

# 2010 LIVCOM AWARDS

## Whole City Awards



## Village of Emly Submission

Submitted on behalf of the people of Emly & Local Tidy Towns Committee by:

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## ***Introduction***

Emly is a small village situated in the South of Ireland to the west of South Tipperary. “Imelach Iubhair” is the Irish for Emly it directly translates “The Edge of the lake of the Yew Tree”. Emly was originally founded as an ecclesiastical centre and the first monastic site stood at the edge of the lake, which is our graveyard today. For the first 700 years of Christianity in Ireland Emly was the predominant ecclesiastical centre in the South of Ireland rivaling Armagh in the North. St Ailbe is associated with the founding of the monastery in Emly we are to believe that he died in 582. The name St Ailbe is used in nearly all of our public buildings in Emly.

Today Emly is overflowing with community spirit and pride in place. Our dedication and achievements over the last number of years culminated in the award of Emly as Irelands Tidiest Town 2009. Up against 720 entries, Emly scooped an impressive five awards including: National Award Winner, Irelands Tidiest Village Award, a Gold Medal Award for Best in our Category, a South East Regional Award and a Best in County Award. We wish to build on our success and in this regard Emly has a 3 year Tidy Towns Development Plan in place.

## ***Enhancement of the Natural & Built Landscape***

The landscaping in Emly is carried out with local environmental needs in mind. As explained in our introduction the Yew tree is very historic and native to Emly however the original yew trees were felled a number of years ago so the Tidy Towns Committee have re planted them. The Four Seasons Garden is a special treat; planted with shrubs representing each season this garden was created as a millennium project and won a regional award in 2000. We have recently developed a sensory garden, which is wheelchair accessible. This garden is planted with specific colour, smell and taste plants to benefit people who have not got all of their senses. We also have a water feature here for someone who cannot see they will be able to hear the water.

We have a wild life garden, which is specifically planted with the feeding of wild animals in mind. This garden is left to its own devices the surrounding path is cut but the centre is left wild so that wildlife will not be disturbed the birds are also manually fed here in the really cold winter months but mainly there is enough of planted materials to keep them fed. This is a quite unusual area as it's so seldom you see wildlife cared for in the middle of a town or village.

Two of the housing estates contain large green areas these are planted and maintained by the residents and the Tidy Towns Committee. At the back of one of the estates St Ailbe's Drive a wildlife garden was created with the residents. This area is completely maintained by the residents and enjoyed by both residents and visitors.

The GAA field and Tennis Grounds are maintained by the clubs however they regularly meet with the Tidy Towns Committee to discuss changes and improvements. The tennis club use water butts to water their flowers with rainwater. In Emly flower boxes and containers are used to enhance each building. Each year we run a garden competition sponsored by a local business. This creates great awareness and competition between households. A dance is held in September each year to announce the winners, which is a great community event.

### ***Arts Culture and Heritage***

We have a local artist group in Emly who hold art exhibitions and classes quite regularly. Emly variety players hold a musical / pantomime or play each year. This is a great achievement for a village, which has only 612 inhabitants in the parish. They have held pantomimes with a cast of 63 involved most of which were children like Oklahoma, Oliver Twist, My Fair Lady and many more.

A local Heritage Committee formed as a sub committee from the Tidy Towns and thus created a Heritage Trail for our Village. This is very special and unique to Emly as we got a local artist involved to sketch all the sites on our Trail. Enclosed you will find a brochure of this Heritage Trail. We turned our old Creamery in to a Museum. We also converted Duhig House in to a Miniature Museum, which displays country living of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The Tidy Towns committee maintain and preserve all Heritage Buildings.

Every 5 years we hold a festival for visitors and invite back people who are from Emly and are living away. It's called The Fáilte Festival, which means Welcome. We hold Heritage walks, Parade, Farmer's market, Art exhibitions, Miss Emly Competition, a Talent Competition, Fun Sports Day, Talent Competition, Drama, Irish classes, hurling and football matches and music sessions. The festival will take place this year starting the 30<sup>th</sup> of July for one week.

### ***Environmental Best Practices***

We recently embarked on a new project with An Taisce, an Irish Environmental NGO, called The Green Home Programme, this programme is an extension of the Green Schools Programme, our local Primary School achieved its first Green Flag last year, now the community is coming together to achieve the Green Home Flag which will fly underneath the Schools Green Flag. Two students from the school are on the Tidy Towns Committee. The school have completed many wildlife and history projects, which are on display in the village. As part of the Green Home Project we are concentrating on reducing energy usage, water conservation, waste management and our carbon footprint. Also the committee have made a Green House with the School out of used milk containers. We also offer water butts to residents at a reduced rate.

We regularly get the Environmental Officer from South Tipperary County Council to come out and do a free information evening on recycling and composting. We give lots of tips on our newsletter about where you can take your rubbish. We made a recycling monster from aluminium drink cans. We reuse materials as much as possible instead of buying new. Last year we were involved in an energy saving project with South Tipperary County Council and Tipperary Energy Agency where 14 households in Emly took part and saved an overall of 4% electricity. Emly National School collect batteries, ink cartridges, mobile phones and aluminium cans for recycling. They also have their own compost where they compost pencil toppings, fruit skins and waster from their garden. In their garden they grow vegetables, potatoes and flowers. When they are off from school for the summer they have a rota of teams for caring and watering the garden.

