

# RATHCOOLE TIDYTOWNS

## LONG TERM PLAN

### 2019-2021



**Prepared for Rathcoole TidyTowns Committee, 2018**

By

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LONG TERM PLAN 2019-2021  
RATHCOOLE TIDYTOWNS

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THANKS

Thanks to the hard-working volunteers of Rathcoole TidyTowns who gave up their time to assist in the development of this action plan for their community. Thanks also to the groups, organisations and statutory bodies that support and assist them in their work.

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**Background to the Author**

Woodrow Sustainable Solutions is an environmental consultancy that works with companies, agencies and communities to help them take the right steps towards sustainability.

Trading in Ireland since 2004, the company has worked with national bodies including Fáilte Ireland, Waterways Ireland, Irish Water, ESB and the Department of Rural and Community Development. It has carried out extensive wildlife surveys and impact assessment across Ireland. Woodrow has provided Local Authorities, private companies and many communities with training on natural heritage.

Sharon Eastwood, Co-Director of Woodrow Sustainable Solutions successfully applied to be a national adjudicator for the TidyTowns competition in 2011. Since this time, she has adjudicated annually being lucky enough to view the efforts of communities across the country. In tandem with this Sharon has attended all training courses and seminars organised for adjudicators as part of their Continued Professional Development. This consists of internal and external speakers and shared best practice.

She shares this expertise with the communities with whom she works. The sustained work, volunteer hours and the energy of TidyTowns volunteers consistently amazes Sharon.

**Important**

*Please note that an adjudicator cannot judge a community where they have been involved in consultancy work for that community for at least 5 years. Implementation of actions in this report may not guarantee a leap of marks but should direct the community in their aims to continue to better their community and advance in the competition.*

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## **SECTION ONE - OVERVIEW**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The national TidyTowns competition will have been running for 60 years in 2018. During this time the competition has evolved to reflect changes in national policy. There are currently eight separate judging categories in this competition. As well as litter, communities are judged for example on local wildlife, sustainability, the built environment and community planning. This wider scope of the competition reflects changes in national policy but always pays heed to the importance of TidyTowns committees and volunteers in shaping their communities.

The cornerstone of the TidyTowns programme is the preparation of a multi-annual plan by the local community outlining their actions and intentions for the next few years. This helps focus the efforts of each community and helps to measure their success.

2018 saw some of the highest ever numbers of entrants in the national TidyTowns competition with over 800 communities across Ireland entering. Every entrant to the competition is asked by their adjudicator to provide an up-to-date long-term plan.

Woodrow Sustainable Solutions was asked to tender for the work to draft the long-term year plan for Rathcoole community. The company was delighted to be subsequently asked to carry out the work with their community.

### **1.2 DEVELOPMENT OF THIS LONG-TERM PLAN**

The plan was developed through a number of different ways.

#### **Desk-top Audit:**

A desk-survey of relevant information was collated including

- Extraction of pertinent information from relevant plans
- Review of websites with information on the area eg. [www.NPWS.ie](http://www.NPWS.ie).

#### **Area Walkabout:**

An introductory meeting was held with the community in September 2018 to discuss their hopes for the project. Then at a later date, a tour of the community was carried out with three representatives of the TidyTowns committee to discuss relevant issues.

#### **Site Audit:**

A walk and drive around Rathcoole were carried out by the report writer to consider the separate categories of the national competition.

#### **Community Discussions**

Representatives of Rathcoole TidyTowns met with the author of this report and walked around the community with them to learn of their hopes and ideas for the community.

### 1.3 LIAISON WITH OTHER LOCAL GROUPS

In any community there are normally a number of community volunteers that are involved in a number of separate committees. In such cases volunteer burn out can be an issue. As the competition has evolved with national policy, the scope has widened. As a result, there is potential for links with other local groups in a community. There are a number of local groups whose aims have a cross over and where possibly working together could be of benefit. As such it is felt that Rathcoole TidyTowns should liaise with different groups

## SECTION TWO – PROPOSED COMPETITION CHANGES

It should be noted that the national TidyTowns competition has commenced a process of change in its marking and focus. A wide-scale consultation was carried out in winter 2017/18 and the views and comments are in the process of a review whilst this report was being compiled. As such whilst the focus of the competition is to remain the same, the marking is due to change in the longer term.

## SECTION THREE – YOUR ENTRY FORM

Every year in May, TidyTowns' groups across the country draft their application form to the national competition. This section outlines what should be submitted to the Department.

### 3.1 DOCUMENTS TO SUBMIT TO THE COMPETITION ANNUALLY

You will be allocated a different adjudicator each year and they receive a copy of last year's adjudication report (if you entered the competition) and **only** what you submit. It is very likely that he/she will be visiting Rathcoole for the first time. As such, please submit annually the following:

- Entry form;
- Map;
- Long-Term action plan.

Do not assume any other knowledge of the community.

#### Entry Form

This is a summary of actions carried out over the last 12 months by Rathcoole TidyTowns. The form is split into these separate adjudication categories.

Too much material is not always examined but photographs are excellent to include, especially before and after photographs or audiences at events. Provide any pertinent links – eg. Facebook Page or school websites or community website. Most adjudicators will check websites via their smartphones to see if information is up-to-date and relevant.

Please read carefully the questions on your entry form as these changes according to feedback from adjudicators and communities.

Never leave any section of your entry form blank. Keep a record of your activities throughout the year to make completion of your entry form easier.

**New, Maintained and Future projects.**

It is also noted that marks are allocated not just for new project but also for maintenance work and any planning that is carried out for future schemes. The 2018 entry form asked for information on projects to be separated into new, maintained and future planned projects.

**Map**

A map should be provided on which the school, Churches and the main buildings are marked. Each year you could handwrite on it the position of any new or maintained projects carried out during the past 12 months.

**Long-term plan**

Every year please submit a summary section of the long-term plan with your entry form. This shows that you have been strategic in your work and helps record your successes and achievements.

This section provides recommended actions for each separate adjudication category of the competition.

The category looks at how the TidyTowns committee integrates with their whole community. This could be through a cross generation project, linking in with existing groups and how estates and new inhabitants are welcomed to participate in your actions. Strategic planning is important to mention here.

Explain to the community that you are considering re-entering this national competition. Benefits include independent visits from adjudicators who draft reports on your work and highlight where improvements can be made. In the past 2 years entrants of the competition have received grants from the Minister. You are encouraged to re start and accumulate points for local works carried out in the community.

**Action: Enter the National TidyTown competition.**

Community Employment Project  
Newman Community Centre  
Folkbook Newsletter  
FAMILY FURY DAY  
Singing for Charity  
On Sale Now  
PLEASE READ  
Newman Community Centre  
GREAT NEWS FOR BAY BOOGIE  
Community Employment Project  
Chill / Cook Carers  
Housekeepers / Cleaners  
26/09/2018

There are many ways to communicate your work. Current methods used are via:

- News letters
- Text Alerts
- Newspaper
- Community Notice board
- A new website and Facebook page are also planned.

	<p>Keep all lines of communication up to date. Keep Social Media Sites up to date sharing details of key aspects of your work or that of other community groups. Aim for an update every month. Where possible ask other local groups to advertise key events such as the Spring Clean.</p> <p><b>Action: Maintain regular communications about your work through all media</b>  <b>Maintain a social media presence every month and gather names for text alerts</b> (subject to GDPR guidelines).</p> <p><b>Links with the School</b></p> <p>Encourage links with the national school and gather ideas from the pupils and teachers, of one action per year that they could complete on behalf of the TidyTowns committee. Do highlight to the school the breadth of work that could be applicable such as the categories on Wildlife, and Sustainability.</p> <p><b>Action: Once started, ask the local school to co-deliver one action in your plan that is of mutual benefit and learning for both the school and Rathcoole TidyTowns.</b></p> <p><b>Planning &amp; Update Job Descriptions</b></p> <p>The community already has scheme workers based at the Community Centre. Review their work programme and ensure job descriptions of scheme workers are updated accordingly in light of changing focus of the competition.</p> <p><b>Action: Review and update long-term plan and job descriptions annually.</b></p> <p><b>Cross Community Work</b></p> <p>Strong links should be maintained and fostered with different community groups and local businesses. Also, attention needs to be made to include inter-generational work and diversity projects i.e. working with groups with different backgrounds. Ask for input into your plan and support for one action over its lifespan from each local group.</p> <p><b>Action: Encourage input into the plan and your actions from all members or various community groups in Rathcoole.</b></p> <p><b>Encourage New Committee Members</b></p> <p>In any community it is often the same volunteers on various committees. It is important, whilst difficult, to continually try and get more. Continue to highlight the different elements of the competition and e.g. a wildlife person might help with an event. Focus on getting new volunteers just for specific events or activities. They might sit on the committee at a later stage.</p> <p><b>Action: Continue to try and attract new volunteers to assist in your work.</b></p> <p><b>Planning</b></p> <p>Review the TidyTowns long-term plan annually and ensure job descriptions of scheme workers are updated accordingly.</p> <p><b>Action: Review and update long-term plan and job descriptions annually.</b></p>
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## 4.2 Streetscape & Public Places

Consider the presentation of key public buildings and the main streets of Rathcoole in this section.

