



Ballyphehane Tidy Towns

Strategic Plan 2023-2026

“Striving Towards A Sustainable Group, Community, And Environment”.

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Our Objectives

The main objectives of Ballyphehane Tidy Towns are:

1. To enhance the physical and social environment of Ballyphehane, Cork and to represent Ballyphehane in the National Tidy Towns competitions, for the benefit of the Ballyphehane community.
2. To liaise with governing authorities such as Cork City Council to aid in the development and management of litter free, clean and green environment for the Ballyphehane area.
3. To enhance the physical, mental and social health and well-being of the Ballyphehane community by supporting the development and maintenance of green spaces for exercise, jogging, walking, cycling, and other recreational activities.
4. To enhance the community through workshops and events deemed to be beneficial to the Ballyphehane area.
5. To strengthen and encourage community participation in all projects undertaken in the community.

Our Values

Our values are derived from the [All-Ireland Standards for Community Work \(2016\)](#) which includes:

Collectivity

Focusing on the potential benefits for the whole Ballyphehane community (present and future) as a collective, rather than focusing only on benefits to individual people or groups within the community.

Community Empowerment

Developing projects and working in a manner that leads people and the Ballyphehane community to be resilient, organised, included and influential.

Participation

The process of participation is fundamental to our work which needs to reflect the diversity of the Ballyphehane community. Our work strategies will be designed, implemented and monitored with the participation of our community stakeholders and will seek to remove barriers preventing community participation in our work where possible. We also support the ideals of participative democracy through our democratically elected voluntary Board of Directors and Executive Committee with their participation in decision making structures and processes.

Social Justice and Sustainable Development

Our work must promote policies and practices that challenge injustice, poverty, inequality, discrimination and social exclusion, and value diversity of identities and approaches within the Ballyphehane community. It must also promote a sustainable society which involves promoting environmentally, economically and socially sustainable policies and practices in safeguarding the future of the Ballyphehane community.

Human Rights, Equality and Anti-discrimination

In seeking a community where human rights and equality are realised and discrimination is addressed, Ballyphehane Tidy Towns will strive towards the protection and promotion of human rights for all.

Our Strategy

Through the work and support of our community volunteers our Strategic Plan 2023-2026 will strive towards creating a sustainable group, community, and environment. Our strategy outlines the projects and initiatives our group and volunteers will work towards accomplishing. And it also sets out the elements our Board of Directors and Executive committee need to develop to support such work.

The strategy is outlined in the following order:

Group Pillars-

- Community Education
- Community Maintenance and Pride
- Community Sustainability & Biodiversity
- Community Events

Board and Committee Pillars-

- Board and Committee Governance
- Strategic Partnerships & Growth

At A Glance – Key Goals

Group Pillars-

Community Education

- Expand Youth Hub Training and Reach
- Establish Junior Youth Hubs At Primary School Level
- Secure A Plot Of Land And Establish Ballyphehane Market Gardens Project In Conjunction With Other Local Groups
- Secure A Plot Of Land And Establish Ballyphehane Tidy Towns Botanists and begin setting the frameworks for Ballyphehane Botanical Gardens
- Arts, Environment and Heritage

Community Maintenance and Pride

- Continued Weekly Litter Picks on Saturday Mornings
- Continued Seasonal Midweek Litter Picks
- Continued Engagement and Reviewing of the Pearse Square Rejuvenation Project
- Expand the Adopt A Street Programme
- Support The Development Of A New Playground For Tory Top Park
- Establish The Ballyphehane Tidy Towns: Pride Of Place Awards
- Develop a Ballyphehane Business/Corporate Volunteer Programme

Community Sustainability & Biodiversity

- Establish a Volunteer Recruitment and Retainment Toolbox
- Support The Development Of A Ballyphehane Business and Community Sustainability Association
- Develop an Individual Neighbour Associations Project linked with the Adopt a Street Programme
- Establish a Monthly Repair and Reuse Café

Community Events

- Continue Hosting an Annual Cherry Blossom Festival
- Continue Hosting an Annual Community Christmas Event
- Establish a Summer 'Know Your Neighbour' Block Parties Weekend

Committee and Board Pillars-

Board and Committee Governance

- Review the Ballyphehane Tidy Towns Memorandum Of Association
- Develop a Volunteer Policy Book
- Ensure Continued Improvement of Good Governance and Transparency Practices
- Achieve Charitable Status

Strategic Partnerships & Growth

- Expand and Continue to Develop Strategic Relationships and Partnerships that complement the work of Ballyphehane Tidy Towns including but not limited to:
- Continue Collaborative Work with Local Community Organisations that complement the work of Ballyphehane Tidy Towns including but not limited to:
- Establish a Solid Fundraising Strategy

Detailed and Advanced – Goals Explained

Community Education

- **Expand Youth Hub Training and Reach**

Our Youth Hub projects have been rolled out in collaboration with local secondary schools – Coláiste Eámánn Rís and Presentation Girl Secondary School. This initiative has been a great success having provided training to over 170+ Transition Year students who conduct weekly litter picks during the school term. With our Strategic Plan we aim to expand this further by introducing more small projects for our hubs that not only complement our overall work and goals, but provides local young people with a sense of pride in their engagement with their community. It's fantastic to engage the young people in Transition Year but it'll be more effective to promote continuous engagement in various ways throughout their school years.

