



TIDY RANDALSTOWN



TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023

Registered Charity Number 108537

INTRODUCTION

Tidy Randalstown is an environmental group constituted within the Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council. It attained registered charity status on 22 February 2022. Our governing document is our constitution.

Tidy Randalstown's purposes are

1. the advancement of environmental protection or improvement
2. the advancement of citizenship or community development

The beneficiaries of the charity are the citizens of Randalstown and all who visit the town for business or pleasure. No harm flows from the purpose of our organisation; nor does any private benefit stem from its activities. In setting our objectives and planning our activities for the year the trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities have helped to achieve the charity's purposes and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries.

Charity Trustees

Moore Blair (Treasurer)
Helen Boyd (Chairperson)
Robert Fulton
Linda Houston
Gerry Lynch
Jane McTaggart
Catherine Purdy
Suzanne Winter (Secretary)

Committee members co-opted in 2023

Stephanie Burns
Donnie Sweeney

Financial Year

1 January – 31 December

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

During 2023 our volunteers engaged in regular litter picking activities throughout the town and immediate surrounding area.

Regular work teams also met, usually twice weekly to undertake a variety of activities which included, street sweeping, planting and maintenance of community gardens, street planters, window boxes and hanging baskets.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SEASONS

WINTER	<p>AGM and Friends Evening attracts a full house for special guest and designer of our Elevation garden, Johnny Knox.</p> <p>TR provides guided walking tour to members of Ballycastle U3A.</p> <p>TR representatives attend pre-match lunch hosted by Randalstown Rugby Club.</p> <p>5 TR trustees raise over £2,000 for planting from Randalstown businesses.</p> <p>Chinese themed night raises £825.</p> <p>Tidy Randalstown's work foregrounded in major feature in <i>Ulster Tatler</i> magazine.</p> <p>TR representatives visit Riverridge Recycling Depot.</p> <p>TR hosts health and safety refresher training evening for volunteers, funded by Live Here Love Here.</p> <p>Based on a visit to Randalstown and also interviews with TR representatives. Patrick Mahon selects Randalstown for the programme Mahon's Way.</p> <p>Nearly 50 volunteers turn out for the annual Big Clean Up, collecting some 47 bags of litter. Associated street collection raises £825 for TR funds.</p> <p>TR representatives travel to Derry/Londonderry to receive the 2022 Ulster in Bloom Small Town award.</p>
SPRING	<p>Randalstown Young Farmers join TR volunteers for a 'Spruce and Sweep' morning around town and gather 112 bags of weeds!</p> <p>TR volunteers support Randalstown Arches members in undertaking a major overhaul of the container garden in Arches Lane.</p> <p>Joe Mahon of UTV's Mahon's Way and his team carry out two days filming, including TR volunteers at work, for an edition of the programme to be broadcast in the autumn.</p> <p>TR hosts a Coronation Afternoon Tea for invited guests with funding from ANBC.</p> <p>TR representatives attend the opening by the King and Queen of ANBC's Coronation Garden, designed by Diarmuid Gavin. TR Chairperson interviewed for UTV News.</p> <p>TR receives funding of £9,882 from DFI to Restoring Our Greenway.</p> <p>Four new interpretive boards installed in 'Elevation'. Content provided by TR. Layout, production and installation by ANBC.</p>

SUMMER	<p>TR gains funding for the maintenance of Elevation from the RHS. ‘Elevation’ wins a Green Flag Community Award. TR and ‘Elevation’ are celebrated in a poem, “The Flower Train” written by a supporter. A representative from the National Trust North Coast spends a morning with TR volunteers to learn about our work and community links. TR installs four additional dog waste bag dispensers at locations suggested by local residents. TR hosts a group of past and present High Sheriffs who visit the town for morning coffee followed by a walking tour of our planting schemes and gardens. TR volunteers enjoy a ‘horticultural mystery tour’ to the Maghera area. Annual volunteers’ barbecue followed by dancing. TR learns of first wedding shoot taking place in Elevation. TR volunteer embarks on horticulture course at CAFRE Greenmount Campus. TR volunteer delivers talk in Elevation to a walking group from Antrim.</p>
AUTUMN	<p>TV gardener David Domoney visits Elevation and meets TR volunteers. Randalstown wins Small Town category in the Ulster in Bloom Awards for the 5th time. Randalstown named best small town and Best of the Best in NI Best Kept Awards. Annual Table Quiz raises over £800 for tidy Randalstown funds. 1,000 crocus corms, donated by Antrim Rotary Club to raise awareness of their Purple4Polio campaign, are planted in the Widows Row Garden. An episode of Mahon’s Way dedicated to Randalstown and featuring the work of Tidy Randalstown is aired on Ulster Television. Volunteers enjoy Christmas Dinner in the Rugby Club, thanks to ANBC financial support for the event. Tidy Randalstown receives Highly Commended Certificate in the Volunteers category of the National Railway Heritage Awards for Elevation Community Garden.</p>

SUMMING UP THE YEAR

Tidy Randalstown enjoyed yet another year of outstanding success in 2023, picking up numerous awards. We were particularly proud to be named ‘Best of the Best’ in the Northern Ireland Amenity Council’s Best Kept Awards. The comments of the judges truly left us with a warm glow:

“The Judges’ visit to Randalstown was most enjoyable and an unforgettable experience, one cannot but be impressed by the standard of cleanliness and tidiness throughout the town.”

“It is clearly evident that the whole community supports the standard of dedication and work that makes this town outstanding.”

Just as precious to us as the awards and prizes are the comments we receive from the public, in person and in social media. Here are just a few examples:-

“You have all done the town proud with your hard work and dedication.”

“Everywhere so well maintained. A joy to look at.”

“An outstanding award for an outstanding team! Well done to all involved.”

“Great team effort. I’ve been coming to Randalstown for nearly 30 years to visit family. You can see the transformation in recent years, it’s truly admirable what you have done to the town.”

We never forget that we owe our ongoing success to:

- The unfailing support we receive from all sections of the local community. Their degree of buy-in to Tidy Randalstown’s ethos has enabled us to reach for and attain goals that couldn’t have been dreamt of just a few years ago.
- Our close partnership with Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council. Agreement on priorities and areas of work means that we can all make more effective use of scarce resources.
- The outstanding dedication of the Tidy Randalstown volunteers. This happy band work hard together and support each other through good times and bad, not to mention in some atrocious weather! In 2023 they gave 8,118 hours of their time in the service of our beloved town.

No doubt in 2024 the work will go on. We look forward to it.

Helen Boyd

Chairperson