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*TidyTowns Waters and Communities Special Award 2019*

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The Waters and Communities Special Award is now open for applications with a deadline of 17<sup>th</sup> May 2019. The Award is run in conjunction with SuperValu TidyTowns Awards.

The Waters and Communities Special Award 2019 aims to get communities more involved with the natural heritage in their local areas by helping to protect, maintain and improve the quality of local waterbodies . To be eligible for this award community groups must demonstrate an appreciation for their water environment and heritage with initiatives or projects during the timespan of June 2018 to May 2019. Examples of community initiatives include: clean ups; provision or upgrading of public amenities; conservation of biodiversity and heritage; promotion of angling; local education and awareness raising; etc).

The Waters and Communities Award was first introduced in 2017 and is now a regular feature in the TidyTowns calendar. Last year, the overall winner of the award was Abbey TidyTowns, Co. Galway. To read about previous winners of the Waters and Communities Special Awards see <https://www.catchments.ie/tidytowns-waters-communities-special-award/>

All applications will be assessed by a panel of judges appointed by Inland Fisheries Ireland, Waterways Ireland and the Local Authority Waters Programme. The judges will assess each application for initiatives undertaken between June 2018 and May 2019 based on the following criteria:

1. Awareness raising (15 Marks)
2. Community involvement (20 Marks)
3. Stakeholder engagement (15 Marks)
4. Project benefits (40 Marks)
5. Lessons learned and plans for the future (10 Marks)

The Waters and Communities Award is open to any community group to apply and is sponsored by Inland Fisheries Ireland, Waterways Ireland and the Local Authority Waters Programme. The award has a total prize fund of €7,000. The overall winner is presented with prize money of €2,000 at the main TidyTowns awards ceremony. All other winners and runners up will be presented with prize money at the TidyTowns regional awards ceremonies.

The Application form and further details are available on the TidyTowns website [www.tidytowns.ie](http://www.tidytowns.ie) .

Closing date for receipt of entries is 17<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

Best of luck everyone!