- **Establish Junior Youth Hubs At Primary School Level**

In line with the previous goal, we aim to engage school goers at a younger age. In this Strategic Plan we'll seek to establish Junior Youth Hubs that links in with/complements the national Picker Pals programme.

- **Secure A Plot Of Land And Establish Ballypnehane Market Gardens Project In Conjunction With Other Local Groups**

Ballypnehane has a [known and recorded heritage of the Market Gardens](#) where food was grown by families on their small plots and sold at market on the Coal Quay. This heritage and food growing skills has been lost over the centuries much like it has globally. In the current climate we think it's important to introduce a project where these skills can be redeveloped within the Ballypnehane community. Through engaging with local residents and fellow community organisations we hope to establish the Ballypnehane Market Gardens Project.

- **Secure A Plot Of Land And Establish Ballypnehane Tidy Towns Botanists and begin setting the frameworks for Ballypnehane Botanical Gardens**

Ballypnehane's heritage also includes the Botanic Gardens which were located on Tory Top Road (now St James's Cemetery) and was run/curated by [Scottish botanist James Drummond](#) for over 20 years. Again, in current climates we've seen botany skills diminish over the last few decades and local skills lost which contributes to a negative impact on local ecosystems, biodiversity and climate change. As a Tidy Towns group we also recognise that there is local interest in botany and gardening which can massively benefit our work. With our Strategic Plan we aim to first establish a Ballypnehane Botanist group where skills can be shared, enhanced and passed on through generations. And we'll then seek to secure a sufficient plot of land to redevelop a Botanic Garden.

- **Arts, Environment and Heritage**

We will seek out opportunities which enable us to carry out educational art projects that enhance the environment and highlight our community heritage.

Community Maintenance and Pride

- **Continued Weekly Litter Picks on Saturday Mornings**
We will strive to continue our weekly weekend litter picks, and to grow volunteer engagement.
- **Continued Seasonal Midweek Litter Picks**
We will continue our season midweek litter picks where daylight hours safely allow.
- **Continued Engagement and Reviewing of the Pearse Square Rejuvenation Project**
We will continue to work on the rejuvenation of Pearse Square and regularly review our performance in tackling the anti-social behaviour that was associated with the area and to ensure the area stays safe for all users. We'll also continue to work with local business owners and the Cork City Council to maintain the square and promote continued community use and engagement.
- **Expand the Adopt A Street Programme**
Our Adopt A Street Programme was created to enable us to engage more community members in tackling the litter issues in the area. We will continue seeking to expand engagement in the Adopt A Street Programme with this Strategic Plan by re-evaluating our promotional strategy and securing funding for registration packs.
- **Support The Development Of A New Playground For Tory Top Park**
In response to ongoing local demand for a cleaner, safer and more inclusive playground in Tory Top Park we will support and/or lead an initiative to achieve this goal. We will aim to investigate the communities wants and needs for a new playground. We will work with local stakeholders to begin a community fundraising initiative for a new playground. And we will lobby the relevant stakeholders to achieve this goal.
- **Establish The Ballyphehane Tidy Towns: Pride Of Place Awards**
There is a lot of amazing work going on in the Ballyphehane Community that goes unnoticed. The awards will recognise individuals, groups, schools, and businesses in the community that most amplify the Pride Of Place theme in making Ballyphehane the best place to live, work and socialise.
- **Develop a Ballyphehane Business/Corporate Volunteer Programme**
Many hands make light work! Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a vital and growing part in tackling environmental and climate change issues globally. As a Tidy Towns group we can be an ideal vessel for corporate engagement in this area. To support this we will develop a volunteer package and programme for engagement with local businesses and corporations. This will afford us the opportunity to build volunteer engagement and to tap into hidden skills within the local business community that might complement our work.