### ***Community Participation and Empowerment***

Emly has great community spirit in all there are 14 clubs in Emly

1. Tidy Towns
2. GAA
3. Tennis
4. Bord Na Óg
5. Ladies Football
6. Lourdes Committee
7. Emly Renewal Group
8. Community Council
9. Resident Associations
10. Tuesday Club
11. Ladies Football
12. Parents Association
13. Bord of Management
14. Heritage Committee

Emly Tidy Towns has been going strong for the last 23 years as explained above they have reached the highest accolade of all by winning Irelands Tidiest Town in 2009. They worked hard for this for 22 years and it was only through the backing of the whole community it was achieved. Any projects that the committee undertake they get all of the clubs and the school involved. The Tidy Towns try to encourage all of our community to join in and integrate together. We have a new housing estate in Emly, which due to the recession has not been finished. Most of the people living there are strangers to Emly. The Tidy Towns committee has stepped in and planted this area. They had an open evening and invited a member from each household to come out a plant a tree and held a party for the children afterwards.

Emly GAA, Tennis Club, ladies football and Bord na Óg keep all of our community healthy with games. The GAA cater for over 14's while the Bord na Óg train and coach our younger children in hurling and football. The Tennis Club hold many tournaments often between business and clubs, which are great fun; they also hold a golden oldies tournament where you must be 40 or over to play. The Tennis club have

a clubhouse, which is used for knitting, art, and yoga classes its also used during the weekdays as a playschool.

The Lourdes committee raise funds to send people who are sick in the village to Lourdes. We have recently formed a youth Lourdes committee where we raise funds to help send young people to Lourdes as helpers.

The Tuesday club look after our elderly in the village. They provide them with a safety alarm button that they can press if ever in danger. They arrange for a chiropodist and community nurse to call to the elderly on a regular basis. They take them on days out during the summer months and at Christmas they hold a party for them.

### ***Healthy Lifestyle***

The lifestyle in Emly is very healthy and enjoyable and is mostly relaxed. As Emly is a small parish everyone knows everyone therefore any party's or celebrations are community orientated. The Tidy Towns have provided the village with 4 beautiful but very different gardens for walking and relaxing. To follow the Heritage Trial is also a good way of exercising while learning the history of the village at the same time. There is also a beautiful walk where the lake of Emly used to be. Of course being involved in Tidy Towns is very sociable and healthy. Being out in the fresh air every evening sweeping, planting weeding or watering is great exercise. We try and work in groups this way you have fun and a laugh together, which makes it more enjoyable. Most days we have tea or soft drinks together while working or when we are finished this is the social side of Tidy Towns. Of course we are extremely good at celebrating success when winning the whole parish and surrounding are invited to a village party.

The Tennis club got a grant and put down new Savannah Tennis Courts, this surface is a lot easier and enjoyable to play on than the tarmac. They hold many tournaments and match's with all ages and holds a week long summer camp during the summer months for the children on school holidays. Also in their clubhouse during the summer a drama camp is also held and run by a local actress.

The GAA and Bord na Óg work together playing and coaching both hurling and football. The Bord na Óg take the young children to Croke Park our National Hurling Park in Dublin to see senior match and to play blitz which consist of many matches being played on the one day. The Tuesday Club and Lourdes committee take care of our elderly. There is also a community bus supplied to the people of Emly 2 days a week to take them in to Tipperary Town shopping old people are free of charge.

## *Strategic Planning*

The South Tipperary County Development Plan 2009-2015 sets out the strategic framework and planning policy context for the development of the County to 2015 and beyond. Emly is identified as one of 19 District Service Centres under the County Development Plan which includes a land use zoning map and specific development objectives for the village.

One of the core objectives for the development of Emly from a planning perspective is that new development respects the character, nature and scale of the village.

One of the actions set out in the County Development Plan is that Enhancement Schemes be prepared for all of the District Service Centres. In this regard the County Council in conjunction with the local community in Emly are currently preparing an Enhancement Scheme which will be endorsed by the Elected Members of the Council in the last quarter of 2010.

The purpose of the Enhancement Scheme is to facilitate and guide improvement works to the streetscapes of the village centres and to enhance village amenity by way of elements such as tree planting and landscaping, improved pedestrian amenity, public lighting, street furniture, etc. When adopted the schemes will represent a shared vision and inform and inspire local community groups, residents, applicants for development, builders, designers and local authority planners.

The measures currently proposed for Emly under the Enhancement Scheme will function to consolidate and strengthen the already impressive environment in Emly and will ensure that the village retains its character and pristine environment into the future for the enjoyment of generations to come.

These works include the introduction of a new special road surface at the village centre in order to highlight this area, the new road surface will also function as a subtle traffic calming measure, an additional pedestrian crossing on the Main Street will also be provided in order to make the environment safer for pedestrians. The footpaths and lighting are to be upgraded and it is also proposed to develop a small plaza type open space area at the end of the Church Avenue. The existing trees on both Main Street and the Village green are also to be enhanced with appropriate under planting. The footpaths are to be extended to serve the new Glen Court housing estate to link this residential area with the village. In addition to the works referred to above which are to be delivered over the coming years the Church Car Park has already been resurfaced this year.





St Ailbe's Church built in 1983



St Ailbe's Creamery set up in the early 1900's



Emigrant memorial for those who left Emly



St Ailbe's Hall formerly the parish church



Emly National School 100 years old



Duhig House - Miniture Museum



Sensory Garden



Greenhouse made from used milk cartons



Four Seasons Garden





Fun dress up nights to raise funds for charity



## Celebrating success

