public about the grants available from the local authority.

Tidy Towns groups are strongly encouraged to apply for a Tidy Towns Grant in order to avail of a portion of the €70,000 that the Council has available to distribute amongst the hardworking committees. According to Áine Mc Carthy, Environmental Awareness Officer, the competitions and grant schemes are a great opportunity for local communities to work together to achieve lasting environmental improvements in their areas and at the same time raise environmental awareness across the community. "We encourage all communities who are working hard throughout the year at improving their local environment to enter the competitions and schemes to gain some recognition for their efforts" she said. "It is an opportunity for community groups to build civic pride and to show off their local area".

Judging for the Tiobraid Álainn - Pride of Place Competition will take place throughout the summer months and awards will be presented to the successful community groups, burial ground committees and schools in each of the four electoral areas at the Annual Environmental Awards Ceremony in November.

The Best Presented Shop Front award introduced in 2008 will be awarded again in 2009. Ms Mc Carthy commented that "This competition is open to anybody to nominate a shop front for consideration, be it the proprietor or a member of the public and we are encouraging any type of business to enter such as clothes shops, book shops, beauty salons, confectionery shops, offices, cafes etc"

"Schools are also recognised for the important contribution they make to the local environment, particularly those who have achieved a green flag. These schools have proven that children can have an influence on their parents and neighbours by encouraging them to recycle and compost at home" added Ms Mc Carthy.

Application forms for all of the competitions and grant schemes are available on the Council's website www.ntcc.ie/environment or contact the Council on 067 44786. For more information about the National Tidy Towns competition visit www.tidytowns.ie .

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