### Presentation of Main Buildings

Continue to monitor and annually identify any buildings in Spring that could be painted to enhance the streetscape. The Garda station looked very smart with freshly painted boundary walls. If possible, ensure all notices here are neat and tidy. The Church of Ireland is another lovely building in Rathcoole. Contact specific building owners to ask for their assistance and participation. There are apps available (eg. Dulux mobile app) that allows for colours schemes to be visualised on streetscapes which can help owners of buildings decide on what could work.

**Action: Approach owners to discuss how they can enhance their buildings and support your work, or if you can if they are not able.**

**Colour Ideas could be discussed and visualised using mobile apps**

### General presentation of Businesses and Public Buildings

Encourage these to be nicely maintained with no protruding signs, no external wires, use signs that are appropriate and bilingual.

**Action: Consider inviting local businesses to hear what an adjudicator looks for and address eg. Wires, poor signage, items blocking pavements etc.**

### Heritage Buildings

**Appendix 2** highlights the 20 separate protected structures in Rathcoole – most of which are buildings. Be aware of these protected structures along Rathcoole and encourage appropriate enhancement. This includes the Rathcoole Inn, a lovely thatched pub on the main street. The only place where its name was read was on the car park sign.

**Action: Raise awareness of the age and history of Rathcoole buildings. Monitor any proposed building works on these buildings and submit to planning applications as necessary.**

### Empty Buildings



*The community has targeted a lot of empty buildings to present them nicely.*

**Action: Continue to present empty buildings nicely where possible.**

**Shopping Centre**

*Shop with internal shutters adding to the streetscape after closing hours.*

There is a planned refurbishment for the façade of the shopping centre. This will be good as a lot of tidiness issues were noted here such as:

- A lot of cigarette butts were noted by entrance to centre.
- Some flags were becoming tatty
- Interior shutters should be recommended.

Increasing the frequency of sweeping should quickly address the first issue here.

**Action: Address immediate tidiness issues around the Shopping Centre and Support planned refurbishment.**

**Encourage Attractive Shop Fronts**

The community was keen to encourage shops to have attractive shop fronts.

**Action: Encourage attractive window displays and high presentation of business through competition or awards.**

**Encourage good bilingual business signage on premises.**

**Highlight Heritage features in the Community**

*Griffeen River stream flowing beside Tay lane which is the nearest public access point to St Brigid's well which was filled in in the grounds of Glebe House. This could be enhanced appropriately.*

There are also designated built heritage features through Rathcoole which are recorded on the Record of Monuments and Places being pre- 1700. These include a holy well, a font, a grave slab and intriguingly a 'holed stone' in the Church of Ireland graveyard (**see Appendix 2**). They could form part of a heritage information and trail that consider built, natural and cultural heritage of the village. St Bridget's Well where the saint drank on her way to Kildare, could be enhanced

**Action: Collate heritage information that could be used in a heritage trail. Consider how to set up a trail of such features.**

	<b>Consider how to appropriately enhance/from such features including St Bridget's well with advice from the Heritage Officer of South Dublin County Council.</b>
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### 4.3 Green Spaces & landscaping

Nationally the TidyTowns adjudicators are looking towards the suitable planting of shrubs and hedges that provide year-round effect or to bring attention to a focal point. Containers should only be located where it is not possible to plant directly into the ground. Also, consideration of the effort needed to maintain work is considered.

As such the followings recommendations have been collated:

The park in Rathcoole is a great amenity and is managed and presented to a high standard. The Rose garden was lovely. There are some ideas to provide for interaction from Rathcoole TidyTowns as follows:

#### Rathcoole Park ideas

##### Share Details on Local wildlife



There are empty notice boards at the park entrances. You should be able to put up posters or information on wildlife in the park and provide a part of this space to include updated or forthcoming activities and events eg. Bird Garden Birdwatch.

**Action: Provide information on wildlife in the empty notice boards in the Park.**

##### Wild Bird Food Table

Create a wild bird table by getting locals to plant sunflowers food in one specific area of the park and then leave the heads full of seeds to feed the birds in the Autumn.

**Action: Create wild bird table.**

##### Changes in Grass Mowing Regimes

One of the easiest ways to support pollinators is to advocate changes in mowing regimes adopting a cut and lift rotation. Maybe cut once a year or 5 times a year. Refer to

[http://pollinators.ie/app/uploads/2018/05/Councils\\_actions-to-help-pollinators-2018-WEB.pdf](http://pollinators.ie/app/uploads/2018/05/Councils_actions-to-help-pollinators-2018-WEB.pdf)

and look at what councils can do to support pollinators.

**Action: Discuss with Council actions to do to support pollinators at Rathcoole Park.**

**Change formal hedging in park from laurel to native hedging**

	<p>Replace some of the formal laurel hedging and replace with native hedgerows. They can also be shaped into a formal hedge and support native wildlife, unlike laurel.</p> <p><b>Action: Shape hawthorn into a formal hedge in the park to support more biodiversity.</b></p>
	<p><b>Bee-friendly Flowers, Plants and Trees</b></p>  <p><i>Bee-friendly planting in Sligo's Doorly Park.</i></p>  <p><i>Lovely wall-top planting in Rathcoole</i></p> <p>As a partner to the All -Ireland Pollinator Plan there are many flowers and plants that can be chosen that look well that also provide food for declining pollinator populations. Avoid traditional seasonal bedding plants such as pansies geraniums, begonias, busy lizzie etc that have virtually no pollen or nectar and hence are of little value to pollinators.</p> <p><b>Appendix 3</b> lists many trees and flowers and shrubs that communities including ideas of flowers that are bee-friendly. Consider avoiding planting just daffodils and tulips and chose more pollinator friendly flowers such as crocus or hyacinth or native bluebells on the approach streets to Rathcoole.</p> <p><b>Action: Use bee-friendly flowers in planting schemes.</b></p>
	<p><b>Container planting</b></p> <p>Only a small % of points available in the marking scheme of the adjudication process are available for container planting. As such containers and</p>

	<p>planting should only be used where they can make an impact and can be easily seen Containers should NOT be located on grass, should blend in with their environment and do not be afraid to remove planters where they are too much work or difficult to manage or access.</p> <p><b>Action: Keep any hanging baskets/ landscaping schemes to a bare minimum and focus on most strategically placed.</b></p>
	<p><b>Wildlife Garden in Centre of the City</b> The planting in the church grounds was delightful. Yew trees and a water butt were good to see here and should be mentioned in an entry form under sustainability and marked on a map. This was one of a number of sites and allotments in Rathcoole that are delightful to visit and could be support more.</p> <p><b>Action: Encourage and support gardening initiatives in Rathcoole.</b></p>
	<p><b>Seven Areas have been identified as spaces that can be improved.</b></p> <p>A detailed plan including planting guide is in Appendix 7 for 7 areas where it is felt improvements could be made if possible.</p> <p><b>Action: Work through the suggestions in Appendix 7</b></p>



#### 4.4 Nature & Biodiversity in your locality

There are three main things that a community can do with regard to this adjudication category.

- Find out what wildlife and special habitats you have in an area
- Promote and Raise awareness of the local wildlife.
- Enhance and connect habitats within the village appropriately.

##### Find out Wildlife & Habitats in your Area



*Image of a track through woodland near Mulally's lane*

While there are no EU Designated Sites of European Importance in Rathcoole the trees, hedgerows and park offer important habitat for wildlife.

There may be bird watchers, or others with a local wildlife interest who can help raise awareness of local wildlife in the area.

**Action: Collate details of wildlife in your area such as along the trails**  
**Work closely with the Woodland group and assist with proposals to set-up an off-road cycle trail for the community to enjoy.**

##### Enhancing Wildlife Areas in Green Areas or Estates

It was felt that their opportunity to enhance the wildlife and habitats in many residential estates where there are just large areas of communal grass and little other habitats. One idea is to involve residents in estates to create a bug hotel.





*Photograph of a bug hotel that could be created in a corner of many of the communal grass areas in estates.*

**Action: Enhance wildlife habitats in one or two estates/residential streets each year.**

##### Encourage sharing News of Wildlife

Raise awareness of local wildlife by running colouring competitions, or a photography competition. You could introduce on Facebook notifications from the village when they hear / see the first swallows, cuckoos, snow drops etc.