Community Sustainability & Biodiversity

- **Establish a Volunteer Recruitment and Retainment Toolbox**

As a voluntary organisation it's important that we strategically establish a toolbox for recruiting and retaining volunteers. This will enable us to future-proof volunteer engagement. [See here for an example.](#)

- **Support The Development Of A Ballyphehane Business and Community Sustainability Association**

A strong and sustainable community can be impacted heavily by local business. By promoting eco-friendly and people-first approaches businesses can improve employee satisfaction, and profit margins while also engaging, supporting and strengthening their surrounding communities. We will support the development of a business association that will work with us on promoting eco-friendly and people-first approaches to benefit all in our community.

- **Develop an Individual Neighbour Associations Project linked with the Adopt a Street Programme**

Neighbour supporting each other and working together to keep their street/estate/square/park clean and safe will complement our work, while also enabling the building of important social connections. Having pockets of Neighbour Associations where neighbours can effectively communicate will enable us to engage more people, but it will also increase the safety of the community. Engagement from the local Community Gardaí has already proven to be beneficial in this scenario with potential criminal activity being easy to report. For example: One of our committee members recently enabled the prevention of some local car thefts after reporting suspicious activity to the local Community Garda who engages with our members through WhatsApp.

- **Establish a Monthly Repair and Reuse Café**

In supporting our constituted aims to be environmentally friendly, we will seek to establish a monthly Repair and Reuse Café in Ballyphehane. In this café people can learn to repair or reuse clothing, furniture, bikes, electrical appliances, etc...This can be aided with corporate volunteer engagement and local skilled resident engagement. There are many skilled people in our community that are willing to share their talents and to teach others. We aim to utilise these skills and promote the repairing and reusing of items to prevent wastage in our community.

Community Events

- **Continue Hosting an Annual Cherry Blossom Festival**

The Ballyphehane Cherry Blossom Festival is an annual three day festival that celebrates the beauty of the blooming season of the local iconic Cherry Blossom trees. The festival features fun, cultural, educational, and environmental friendly events and workshops.

- **Continue Hosting an Annual Community Christmas Event**

Our annual community Christmas events is a family friendly gathering for all. This fun event provides local families with an opportunity to meet Santa Clause (free of charge), and to build connections while celebrating the holiday season with their neighbours.

- **Establish a Summer 'Know Your Neighbour' Block Parties Weekend**

Stop twitching and come out from behind those net curtains! While our larger whole community events are a great opportunity for locals to meet people from the wider community, we also seek to improve the social connections of neighbours on their own doorsteps. Ballyphehane's continuous growing population, and modern lifestyles (longer work hours, ever-increasing commute times, and more family and other commitments) means people are spending less and less time actively engaging in community-based activities. It takes a village to not only raise a child, but to support a person of any age. A strong, safe and healthy community is best when neighbours know and look out for each other. By establishing a Summer 'Know Your Neighbour' Block Parties Weekend we hope to encourage and inspire neighbours to come together and use their shared outdoor green spaces for fun social and increasingly multicultural events in the summer sun. This initiative will also link nicely with our 'Adopt A Street' and 'Individual Estates Associations Project'.

Board and Committee Governance

- **Review the Ballyphehane Tidy Towns Memorandum Of Association**

We need to consistently keep our Memorandum of Association up to date with the latest developments with legal, operational and financial changes.

- **Develop a Volunteer Policy Book**

We will develop and sign off a Volunteer Policy Book in line with legal, community sector, and health & safety requirements. This is for our own protection as a Board and Committee, but also for the protection of all volunteers we engage with.

- **Ensure Continued Improvement of Good Governance and Transparency Practices**

We commit to continuously improve and stay up to date with our practices to ensure good governance and transparency.

- **Achieve Charitable Status**

We will aim to secure Charitable Status as soon as possible to highlight our trustworthiness in relation to good governance and transparency. Achieving Charitable Status can raise our potential to attract funding from a wider range of sources.

Strategic Partnerships & Growth

- **Expand and Continue to Develop Strategic Relationships and Partnerships that complement the work of Ballyphehane Tidy Towns including but not limited to:**
 - Building connections with Cork City Council
 - Building connections with Cork City Partnership
 - Ballyphehane Community Association Membership
 - Ballyphehane Learning Network Membership
 - Cork City PPN Membership
 - The Wheel Membership

- **Continue Collaborative Work with Local Community Organisations that complement the work of Ballyphehane Tidy Towns including but not limited to:**
 - Ballyphehane/Togher Community Development Project
 - Ballyphehane Men's Shed
 - Green Space for Health Cork
 - Trees Please

- **Establish a Solid Fundraising Strategy**

While project specific funding can be great for our work, we also need to expand access to unrestricted funding opportunities to enable us to start a Reserve Fund for potential futureproofing. We will seek to identify continuous fundraising opportunities and events for example: annual bake sales, online merchandise store, annual sponsored walks and or/social enterprising avenues. This will give us continued access to necessary funding.