



Tidy Towns Seminar

Limerick

16 February 2022

Blackrock

Co. Louth

Blackrock Co. Louth



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4k1B7agHGUY>

Blackrock Awards

- Awards as follow:
- 2004 - Endeavour Award
- 2012 - Bronze Medal
- 2013 - Gold Medal
- 2014/15 - Silver Medals
- 2016/17/18/19/21 - Gold Medals
- (6 Gold medals in total)
- County winners since 2016
- 2019 Ireland's Tidiest Small Town
- 2021 Joint 3rd Nationally 2 points from Ennis



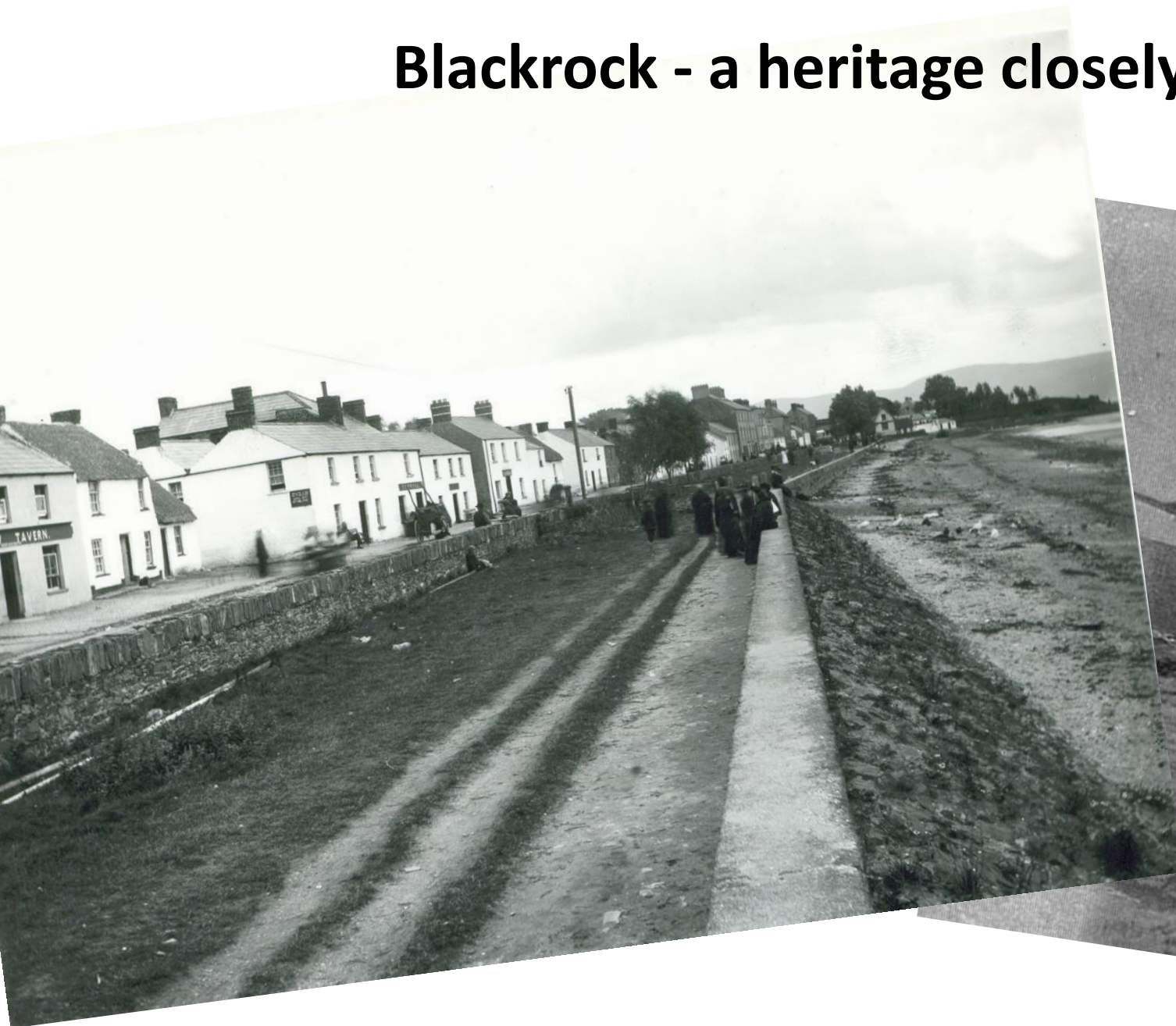
Ireland's Tidiest Small Town 2019



Louth Looking Good Awards 2021

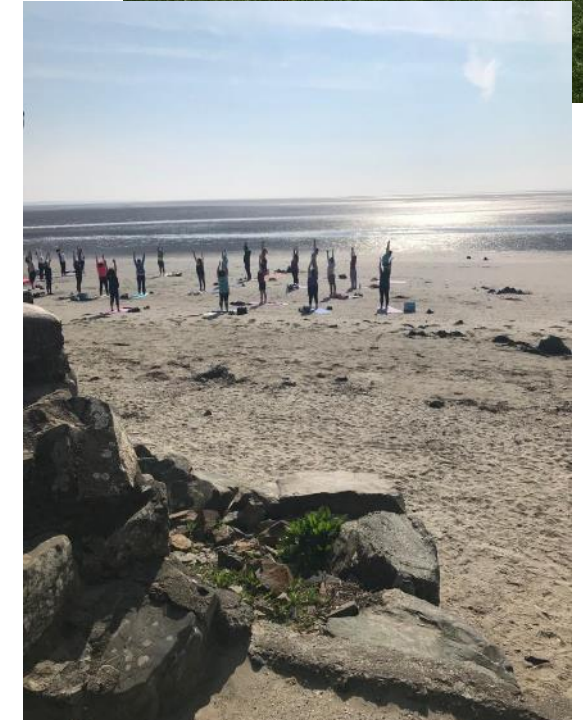


Blackrock - a heritage closely related to the sea



Blackrock - our Best Features

- Our location
- The Beach, views of the mountains
- The promenade, three sculptures, focus is The Sundial.
- The Park – Green Flag
- Walking routes, a destination
- Fine Dining, restaurants, cafes, ice cream shops
- The Sea – activities, swimming, windsurfing, canoeing, paddleboarding, triathlon, outdoor yoga, SPA/SAC
- Architecture
- Festivals, raft race, Pumpkin festival, St. Patrick
- Community Centre
- Sports clubs, GAA, Golf, Soccer, Hurling, Athletics
- An active and vibrant community
- Relationship with local traders- sponsorship
- Ras Tailteann(2022)
- Charities and charity events
- One of the best places to live in Ireland.....



Blackrock's growing status has been hard won



John Mulligan
johnmulligan@argus.ie

IT doesn't take an Irish Times competition to reveal to residents of Blackrock that they are living in one of the top 20 places in the country to reside. Hopefully when the judging panel announces the overall winner on September 25th Blackrock will be in the running, not that overall victory would be welcomed by all since the village has been overrun at times during a very busy summer, with parking especially at the premium on peak occasions.

HARD WORKING TIDY TOWNS COMMITTEE HAVE PUT A LOT OF WORK INTO MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING PUBLIC AREAS AND AMENITIES

However, the recognition that Blackrock is receiving not just locally but now on a national stage, is well deserved for lots of people, the owners or business premises, and the hard working Tidy Towns committee have put a lot of work into maintaining and enhancing public areas and amenities.

In conjunction with the news of the Irish Times competition comes a call from a local councillor for a risk assessment to be carried out on Blackrock beach and a warden to be employed to make the area safer.

That may seem a little unnecessary especially to the many who ventured into the sea this summer off Blackrock beach only to find that they had to walk a considerable distance from shore to cover their waist.