	<p><b>Action: Raise awareness of local wildlife through a competition or share wildlife news on social media to raise awareness of same.</b></p>
	<p><b>Consider Joining National Wildlife projects</b>          There are many worthy national wildlife projects such as <a href="http://www.swiftconservation.ie">www.swiftconservation.ie</a> which would be an ideal project for an urban community to embrace, this is to encourage swift to nest in community buildings.  <b>Action: Join in a national wildlife project.</b></p>
	<p><b>Biodiversity of Stone Walls</b>          The exterior wall at the Church of Ireland support a lot of biodiversity. Stone walls and the rocks can be a good wildlife habitat in their own rights.</p> <p><b>Action: Raise awareness of flora on stone walls and similar areas – an important habitat often overlooked.</b></p>
	<p><b>Care of Trees</b>          Christmas lights were noted nailed on the cherry tree near the Shopping Centre. Please refrain from attaching wires to trees as they can damage the trees introducing infection.          The main streets of Rathcoole could be greatly enhanced with the provision of more street trees. They can absorb rain water, pollutants and carbon dioxide. They would help soften the dominance of cars on the streets and this would link in nicely with the competition's drive towards more sustainable planting. Street trees could also be used to cleverly screen areas such as businesses that need some camouflage!          Pyrus calleryana 'Chanticleer' is upright and elegant and is also one of the tree species recommended as good for pollinators and would help you gain marks in the wildlife category of the competition also. Recommendations are available from <b>Appendices 3 and 4</b> and also from the Tree Council's website.  <b>Action: Do not nail into living trees.</b>  <b>Consider a tree-planting programme of native trees in the community and appoint a volunteer to nurture any newly planted trees in their formative years.</b></p>
	<p><b>Invasive Plant Species</b></p>  <p><i>The invasive plant species Gunnera was in situ in the park at Rathcoole.</i></p> <p>Located at the pond edge it can grow to 2m high. It is highly invasive, growing in thick clumps and takes over gardens etc. Much of Achill Island is invested with this plant. This invasive species should be closely managed and no doubt South Dublin Parks Department is closely monitoring the site to ensure it is curtailed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not dig close to the plant or break up the rhizome, as new plants can grow from each fragment</li> <li>• Do chop the flowers off mature plants in spring/early summer before they go to seed</li> <li>• Do not dump plant cuttings or soil elsewhere</li> </ul>

	<p>This link provides detailed information on the plant:  <a href="http://invasivespecies.ie/invasive-plants-japanese-knotweed/gunnera-tinctoria/">http://invasivespecies.ie/invasive-plants-japanese-knotweed/gunnera-tinctoria/</a>  The following is an extract from Galway Community Biodiversity Page –  Chemical Control of Gunnera  Herbicides usually provide the best and most cost-effective method for Gunnera control. A systemic herbicide that will kill the roots of the plant is needed and a glyphosate-based formula is recommended. The weed killer can be applied in 2 ways:  Foliar spray: Using the manufacturers recommended concentration, leaves should be sprayed until the point of ‘run-off’ i.e. well coated but not dripping. Spraying should only be carried out in cool, dry, calm weather.  Cut and paint technique: Leaf stalks should be cut close to the base of the plant and the stumps immediately painted with a 25% solution of glyphosate applied using a brush or sponge. The leaves can be composted or allowed to rot down on site. This method is recommended for sensitive sites such as around waterbodies.  <b>Action: Treat the invasive plant species Gunnera to stop its spread</b></p>
	<p><b>Tree Signage and Trail</b>  There is potential to develop a tree trail through Rathcoole highlighting the different native trees that can be located in the village. This could be incorporated into the heritage trail for the village or could be a separate school project. The community could work with the local men’s shed or scheme workers to develop signage for a trail of trees</p>  <p><i>Image of a tree-trail marker from Letterkenny’s public park.</i>  <b>Action: Work on a project to sign awareness of native trees in the community.</b></p>




## 4.5 Sustainability – Doing more with less

This category of the competition asks communities to consider resource efficiencies in areas of water, energy and transport for example. There are a lot of activities that you already do of relevance to this part of the competition. Below are a series of other suggested activities that the community could adopt that would help them gain points in this category of the competition:

- Issue Text Alerts to reduce paper usage re meetings and events;
- Run a re-use event eg. Clothes Swap Party – issue a press release and include photos of the event in entry form. Provide some quantitative results for this;
- Support any Grown Your Own Initiatives running in the community;
- Highlight the use of low energy lights in all community buildings.

There is a very useful booklet on the TidyTowns website with ideas and suggestions for this category of the competition. <https://www.tidytowns.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Sustainable-Waste-and-Resource-Management.pdf>


Actions to progress are listed below.


<b>Travel</b>	<p><b>Travel – Promote and encourage public transport</b> Provide up to date information on bus routes, times and have clean and presentable bus shelters. <b>Action: Support and promote bus use in Rathcoole. Ensure bus timetables are up to date in all bus shelters.</b></p>
	<p><b>School – Congestion is an issue from school runs.</b> Could parents be encouraged to Walk on Wednesday? Could 'scoot to school' be considered. <b>Action: Discuss initiatives with the school on sustainable transport options for pupils.</b></p>
<b>Energy</b>	<p><b>Energy Savings from insulation</b> Monitor the energy savings which come about to the Community Centre following the installation of the new roof. <b>Action: Collate and provide statistics on the energy savings as a result of the new roof at the centre.</b></p>
	<p><b>Promote energy saving initiatives</b> There were electric car charging points and solar panels on many homes. This should be promoted and numbers who have signed up and use these should be provided in entry form</p>
<b>Waste</b>	<p><b>Reusable Cups</b> The community were keen to have incentives the use of reusable cups. They could offer to subsidize 20c per cup reused for example. <b>Action: Community to investigate options to promote the re-usable cups.</b></p>
	<p><b>Green your Events</b> Discuss with local groups about ways to run any competitions or similar events as green as possible. <b>Action: Consider ways to make any local events more environmentally friendly.</b></p>
	<p><b>Grass cuttings</b></p> 

	<i>Grass clippings dumped that could be mulched or composted.</i> <b>Action: Run a composting workshop.</b>
<b>Water</b>	<b>Action: Encourage the installation of water butts at landscaping schemes and at the community and school buildings.</b>

#### 4.6 Tidiness & Litter Control

Not only are we looking at litter, but clutter, blocked pavement, advertising banners, fly-posting, signage and poor parking.

	<p><b>Litter Plan</b></p>  <p><i>Identify litter-black spots that need specific attention.</i></p> <p>You are recommended to devise a litter plan for Rathcoole. This should be based on a survey of litter – what type is most common, and where? When is litter mostly dropped? What black spots are there? Once you know these details then a series of actions can be drafted to tackle some of the issue.</p> <p><b>Action: Draft a Litter Action Plan (see sample in Appendix 8).</b></p>
	<p><b>Monitor success of Solar Litter Bins</b> <b>Action: Monitor the success of the solar powered litter bins in Rathcoole.</b></p>
	<p><b>Annual Spring Clean</b> Run and Support the annual Spring Clean and offer teas and buns at drop off points and make it a social event with a photograph and a time for all to return with bags. <b>Action: Support the Annual Spring Clean offering refreshments for volunteers.</b></p>
	<p><b>Job Description of Regular Litter Pickers</b> Rathcoole has a number of key volunteers. Make sure each are briefed annually and have a H&amp;S briefing and a high vis vest. Where possible encourage them to hand-pull weeds also and report any dumping or other issues that are noted. Cable ties should also be removed from posts.</p> <p><b>Action: Support litter pickers.</b></p> <p><b>Approach local walking groups to see if they would assist in litter picking whilst enjoying their walks also,</b></p>

	<p><b>Clean Street Signs</b></p>  <p>Information signs at the park need to be cleaned and also the Sli na Slainte signs. In estates many of the children at play warning signs also needed cleaning or indeed replacing.</p> <p><b>Action: Ensure street signs are clean and legible. If not possible, they should be replaced.</b></p>
	<p><b>Street Light Replacements</b> Many of the street lights are old and quite ugly. Can they be replaced in the longer term with elegant, energy efficient lights? <b>Action: Lobby for replacement of street lights.</b></p> <p><b>Dumping</b> <b>Action: Monitoring fly tipping at White House Lane and get Council Support as necessary.</b></p> <p><b>Flags &amp; Bunting</b> Take care as these can get tattered and look shabby quite quickly. <b>Action: Encourage quick removal or replacement of flags and bunting before they get too tatty.</b></p> <p><b>Christmas lights up outside of festive season</b> Sadly, a lot of festive lights were erected in Rathcoole - in position throughout the festive season. This is not appropriate and sadly some have been erected onto heritage buildings. Lights should also be LED where possible to save energy. <b>Action: Remove all festival lights outside of the season. Encourage purchase of small, easily managed LED lights.</b></p> <p><b>Sewerage Vent Pipes</b> These were very rusty. Due to their height you will need support from the council or others to ensure they are all treated and painted accordingly. One of these is detailed in Appendix 2 as it is listed. <b>Action: Paint and take appropriate care of Sewerage Vent pipes</b></p> <p><b>Antennae at garda Station</b> This is very large and untidy. Many of these are now obsolete. <b>Action: Determine if the large antennae is still in use. If not, it should be removed/recycled.</b></p> <p><b>Low-hanging overhead signs and wires</b> Watch very low-hanging signs at the roadside pavement from the walls of Centra. Also watch low-hanging wires at the community library building. <b>Action: Be careful with low-hanging signs and wires that visually impaired may not see and collide into these.</b></p>

**Wirescape**

Overhead wires and telegraph poles are ugly and detract in Rathcoole.

