

TOP TIPS

Simple but practical ‘Top Tips’ to encourage a more sustainable community:
 (you might think of your own!)

- Bulk buying/using sturdy reusable containers.
- Avoid buying disposable goods.
- Shop local: Mention any ‘Shop Local’ campaign as this saves on energy and transport as well as helping the local economy.
- Promote ‘no waste’ gift ideas like vouchers/tickets/memberships.
- Sharing resources in the community such as grass-cutting/landscaping equipment.
- Install water-saving devices in community facilities (water butts, devices to reduce water flow in showers/sinks/toilets).
- Some TidyTowns groups have worked with their local authority to install a water refill station in prominent areas of a town.
- Include in your entry initiatives such as community bus schemes, promotion of walking or cycling (e.g. Green Schools Travel actions, Park and Stride, Cycle Bus).
- Lobby for cycle paths and routes (if appropriate) and encourage the local authority to install cycling infrastructure such as secure bike stands and shelters.
- Run an ‘eco-pledge’ campaign (waste/water/energy/all).
- Enter the TidyTowns Special Awards or get a school/community group to do so. Relevant awards may include Waste Prevention, Water in the Communities, Sustainable Development Goals, Leave No Trace, Water and Communities and Climate Action to name a few. The same information should be included in your main entry under this category.
- Put a waste prevention ‘Tip of the Week’ on your noticeboard/facebook page.
- Organise a community jam-making evening, perhaps after a community berry pick in autumn? Provide recipe leaflets for jams and chutneys. Organise a foraging walk and talk.
- Some communities can avail of free insulation services for qualifying households, e.g. elderly residents. Is there any such scheme in your area and what has it achieved? Energy Action Ireland administers this scheme in the greater Dublin area. www.energyaction.ie. Visit www.seai.ie for tips and grant schemes for householders/communities.
- Donate used books/magazines to a library, nursing home, doctor’s surgery etc.
- Set up a community repair workshop or project. ‘Repair Cafes’ are popular in some areas. Find out what hidden talents or ‘fixing’ expertise you have in the community, e.g. bike repair, computer repair, furniture repair, jewellery repair, clothes alterations etc. This could also be a lot of fun as a community social event. Collaboration with the local authority may be necessary. www.changex.org/ie/repaircafe
- Run a ‘bring and take’ day/ ‘swap shop’ for reusable items such as household goods, clothes and bric-a-brac. This may also serve as a fund-raising opportunity.
- Collect unused mobile phones and post them off to charity or organisations for reuse.
- Get a local group to host a ‘Stitch & Style’ fashion event – mending, altering and embellishing clothes to make the most of wardrobes.
- Run a vintage fashion show of pre-loved clothes to encourage buying second-hand clothes, (tie in with local secondary school/TY students).

- Organise a ‘rubbish night out’ with craft making from reused items. Some Local Authorities hold talks on ‘Upcycling’; maybe your group could host one?
- School Book Reuse / Rental Scheme: Does your local school have schemes to encourage the reuse or rental of books/uniforms etc? Make sure to include this in your entry form. If not, could you encourage it in any way?
- Reduce the amount of plastic bottles in a school by providing a drinking water facility.
- Promote reuse websites, e.g. www.jumbletown.ie, www.freetradeireland.com www.freecycle.org Many counties have ‘free to a good home’ facebook pages. These initiatives encourage reuse of unwanted items in reasonable condition.
- Reusing jam jars, egg boxes etc. in the community is more sustainable than transporting them long distances for recycling. Mention any organisations in your community that are upcycling goods such as furniture or clothes (sometimes these are social economy schemes).
- Do you have any community groups that reuse items as part of their activities? e.g. Men’s sheds have made bird boxes, planters and attractive gates from old pallets.
- Bring old glasses back to the opticians for reuse in the developing world.
- Encourage people to use the local library and charity shops.
- Use broken crockery as drainage in plant pots.
- Establish a community noticeboard to advertise ‘free to a good home’ items
- Hold a demonstration on how to make environmentally friendly household cleaning products.
- Organise a bicycle maintenance day with a local cycling club and bike shop. Get more people on their bikes.
- Household recycling campaign www.mywaste.ie/what-to-do-with-my-recycling/

Quick Tips for Water Conservation

- Fix leaks or drips
- Monitor meter readings – graph
- Install flush/flow control devices
- Green Schools – water saving actions
- Install auto-shut off or push taps
- Rainwater harvesting
- Gardening/planting to conserve water

Quick Tips for Sustainable Transport

- Green Schools Travel Theme – www.greenschools.ie
- Promote Walking – Walkability Survey, Get Ireland Active, Operation Transformation, Healthy Heart Walks
- Cycling – Safe cycle routes, cycle –skills local cycle clubs, family fun cycles
- Park’n’ride – Park’n’Stride
- Car Pooling
- Using Public Transport