Nonetheless there have been incidents in the past, and sadly deaths, when the victims, including children, were stranded by the in-coming tide. Sufficient warning signs are essential to warn people of this risk, for while it is easy to be fooled by the shallow water close to the shore, experience has taught us that you can never take the sea for granted.



n Ireland; Claddagh Basin, Galway; Blackrock beach, Bl
NRYK SADURA/GETTY; MICHELLE MCMAHON/GETTY; DARAC MAC DONAILL; ALAN

naturally beautiful location, with a well-kept centre. Though property is expensive, the place also offers numerous free amenities and wealth of natural features, such as the castle park, beach and coastal walks. A pretty, comfortable place, it has the feel of a village and the scale of a town, just far enough from the city."

TOWNS

Blackrock, Co Louth
Population: 5,000
Average house price: € 278,125
Nominated by: John Horan
Total nominations: 11

What the pitch says: "Nestled in the crook of Dundalk Bay, Blackrock in Co Louth boasts a wonderful vista of the Cooley Mountains, and use of the sea as an amenity has increased during the last year, with people enjoying swimming, paddle

boarding surfing. Town in 2019, and support for charities is unflinching."

What The Irish Times says: "It's a holiday destination with ice-cream and tea stops, yet and train services from Dublin and Belfast make it a commuter town. It has a very active group, and the local community has obvious pride in the area."

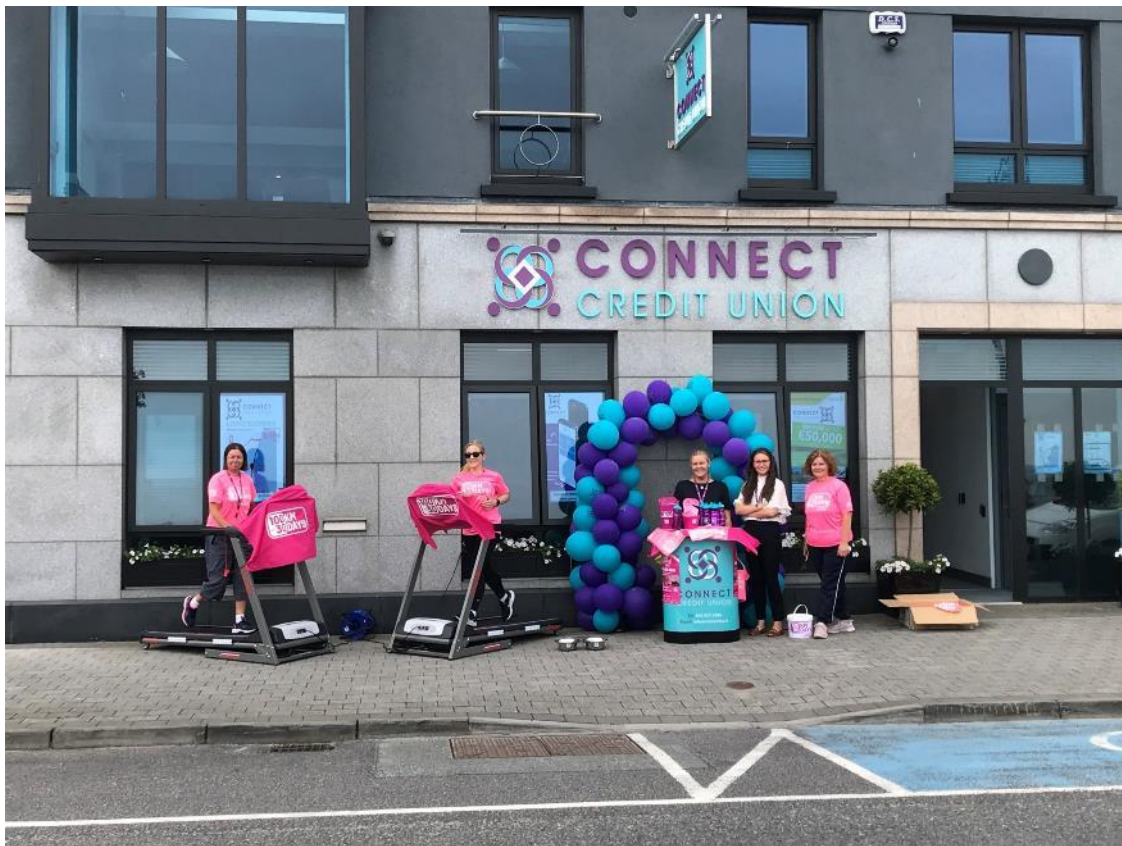
Bray, Co Wicklow
Population: 32,600
Average house price: €408,000
Nominated by: Nikki McLaughlin
Total nominations: 55