**Action: Lobby for undergrounding of electricity wires.**

**Paint Notice Board Frames & Street Furniture**

You are recommended to repaint the notice board frames at the library and Church of Ireland. Also look at all street furniture and identify those that need repainting.



**Action: Repaint all street furniture when required.**

**Redundant Posts & Signage Clutter**

*Some of a number of posts with no signs around Rathcoole.*




*Six separate signs at the entrance to the park which form clutter.*

	 <p><i>Empty frame that should be removed and you should recommend the bed is re-landscaped here.</i></p> <p><b>Action: Redundant posts (post with no sign) should be removed to reduce clutter.</b></p>
	<p><b>Replace Hoarding that is becoming tatty</b> Hoarding can quickly become tatty and should be replaced/removed quickly.</p>
	<p><b>Graffiti Removal</b> <b>Action: Maintain the quick and effective removal of graffiti in the village.</b></p>



## 4.7 Residential Streets & Housing Areas

In this category we consider private homes and the collective appearance of these and potential links for pedestrians through estates.	
	<p><b>Street or Estate Representatives</b> It is recommended that you try to have a representative from the estates or each street on the TidyTowns committee. They will work with the TidyTowns committee to help action your plan and help with two-way communication. <b>Action: Support the appointment of street / estate representatives to link with your TidyTowns committee.</b></p>
	<p><b>Raising issues of tidiness in Estates</b> A rep could help identify and raise tidiness issues in estates. They could have a graffiti wipe set and tackle any such issues straight away. <b>Action: Encourage estate reps to discuss repair and tidiness issues.</b></p>
	<p><b>Name Signs at Estates and Gateways</b> With older developments being completed and newer ones commencing, do endeavour that all have the same principles adhered to as per this plan, eg, planting ideas or signage. <b>Action: Ensure bilingual signs are erected and ideas are incorporated from this plan into estates as they are being constructed</b></p>
	<p><b>Wildlife Friendly Gardens</b></p>  <p><b>PLEASE DON'T SPRAY OR PULL THE SPRING DANDELIONS</b></p> <p><b>THEY ARE ONE OF THE FIRST SOURCES OF FOOD FOR BEES</b></p> <p><i>Image used to encourage us not to cut dandelions until after they flower in April so that bees emerging from hibernation have a handy food source.</i></p> <p>Highlight to the community your bee-friendly actions and how they could replicate your example. <b>Action: Encourage home owners to implement wildlife-friendly actions in their gardens.</b></p>
	<p><b>Removal of Tree Stumps</b> Quite a number of tree stumps were noted in many of the residential estates. Lobby for their removal and replacement Section 4,.3 highlights the benefits of street trees. <b>Action: Arrange for the removal of stumps so a programme of planting of replacement street trees can be addressed.</b> <b>Appoint a volunteer in each area to nurture newly planted trees.</b></p>
	<p><b>Monitor Planning Applications</b> Consider all new applications to ensure footpaths, continuity of pavements and cut-through access for all are considered and the design is in accordance with DMURS – this is the latest guidance for design of roads where traffic flow is less than 60kph is the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Street. Dept of Transport, Tourism &amp; Sport (2013).</p>

	<p><a href="http://www.dttas.ie/corporate/publications/english/design-manual-urban-roads-and-streets">http://www.dttas.ie/corporate/publications/english/design-manual-urban-roads-and-streets</a></p> <p>It changes the focus of road users from primarily motor vehicles to all users. The new policies are encouraging and it has good design suggestions and ideas. In all discussions with Local Engineers'</p> <p><b>Action: Monitor Planning Applications and input appropriately.</b></p>
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## 4.8 Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes

Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes – in this category we consider not only the first impressions when you arrive into Rathcoole, but also look at side streets and lane ways.

### **Relocate Twinning Sign**

The 'Welcome to Rathcoole - Twinned with École-Valentin ...' was located quite far by Avoca from the roundabout which is where the community considers is the entry point for Rathcoole.

**Action: Relocate the 'Twinned with École-Valentin' sign to the roundabout at the entrance to the village.**

### **Improve Cycling Facilities and Cycling Routes**

Support sustainable transport options including cycling by demarcating areas on the pavements on approach roads where cyclists could cycle.

Provide more facilities such as covered shelters for cyclists.

**Action: Improve and enhance facilities for cyclists.**

### **Pedestrian Cut through Paths through estates**



### *Colourful alleyway in Belfast*

Many of the paths in the estates in Rathcoole are very clean to the point of being quite stark. In some, the planting of climbers such as honeysuckle could provide a nice fragrance and soften it.

**Action: Use climbing plants to soften pedestrian cut-through paths in estates.**

### **Lane where a colourful mural could work**



*Painted footprints of various animals could be painted here to make this regular children's route more attractive.*





*Similar alleyway in Sneem with colourful footprints.*

**Action: Consider an action to brighten this lane.**

### **Planting at Roundabouts**

Much more could be made of planting at the entrance roundabout.

**Action: Improve planting at entrance points such as roundabout and at An Poitin Still turn-off.**

### **Commuinty Notice Boards on Approach Roads**



*Board on approach roads in Mullingar where all community notices are erected*

**Action: Erect community notice board on approach roads.**

## **SECTION FIVE– SUMMARY ACTION PLAN**

### **5.1 Table of Long-Term Actions.**

The following table is a summary of the proposed actions details in section 4 of the report. The actions are prioritised into who would lead and the year the action would be carried out during the three years of this plan.

Adjudication category	Specific Action	Year action is to be completed	Review/ Assessment	Lead TidyTown Volunteer	Partner Body EG. Local Authority/ LEADER
<b>Community Involvement &amp; Planning</b>	Re-enter the National TidyTown competition.				
	Maintain regular communications about your work through all media				
	Maintain a social media presence every month and gather names for text alerts (subject to GDPR guidelines)				
	Once started, ask the local school to co-deliver one action in your plan that is of mutual benefit and learning for both the school and Rathcoole TidyTown.				
	Review and update long-term plan and job descriptions annually				
	Encourage input into the plan and your actions from all members or various community groups in Rathcoole.				
	Continue to try and attract new volunteers to assist in your work.				
	Review and update long-term plan and job descriptions annually.				
<b>Built Environment and Streetscape</b>	<p>Approach owners to discuss how they can enhance their buildings and support your work, or if you can if they are not able.</p> <p>Colour Ideas could be discussed and visualised using mobile apps</p> <p>Continue to consider the presentation of buildings on the main street.</p> <p>Encourage attractive window displays and high presentation of business through competition and awards.</p>				

	Consider inviting local businesses to hear what an adjudicator looks for and address eg. Wires, poor signage, items blocking pavements etc.				
	Raise awareness of the age and history of Rathcoole buildings. Monitor any proposed building works on these buildings and submit to planning applications as necessary. Encourage good bilingual business signage on premises.				
	Continue to target empty buildings and ensure they are well presented.				
	Address immediate tidiness issues around the Shopping Centre and Support planned refurbishment.				
	Collate heritage information that could be used in a heritage trail. Consider how to set up a trail of such features. Consider how to appropriately enhance/from such features including St Bridget's well with advice from the Heritage Officer of South Dublin County Council.				
<b>Landscaping and Open Spaces</b>	Provide information on wildlife in the empty notice boards in the Park.				
	Create wild bird table.				
	Discuss with Council actions to do to support pollinators at Rathcoole Park.				
	Shape hawthorn into a formal hedge in the park to support more biodiversity.				
	Use bee-friendly flowers in planting schemes.				

	Keep any hanging baskets/ landscaping schemes to a bare minimum and focus on most strategically placed.				
	Encourage and support gardening initiatives in Rathcoole.				
	Work through the suggestions in Appendix 7				
<b>Nature &amp; Biodiversity in your locality.</b>	Collate details of wildlife in your area such as along the trails Work closely with the Woodland group and assist with proposals to set-up an off-road cycle trail for the community to enjoy.				
	Enhance wildlife habitats in one or two estates/residential streets each year.				
	Raise awareness of local wildlife through a competition or share wildlife news on social media to raise awareness of same.				
	Join in a national wildlife project.				
	Raise awareness of flora on stone walls and similar areas – an important habitat often overlooked.				
	Do not nail into living trees.  Consider a tree-planting programme of native trees in the community and appoint a volunteer to nurture any newly planted trees in their formative years.				
	Treat the invasive plant species Gunnera to stop its spread.				
	Work on a project to sign awareness of native trees in the community.				

<b>Sustainability - doing more with less.</b>	Support and promote bus use in Rathcoole. Ensure bus timetables are up to date in all bus shelters				
	Discuss initiatives with the school on sustainable transport options for pupils.				
	Collate and provide statistics on the energy savings as a result of the new roof at the centre.				
	Community to investigate options to promote the re-usable cups				
	Consider ways to make any local events more environmentally friendly.				
	Run a composting workshop.				
	Encourage the installation of water butts at landscaping schemes and at the community and school buildings.				
<b>Tidiness and Litter Control</b>	Draft a Litter Action Plan (see sample in Appendix 8).				
	Support the Annual Spring Clean offering refreshments for volunteers.				
	Monitor the success of the solar powered litter bins in Rathcoole.				
	Support litter pickers.				
	Approach local walking groups to see if they would assist in litter picking whilst enjoying their walks.				
	Ensure street signs are clean and legible. If not possible, they should be replaced.				
	Lobby for replacement of street lights.				
	Monitoring fly tipping at White House Lane and get Council Support as necessary.				

	Encourage quick removal or replacement of flags and bunting before they get too tatty.				
	Remove all festival lights outside of the season. Encourage purchase of small, easily managed LED lights.				
	Determine if the large Garda antennae is still in use. If not, it should be removed/recycled.				
	Be careful with low-hanging signs and wires that visually impaired may not see and collide into these.				
	Lobby for undergrounding of electricity wires.				
	Paint and take appropriate care of Sewerage Vent pipes				
	Repaint all street furniture.				
	Redundant posts (post with no sign) should be removed to reduce clutter.				
	Maintain the quick and effective removal of graffiti in the village.				
<b>Residential Streets &amp; Housing Areas</b>	Support the appointment of street / estate representatives to link with your TidyTowns committee.				
	Encourage estate reps to discuss repair and tidiness issues				
	Ensure bilingual signs are erected and ideas are incorporated from this plan into estates as they are being constructed				
	Encourage home owners to implement wildlife-friendly actions in their gardens.				
	Arrange for the removal of stumps so a programme of planting of replacement street trees can be addressed.				

	Appoint a volunteer in each area to nurture newly planted trees.				
	Monitor Planning Applications and input appropriately.				
<b>Approach Roads, Streets &amp; Lanes</b>	Relocate the 'Twinned With Vakentin' sign to the entrance to the village by the permanent Christmas tree.				
	Improve and enhance facilities for cyclists.				
	Use climbing plants to soften pedestrian cut-through paths in estates.				
	Consider an action to brighten this lane				
	Improve planting at entrance points such as roundabout and An poitin Still turn-off.				
	Improve planting at entrance points such as roundabout and at An Poitin Still turn-off.				
	Erect community notice board on approach roads.				



## APPENDIX 1: USEFUL LINKS ON BIODIVERSITY FOR RATHCOOLE

*\* This is a selection of links that may be useful. Some websites (such as Invasive Species Ireland) are no longer be updated but still contain good information.*

**Bat Conservation Ireland** – charity dedicated to conserving Ireland's bats. [www.batconservationireland.org](http://www.batconservationireland.org)

**BirdWatch Ireland** – NGO committed to conservation of Ireland's birds. [www.birdwatchireland.ie](http://www.birdwatchireland.ie)

Information on building bird feeders and nest boxes.  
<http://www.birdwatchireland.ie/Default.aspx?tabid=264>

**Butterfly Ireland** - Butterfly information and distribution maps in Ireland.  
[www.butterflyireland.com](http://www.butterflyireland.com)

**Buglife** – UK Charity to encourage invertebrates [www.buglife.org.uk/](http://www.buglife.org.uk/)

**Coillte** – 20% lands managed for biodiversity. <http://www.coillte.ie/our-forests/public-goods/biodiversity/>

**Green Schools Ireland** - [www.greenschoolsireland.org](http://www.greenschoolsireland.org)

**Heritage Council** – Independent, body advancing both built and natural heritage in Ireland. Co-ordinates the vitally important network of Heritage Officers across Ireland.  
[www.heritagecouncil.ie](http://www.heritagecouncil.ie)

**Inland Fisheries Ireland** - <https://www.fisheriesireland.ie/>

**Invasive Species Ireland** – Info. on invasive species [www.invasivespeciesireland.com/](http://www.invasivespeciesireland.com/)

**Irish Peatland Conservation Council** NGO promoting peatland conservation.  
<http://www.ipcc.ie/>

**Irish Wildflowers** –Over 800 wildflowers with names in Irish, English & Latin.  
<http://www.irishwildflowers.ie>

**Irish Wildlife Trust** – a charity committed to conserving of Ireland's rich natural heritage.  
[www.iwt.ie](http://www.iwt.ie)

**Local Authority Prevention Network.** <http://localprevention.ie/tidy-categories/schools/>

**Moths Ireland** – Moth information and studies in Ireland. [www.mothsireland.com](http://www.mothsireland.com)

**National Biodiversity Data Centre** - National Biodiversity Data Centre - documenting Ireland's wildlife. Citizen Science Projects [www.biodiversityireland.ie/](http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/)

**National Parks and Wildlife Services** - Information on important sites and species, wildlife legislation and biodiversity plans. It includes an interactive mapper with information.  
<http://www.npws.ie/>

**National Parks** – Information on National Parks <http://www.npws.ie/nationalparks/>

**National Pollinator Plan resources for Communities -**

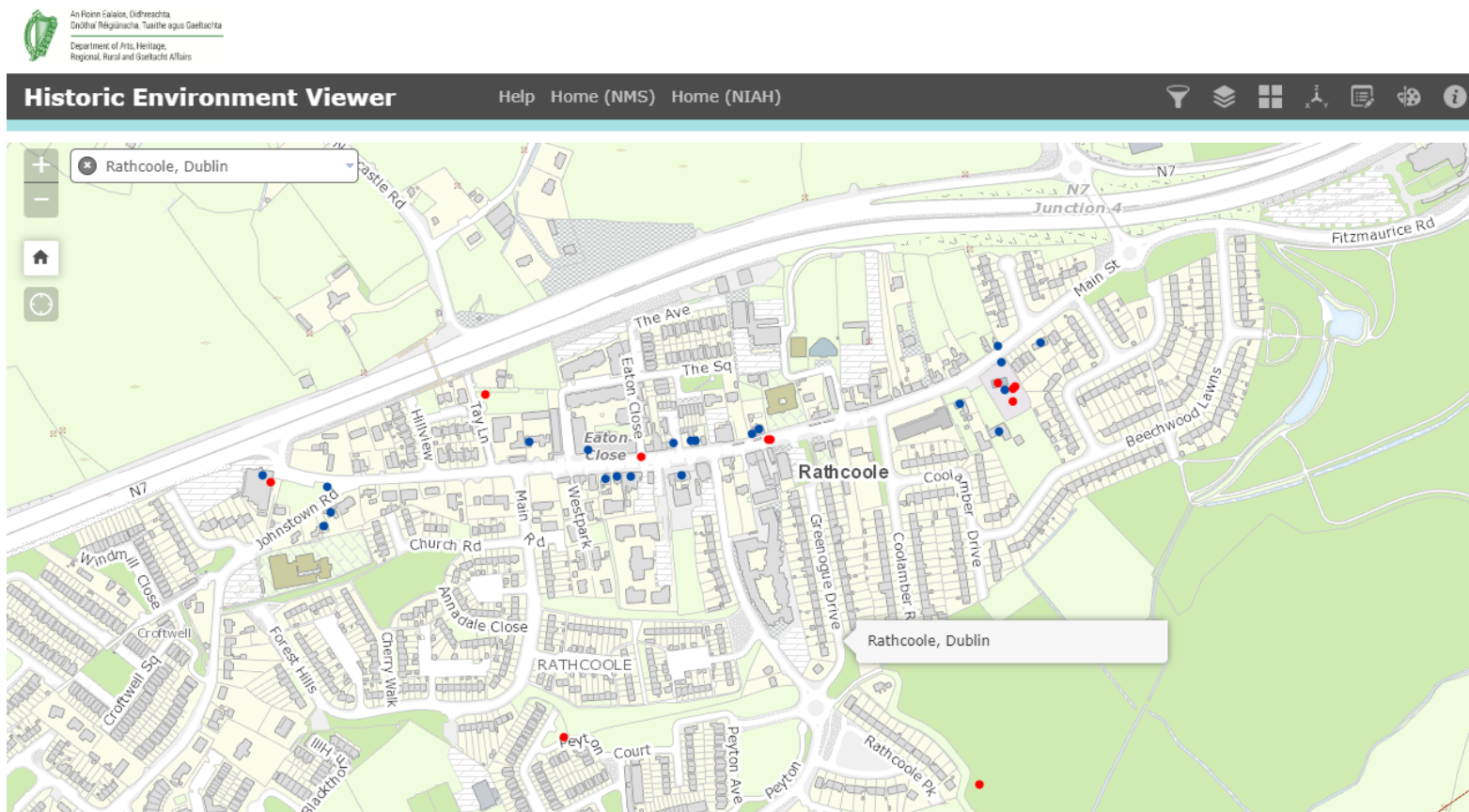
<http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/projects/irish-pollinator-initiative/all-ireland-pollinator-plan/local-communities/>

**RSPB** – Information on building and siting nest boxes. [RSPB Nest Box Guide RSPB Feeding Birds Guide](#)

**Tree Council of Ireland** –A voluntary group concerned with trees in Ireland  
<http://www.treecouncil.ie/>

## APPENDIX 2: ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONUMENTS & PROTECTED STRUCTURES.

Data sourced from National Monuments Service, Department of Arts, Heritage & Gaeltacht. [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie) through its Historic Environment Viewer. In this viewer you can change the base maps to view different aged maps of the area overlaid with data about National Monuments and Protected Structures.