What the pitch says: "Bray is a helpful, happy and has a great life. The mountains and the

COMPETITION

Best Place to Live in Ireland 2021

Blackrock in the top 20 Best Places to live in Ireland



“100k in 30 Days”
challenge by staff of the Credit Union

Support for Charities and Events

Coasters
Motorcycle
Toy Run



#LH286

**SATURDAY
18TH SEPT**

**TOUR
D'DISTRICT**

FINAL DAY - AROUND THE WORLD IN 8 DAYS

FOR INTERESTED
REGISTERED CYCLISTS

www.lh286cycle.com

Starting **Clermont Restaurant Terrace Garden**
Leaving **9.30am Sharp Blackrock**
Enter at the **BLUE DOOR** at the Clermont, Main Street

90K Route
Greengates - Martins Cross - Knockbridge
Hackballscross - Dundalk - Dromad - Edentubber
Omeath - Carlingford - Dundalk - Blackrock

60K Route
Greengates - Xerox - Ballymac - Lordship
Bush - Greenore - Dundalk - Blackrock

REFRESHMENTS after at the Clermont

USE YOUR KILOMETRES TOWARDS OUR CHALLENGE

Tony Golden Cycle
Run

The Promenade

Focus on The Sundial (2000)

Cockle Pickers (2018)



Bradain (2013)

In Spite of Covid....

March 2020



October 2021



In spite of
Covid....



Activities continue...



Sponsorship continues...



Pollinator friendly planting continues



Clean Coast and CoastCare event



The Makers

New craft shop opened
A vote of confidence in the
future of Blackrock
Selling crafts from local
producers



Since 2021

Blackrock has opened up...