Screen grab of the interactive map from [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie) where blue dots represent buildings detailed on the National Inventory of Architectural heritage and red dots are sites/items scheduled for inclusion in the Record of Monuments & Places (pre-1700 AD). Please note that we have permission for this to be shown for educational purposes but not for commercial gain. You are highly recommended to view this online where you can view, interrogate and change base map settings.

Table of designated heritage features in Rathcoole listed in the Record of Monuments & Places available to the public from interrogation of the map viewer in from [www.archeology.ie](http://www.archeology.ie)

SMR No.	Class	Townland	ITM Easting	ITM Northing
DU021-030001-	Church	RATHCOOLE	702427	726843
DU021-030002-	Graveyard	RATHCOOLE	702444	726822
DU021-030003-	Cross	RATHCOOLE	702444	726836
DU021-030004-	Ritual site - holy well	RATHCOOLE	701839	726829
DU021-030005-	Graveslab	RATHCOOLE	702164	726778
DU021-030006-	Redundant record	COLLEGELAND,RATHCOOLE,TOOTENHILL	702166	726778
DU021-030007-	House - 17th century	RATHCOOLE	701593	726729
DU021-030008-	Settlement cluster	RATHCOOLE	702018	726758
DU021-030009-	Holed stone	RATHCOOLE	702447	726839
DU021-031----	Font	RATHCOOLE	701929	726437
DU021-033----	Redundant record	RATHCOOLE	702406	726382

Whilst the data on the blue dots is not exportable, by clicking on each you can find details of each record including the water pump (listed 1850 – 1880), the Kennedy Family Tomb (Mausoleum 1825 – 1830) and the vent pipe:

Cast-iron vent pipe, c.1880, with fluted base, slender shaft and crown cap, located to road side.

<http://www.buildingsofireland.ie/niah/search.jsp?type=record&county=SC&regno=11213028>

## APPENDIX 3: PLANTING FOR POLLINATORS

The following is an extract from guidelines available from [www.pollinators.ie](http://www.pollinators.ie):

Pollinator friendly planting code - professional planting recommendations Experts agree that inadequate nutrition is a major cause of pollinator declines. We want pollinators to be there when we need them, but our landscape doesn't provide the abundance and diversity of flowering plants that they need to survive throughout their life cycle. To have a healthy balanced diet, bees need to be able to feed on pollen and nectar from a range of different flowers from early spring to autumn.

It is important to prioritise increasing native plants (trees, shrubs, wildflowers) across the landscape to provide food for pollinators.

Good native hedgerow species for pollinators:

Hazel (Feb-Apr) Willow (Mar-May) Blackthorn (Mar-May) Hawthorn (Apr-Jun) Broom (Apr-Jun) Wild Cherry (Apr-May) Bramble (May-Sept) Wild Privet (May-Jul) Crab apple (May-Jun) Elder (May-Jun) Whitebeam (May-Jun) Rowan (May-Jun) Wild Rose (Jun-Jul) Honeysuckle (Jun-Oct) Guelder Rose (Jun-Jul) Raspberry (Jun-Aug) Ivy (Sept-Nov) Gorse (Jan-Dec)

These species are **not** recommended for hedgerows: Horse Chestnut, Beech, Laburnum, Lilac, Lime.

These species can be **considered invasive** and should not be planted: Fuchsia, Cherry Laurel, Rhododendron, Sycamore, Snowberry.

Deliberately planting horticultural or ornamental plants Important:

In towns and villages non-native horticultural or ornamental plants can be an important additional food source for pollinators. It is important to choose species that are good sources of nectar and pollen. However, you should **not** plant these in natural or semi-natural habitats. They should also not be planted in farmland (outside of farm gardens).

- Perennial plants are generally better sources of pollen and nectar than annuals. They are also cost effective as they grow and flourish over the following years. In contrast to seasonally replaced annual bedding, perennial plants can look less attractive to the public when they have finished flowering. This can be minimised by carefully selecting perennials and mixing them with ornamental grasses.
- Traditional annual bedding plants like Geraniums, Begonias, Busy Lizzy, Petunias, Polyanthus or Salvia splendens have virtually **no pollen and nectar** and are of little value to pollinators. If you are using annuals you should try to select scented, single-flowered varieties. The block planting of these can be an excellent source of food for pollinators.
- The All Ireland Pollinator Guide have lists of pollinator friendly trees, shrubs, climbers, perennials, annuals and bulbs. Please note that these are not exhaustive lists. The best

guide is to observe what the bees themselves are feeding on in parks/gardens and to increase the amount of these plants.

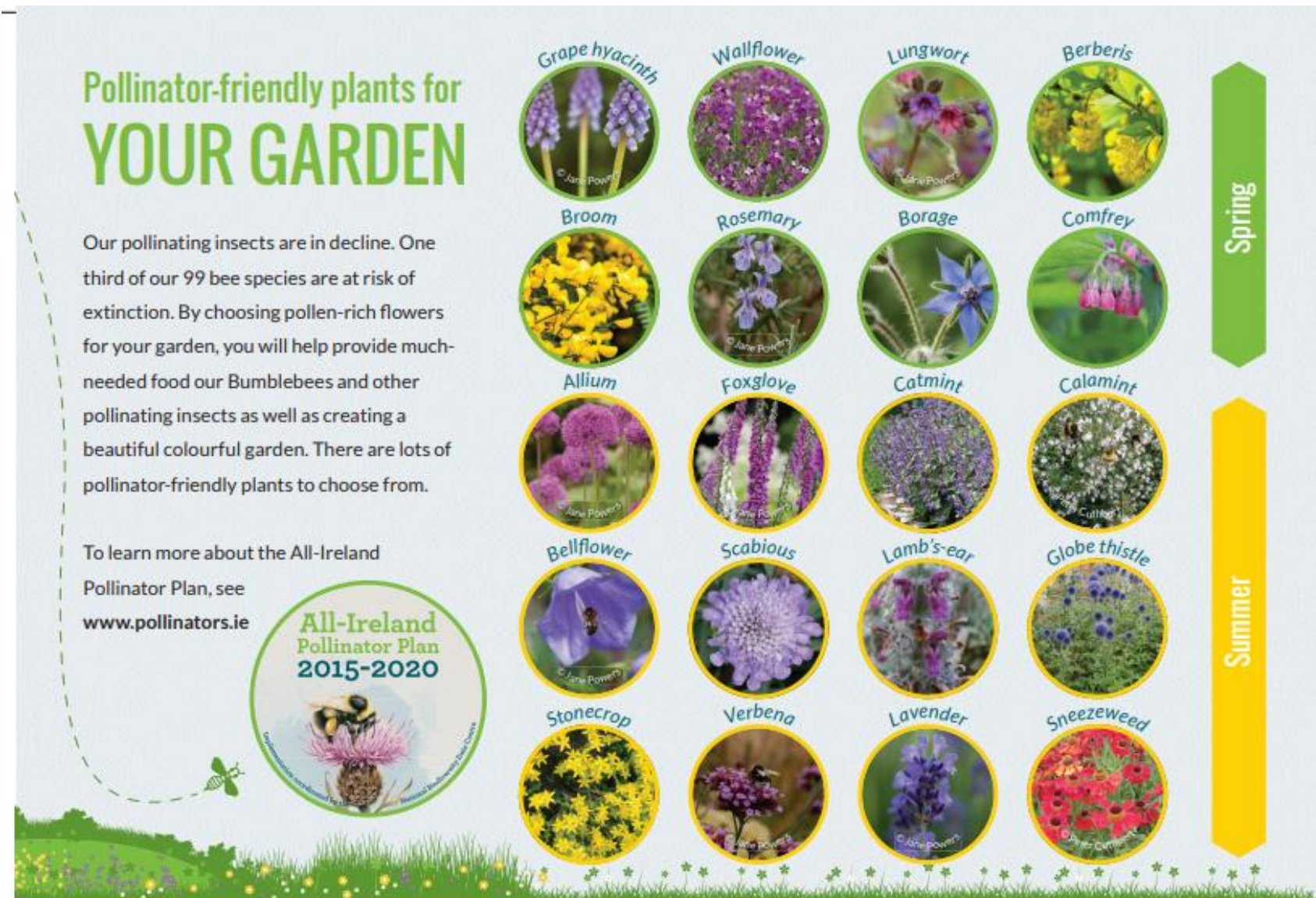
**STREET TREES** Roadside margins can be difficult locations in which to establish trees. Those suggested are pollinator friendly, resistant to pruning and should not cause any structural damage or create health and safety issues.

Species	Flowering
Juneberry Tree <i>Amelanchier x grandiflora</i> 'Robin Hill'	Small white flower April. Good autumn colour
Upright Hawthorn <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> 'Stricta'	White flowers May
Pillar crab <i>Malus tschonoskii</i>	Scented white flowers May. Can set fruit
Callery pear <i>Pyrus calleryana</i> 'Chanticleer'	White flowers April-May. Can set fruit.
Rowan <i>Sorbus acuparia</i> varieties	White flowers May-June
Lime <i>Tilia cordata</i> 'Greenspire'; <i>Tilia x europaea</i> 'Euchlora'	Pale yellow flowers June-July

Lime (*Tilia*) species have fragrant flowers and produce a lot of nectar, however care is needed in the selection of cultivars as many can grow to large tree size proportions that will exceed allotted roadside space. Some are also very attractive to aphids and can lead to honeydew drip onto cars below (e.g., *Tilia x europaea*, *T. platyphyllos*). Those suggested above are smaller and don't attract aphids, therefore producing no dripping.

[A detailed list of bulbs, flowers and climbers suitable for any season are available to view here.](#)





Available from resource section from [www.pollinators.ie](http://www.pollinators.ie)

**APPENDIX 4: NATIVE TREES & SHRUBS FOR LANDSCAPING<sup>1</sup>**

Common name	Latin name	Height (max)	Suitable for public open spaces	Suitable for streets / confined spaces	Suitable for tubs, containers, raised beds.	Guide to planting: see key below
Alder	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	22m	Yes	No	Yes	ADPS
Alder buckthorn	<i>Frangula alnus</i>	6m	Yes	No	Yes	D Restricted distribution. Not commonly available.
Arbutus (strawberry tree)	<i>Arbutus unedo</i>	8m	Yes	No	Yes	Not frost hardy
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	28m	Yes	No	No	ADIPS
Aspen	<i>Populus tremula</i>	24m	Yes	No	No	DPSV Not close to buildings or any services
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	2m	No	No	No	C/H note: tends to be invasive
Broom	<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	2m	Yes	No	Yes	*
Burnet rose	<i>Rosa pimpinellifolia</i>	2m	Yes	No	Yes, but vigorous	C/H Restricted distribution. Not commonly available.
Common (or European) gorse	<i>Ulex europeus</i>	2.5m	Yes	No	In a rural setting	HV
Crab apple	<i>Malus sylvestris</i>	6m	Yes	No	No	AHIP
Dog rose	<i>Rosa canina</i>	2m	Yes	No	Yes. Vigorous	C/H
Downy birch	<i>Betula pubescens</i>	18m	Yes	Yes	Yes	ADIP
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	6m	In hedge	No	No	V
Guelder rose	<i>Viburnum opulus</i>	4.5m	Yes	No	No	DH
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	9m	Yes	Yes	Yes	AHIPS
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	6m	Yes	No	No	AHS
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	15m	Yes	Yes	Yes	AHPS
Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	climber	Yes	On walls	No	C
Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>	climber	Yes	Yes	Yes	C
Juniper	<i>Juniperus communis</i>	6m	Yes	No	No	S
Pedunculate oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	30m	Yes	No	No	AI only suitable for large spaces
Privet	<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>	3m	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Rowan or mountain ash	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	9m	Yes	Yes	Yes	ADHIP
Scots pine	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	24m	Yes	No	No	AI
Sessile oak	<i>Quercus petraea</i>	30m	Yes	No	No	AI only suitable for large spaces
Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>	18m	Yes	Yes	Yes	ADIP
Sloe, blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	3m	Yes	No	No	AHPV
Spindle	<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>	7.5m	Yes	No	No	H
Western (or mountain) gorse	<i>Ulex gallii</i>	1.5m	Yes	No	Yes	* Restricted distribution. Not commonly available.
Whitebeam spp.	<i>Sorbus aria</i>	12m	Yes	Yes	Yes	IPS
Wild cherry	<i>Prunus avium</i>	15m	Yes	Yes	Yes	AHI
Willow spp.	<i>Salix spp.</i>	6m	Some	No	No	V Not suitable near buildings or services
Wych elm	<i>Ulmus glabra</i>	30m	Yes		No	PS
Yew	<i>Taxus baccata</i>	14m	Yes	No	Yes	AIPS

A – Grows in a wide variety of soils, C – Climber, H – Suitable for hedging, I – Suitable as an individual tree, D – Tolerates or prefers damp conditions, P – Tolerates smoke or pollution, S – Tolerates shade, V – Invasive, \* – Tolerates dry conditions

<sup>1</sup> Source – Heritage Council (2004) Conserving and Enhancing Wildlife in Towns and Villages.



## APPENDIX 5: INFORMATION ON NEST BOXES AND THEIR REQUIREMENTS

Species	Nest box type and hole diameter	Position of nest boxes
Blackbird	A box with 10cm high open front. Dimensions: 28 x 23 x 17 cm	Fix the box 1.5m to 5.5 metres high.
Blue tit	Entrance hole size diameter should be 2.5cm.	Boxes for tits, sparrows or starlings should be fixed 2m to 4m up a tree or a wall.
Great tit	Entrance hole size diameter should be 2.8cm.	
Starling	Entrance hole size diameter should be 4.5 cm.	
Pied wagtail	A small box with 10cm high open front	Should be fixed up to 5m above ground.
Robin	A small box with 10 cm high open front.	Open-fronted boxes for robins and wrens need to be low down, below 2m, well hidden in vegetation.
Wren	A box with a 14 cm high front panel	
<b>Note:</b> It is best to erect nest boxes in the Autumn. Nailing them to trees may damage the trees so it is suggested you erect them with a nylon bolt or wire. Ideally your nest box would be positioned between south east and south west if there is plenty of shade. Make sure that the birds have a clear flight path without any clutter directly in front of the entrance. Tilt the box forward slightly so that any driving rain will hit the roof. <i>Adapted from the RSPB.</i>		

## APPENDIX 6: GREENING YOUR EVENT

IDEAS FOR GREENING YOUR EVENT – please note ideas overleaf on balloon launches

### PLASTIC FREE FESTIVALS

Do not allow single-use plastics at your event. Have water fountains or refillable bottles, glasses and cups. Use paper straws. Use crockery / cutlery where you can wash them.

### FOOD PACKAGING

Encourage stall holders not to use Styrofoam containers or other non-recyclable containers. Use where possible compostable plates and cutlery. Choices include:

**Recycled Plastic** – Plastic that's been recycled is more sustainable.

**Bamboo** – Bamboo is a grass that takes only 5-7 years to reach maturity, thus making it highly sustainable. Bamboo is also naturally antibacterial making it super hygienic.

**Wooden** – Wooden is a natural and clean option.

### RECYCLE STATIONS

Clearly label and set up recycling stations. If possible – have volunteers at recycling stations to direct what waste goes into which bin.

### CATERING:

When planning the menu for your event, try to consider organic, seasonal and local food, which isn't likely to leave a big carbon footprint.

Try to choose coffee and tea from sustainable and fair-trade growers. These can be purchased in most Irish supermarkets.

Getting food quantities right is always a worry. Provide too little and you'll have everyone grumbling (their stomachs, too!), provide too much and there will be waste to deal with. To minimise any waste, be sure, where possible, that you know the numbers attending and any dietary requirements so that your caterer can plan quantities accordingly.

### LIGHTING

LEDs are an energy-efficient alternative to traditional light bulbs.

**Prizes** – give away prizes of packets of local seeds, or wind-up torches or refillable water bottles.

## **BALLOONS & CHINESE LANTERNS OR PLASTIC DUCKS – DO NOT RELEASE AS HARMS WILDLIFE AND ADDS TO PLASTIC POLLUTION**

For many people, sending a balloon into the sky is a popular way to remember someone or to celebrate an event. Although popular and well loved, the act of releasing balloons is also an environmental issue. Balloons, and balloon accessories like plastic clips and ribbons, are not biodegradable. In particular mylar balloons, which are essentially foil-coated plastic, stay in the environment forever. Similar to plastic bags, in sunlight they break down into smaller pieces forming dangerous micro plastics. Latex balloons generally degrade more quickly than other types of plastics but can take years to fully decompose depending on conditions and the materials used in their manufacture.