Fine dining restored

New Tapas bar

New Craft Shop

Community Centre relaunched

Tree survey under way

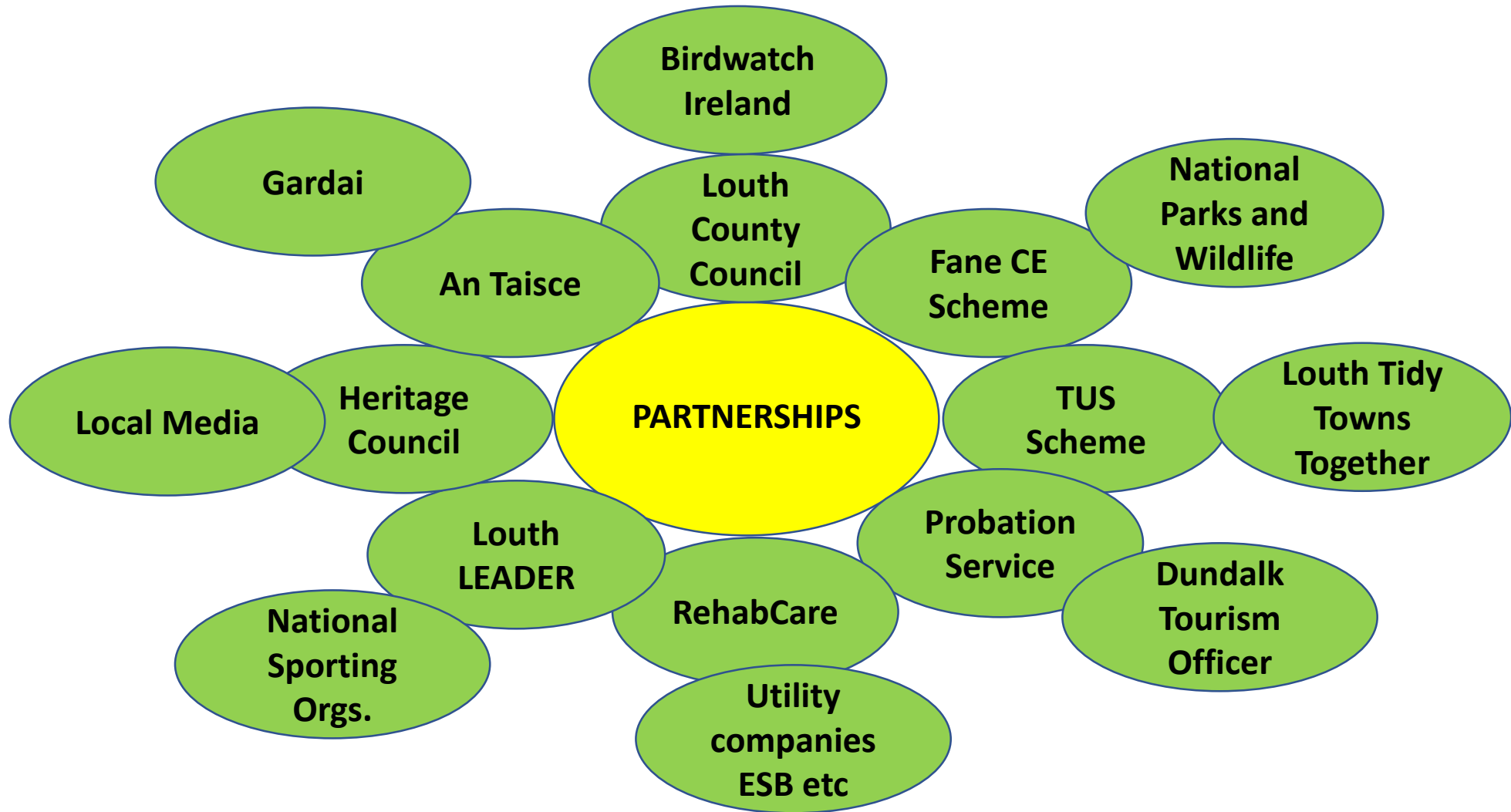
Sport is back

Blackrock in top 20 best places to live in Ireland

100k in 30 Days challenge for Breast Cancer

Tony Golden Memorial Cycle







Sustainability – Doing more with Less

BEC

Green Schools

Renewable Energy Project in the Park

Home Composting Demo Site

Christmas Tree Shredding

Easter Egg packaging

Climate Ambassador

Community Centre Refurbishment

Rainwater harvesting

Sustainability in hospitality

Go Cars

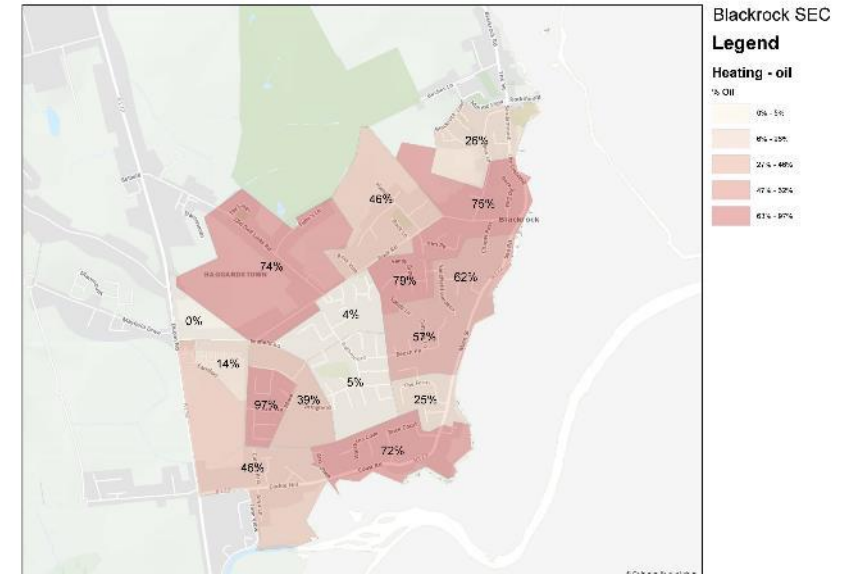
(Adopting the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals)



Louth Co Co / Blackrock Partnership on Climate Change

Climate change is set to be a huge agenda item with Council going forward

Louth County Council has proposed Dundalk and Blackrock to be the first Low Carbon Zone in County Louth. Blackrock is chosen because it is already a Sustainable Energy Community and there is a Sustainable Energy Garden at Blackrock Park and the EV charging locations in the village and especially because of Blackrock Tidy Towns commitment to improvement of the area. This will enable a further development of Blackrock towards mitigating the effects of Climate Change and making Blackrock an even better place to live and work.



Nature and Biodiversity

Biodiversity Action Plan

Adapted planting Regime to favour
pollinator friendly

Wildflower

LoMo

Wild for Wildlife – awareness signage

Verges – outer verge trimmed only

Blackrock Park

Foreshore area not interfered with



Funding

Funding Sources

- Own fundraising
- Sponsorship – local businesses
- Louth LEADER
- Heritage Council
- Local Authority
- Town and Village Renewal
- ORIS
- Prizes from competitions

Have projects ready to go



Going for Gold

- Identify your physical boundaries
- Have a Plan (or two), use expert help, review regularly
- Address items mentioned in last years report
- Address all eight categories in the competition (each year)
- Make the most of your features (babbling brook and stone bridge) the sea
- Be aware of any relevant improvement in your locality and document it
- You don't have to do everything yourself, use sub committees or expertise/skills in your community
- Publicise your successes, local papers, social media
- Be open and welcoming, new talent



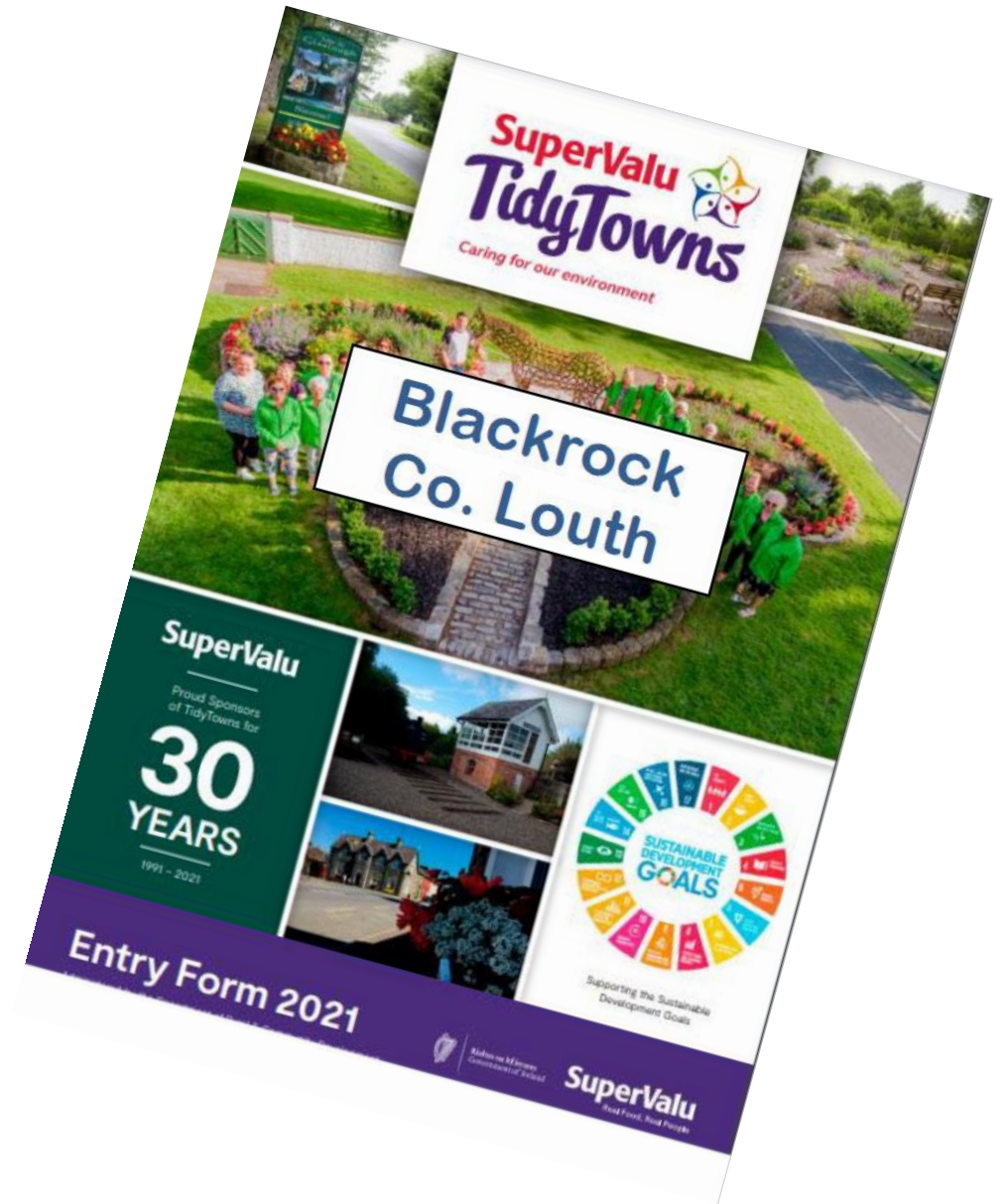
Going for Gold

- Make the most of your relationships with Schools (Green Schools)
- Don't be afraid of big projects
- County Development Plan!
- Keep an eye on planning
- Heritage
- Use your local elected representatives
- Identify sources of funding (get an expert)
- A maintenance programme is essential (Housekeeping - litter, weeds, grass, paint)
- Balance with new projects



The Application

- Is a skill in itself
- Get help if necessary from outside your committee
- Record everything remember it is not just the work of your TT committee that is adjudicated, it is your community
- Include anything of relevance going on in your community
- Your map is important
- Should it be long or short?



The Report

- Read the report carefully (also the county report)
- Analyse marking (but don't be a slave to it), compare
- Don't be disheartened with a small increase in marks despite great effort (we've all been there)
- Congratulate yourself on the good points. Celebrate!
- Look for points identified as shortcomings
- Address categories where your marks are low
- Add to your current plan, identify achievable projects
- Plan to visit other centres, you are not alone!
- Celebrate! The social aspect is important



The Future

Try to address challenges on the horizon

In Blackrock ...

Sea level rise

Rapid development

Ageing committee

Nothing is perfect...



Blackrock County Louth

Good luck to all in Limerick for the 2022 Tidy Towns competition



Links to YouTube videos

- Traders
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qYTWam6r_ek
- Raft Race
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWWU4YKptvk>
- DJI drone
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4k1B7agHGUY>
- Louth Looking Good Awards
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3ZCINdXzJE&t=14s>