### **ALTERNATIVES TO BALLOON RELEASES**

**Have balloons tied down and do not release them. Ensure they are disposed of at the end of the event.**

**Bubbles:** Make a bubble solution so you can blow bubbles and let the breeze carry them skyward. You can also make giant bubbles and frost patterns in bubbles in the winter. Bubbles are a fun addition to any party; people of all ages love them, and they look so pretty floating around in photos. Just be sure to buy or make non-toxic bubble mix that is eco-friendly. [Here is a recipe.](#)

**Kites:** Flying kites is a great way to promote your event and make it visible for miles.

**Flags, banners, streamers and dancing inflatables** – Many businesses are realizing the benefits of using reusable eye-catching signage. Colourful streamers, flags and banners save money and time over balloons, ribbons and helium. They are also weather resistant, save Helium, and can be reused again and again!

**Bunting** – A great way to decorate for parties and celebrations is bunting! These beautiful waves of fabric can be made at home and uniquely designed with different patterns, shapes, and colours. They are also reusable, fun to make, and are sure to light up the party! Here is a link to [Make your own bunting](#).

**Wildflower seed bombs** – A great way to give a gift that grows is by making your own flower seed bombs! It's important to only use native seeds – you could collect these from local fields etc. These little pounces will spread life-giving, beautiful flowers. [Make your own seed bombs making sure you choose local seeds](#).

**Coloured lights** – Coloured lights catch attentions during parties, holidays! They can be more wildlife-friendly than bright lights that can impact on eg. foraging bats.

## APPENDIX 7: SPECIFIC LANDSCAPING IDEAS FOR RATHCOOLE

*Disclaimer: The author was asked to provide specific planting advice for a number of sites in Rathcoole and as such the following is provided. All ideas are based on visual assessment from photos and a quick look at the sites only, attention should be paid to in-situ conditions such as access, overshadowing, soil conditions etc.*

### AREA ONE – Entrance Bed To Village – A Key Focal Point On Approach Road

**Idea/Concept:** Plant up blank spaces with 2-3 shrubs towards the back and the foreground to be planted up with flowering perennials which will provide seasonal colour and impact as well as nectar and pollen for browsing pollinators.

**Possible Planting scheme:** A selection or combination of some of the following depending on desired taste

- Shrubs to place at back near rock- *Buddleia* spp. (butterfly bush) , *Berberis* spp. And/or *Cytisus* spp.(Broom)
- Perennials in foreground: *Anemone japonica* (Japanese anemones) with *Geranium* spp. (Groundcover geranium/bloody cranesbill) in front or *Nepeta nitida* (cat mint) in front.



Bed on approach road into Rathcoole

### AREA TWO – Area Where Wall Has Been Removed and Boxes Placed On Top with Plants

Boxes could be planted up each growing season with a pollinator friendly annual such as trailing Nasturtiums, Cosmos, *Digitalis* or *Calendula* spp.. Perennial options could include *Campanula* spp. Trailing dwarf ivy (*Hedera* spp.), *Aubrieta* sp. *Geranium* spp., *Echinacea purpurea*, *Aster* spp., etc.



### AREA THREE –

Existing Planting could be enhanced with low maintenance pollinator friendly colourful perennials such as- *Nepeta nitida*, *Anemone japonica*, *Penstemon spp.*, *Lavendula angustifolia*, *Rudbeckia spp.*, *Verbena bonariensis*, *Salvia spp.*,



#### AREA FOUR – Just On Slip Road from Bypass

Area seen below could be planted up to provide a 'woodland edge' effect with native shrubs planted to whatever density desired and flowering perennials planted if maintenance budget allowed. Native shrubs to choose from could be *Crataegus monogyna*-Hawthorn, *Corylus avelana*-Hazel, *Prunus spinosa*-Blackthorn, *Euyonymus europaeus* Spindle, or *Ilex aquafolium* -Holly or a combination of all, these could be combined with Dog rose (*Rosa canina*) and *Anemone nemerosa* and or *Anemone blanda* in the foreground and some native ferns.



Below- A topiary of low maintained Holly could be used in a clump planting. Or any of the perennials mentioned for planting in early schemes could be used as one sees fit.



Below- A small hedge (either trimmed annually or left grow on as an informal hedge) of either *Hypericum* var. "Hidcote" or Broom- *Cytisus* would form a non-thorny flowering border hedge needing little or no maintenance.





### AREA FIVE - Montbretia Under Trees.

Below-Orange flower could be slightly invasive variety of *Crocsmia* (var, Monbretia) or could be a more cultivated variety, assuming soil is not overly disturbed and bulbs not moved to other site it poses no invasive risk. This strip could be enhanced with a planting of catmint –*Nepeta nitida*.



### AREA SEVEN - Grass Strip Between Road And Pavement At School



Above- Grassy strip could be planted with an edge of box and interior planted with a range of taller flowering perennials in either block or mixed plantings. This would help separate school children from passing traffic in particular. It works very well in Birr, Co Offaly. Any of the perennial species sited earlier could be used e.g *Lavendula angustifolia*, *Nepeta nitida*, *Echinacea purpurea* or *Verbena bonariensis*

## **APPENDIX 8 – SAMPLE LITTER ACTION PLAN**

### **RATHCOOLE TIDY TOWNS LITTER PLAN 2018**

#### **Background**

Rathcoole Tidy Towns committee decided to develop a litter plan for its community. This would allow them to focus actions with regard to litter. This would also allow them to evaluate what has worked well, and where more effort may be required.

#### **Litter Surveys undertaken**

To do this, firstly the Committee undertook several litter surveys over Spring 2019. This involved surveys on both the weekend and on school days to consider any school-related litter issues. Volunteers walked key routes through the community to note the various types of litter found, and where it was mostly located.

#### **Results of litter surveys**

Overall, we were pleased with the results and feel that many across the community we are working hard to alleviate litter in the community.

Six main litter problems were identified:

1. Dog Fouling
2. Graffiti
3. School pupils related litter from pupils along routes to & from school.
4. Cable ties on telegraph poles.
5. Overflowing bins by shops
6. Overflowing bins by bus stops.
7. Night-time littering (from fast food premises).

Each area has a detailed list of actions detailed below to help address the issues involved:

#### **Dog Fouling**

Rathcoole County Council already has 'Dog fouling' signs which are available to community groups. They could be erected but they are not often noted. Ideas which include those generated from launch:

Establish The 'Poo Fighters' - a team of volunteers to insert 'flags' or 'spray paint' in poos to highlight them and how long they hang around.

At 'black spots', have junior Rathcoole Tidy Towns volunteers give out free Poop scoops to any dog owners. This could be done in conjunction with asking them to pledge to pick up their dog's waste.

Visiting schools with local vet and public health nurse to inform pupils of health hazards of dog fouling. Poop scoops issued to pupils and fun demonstration on their use.

#### **Graffiti**

Set up a number of 'graffiti vice squads' who would be provided with sets of graffiti wipes to clean-up small incidents of graffiti when noted.

Plant prickly plants (eg. *Pyracantha*) along walls that are regularly targeted with graffiti to make it harder for the artists to access the sites.

Devise art project to cover utility boxes or other graffiti- target areas.

#### **School Related Litter**

Appoint a ***Schools-liaison*** officer. The person in question would discuss suggested actions with the schools in question. Ideas could include:

- Set up temporary bins during lunchtime school routes
- Litter monitors.
- There are a number of overgrown shrub areas where pupils congregate in den-like areas. In these areas litter is dumped and collects in bushes – so it is suggested these areas could be possibly cut-back.
- Incentives for pupils to bring litter back to school (apple vouchers?).

### **Cable ties**

Set up a **squat team** to remove all recorded cable ties. Ensure they are competent and fully au fait on Health & Safety requirements.

Direct litter pickers how to advise the ***cable-tie squat team*** when they see any in situ.

Set up an action group to write to candidates in election campaigns and ask them to remove all cable-ties as well as posters from within your community.

### **Shop Bins and related litter**

Ask a diplomatic volunteer to discuss the issue with the shop in question and suggest ideas to tackle localised littering including more regular empty of bins and sweeping up more regularly outside premises. This could be suggested at a start to be just for a limited time period (eg. The 6 weeks of adjudication from mid-June to end of July annually).

### **Bus stop Bins**

Discuss with SDCc ability to have bins at bus stops emptied more regularly.

Ask SDCC to determine the main sources of waste in bus stop bins to see if it's mostly household waste and if so to alter design of bins to reduce household waste deposits.

### **Fast Food Outlets**

Put up posters encouraging customers to dispose of litter appropriately.

Encourage businesses to keep street areas clean and litter free outside their premises.

Inform fast food proprietors of any litter problems associated with their businesses.