



**INTERNATIONAL
LivCom Awards 2013**

Whole City Section (Category A)

Summary of Submission from:

Birdhill, Co. Tipperary, Ireland.

Birdhill LivCom

Summary

In the heart of Birdhill, a tall stainless steel sculpture of the Éan Fionn stands sentinel over the village green. It celebrates the legend of Oisín who defeated a giant destructive bird - a modern representation of an ancient tale, truly reflecting Birdhill's connection between past and present.



Éan Fionn sculpture on the Village Green

Birdhill and its countryside has been shaped by hundreds of years of farming and community settlement and today we are linked to that history by the unique mark each generation has left.

Those ties that bind find obvious expression in the built environment of the village and the artifacts that adorn our local hostelrys. But at a far more visceral level, they are to be found in the less tangible things, such as the annual communal hay harvesting on the newly constructed Birdhill roundabout, a small but practical way in which the traditions of the past are kept alive for future generations.

Forever, rooted to the land, Birdhill has seen the ebb and flow of civilisation and technology, of people and industry and yet has remained steadfast throughout. The

inclusive and democratic traditions of Birdhill have allowed us to work together as a true community, taking charge of our lives through co-operation, consensus and compromise. The result is a community with a life well lived by all.

Rather than simply tear down the old, we have continually repurposed our existing buildings in the centre of the village to satisfy our modern needs, so for example the old Police Barracks is now a retail outlet. Where existing buildings are currently unused,



such as the old Dairy Co-op, we decorate the façade to remind us of our past until it can find a new use.

[Colour and construction in Birdhill](#)

Birdhill has not been immune to the environmental challenges facing us all. Recognising the crucial need to educate succeeding generations, the local National School is an integral part of our commitment to environmentally friendly practices through the Green Schools Initiative. The energy audits have been very successful in educating the adults in our community. To provide access to nature in an increasingly cloistered world, we have opened up nature trails and used modern technology, e.g. webcams to bring nature even closer to home.

There is a strong sporting tradition in the community of young and old at play. The Battle of the Roads on our community day brings a competitive fun element to sport. Many walk, cycle or swim for personal well-being, while coming together to weed, clean, dig

and plant contributes to the health of the community. And for those who prefer a different pace, the community offers activities such as yoga and pilates which provide opportunities to reconnect with our inner spirituality while not forgetting daily Mass in our local church as a spiritual and social resource.



Birdhill has something for young and not so young



There is a strong social dimension to all our activities, whether music, sport, religious or environmental. It is evident in a very special way in the many social gatherings throughout the year, such as the Winter Wonderland or the Community Day where there

is a welcome for all. It is to be found in the integration of everyone, regardless of gender, race, religion, age or ancestry into the community. It is to be found in the community co-operating to enhance the village, for example by donating land, labour and materials to create new amenities for our young and old. And of course, it is to be found in the knowledge that help is only as far away as your next door neighbour, whether you have just moved in or whether your family has been here for generations.

*Fundraiser in the
Community Hall*



Although Birdhill is forever at a crossroads, it is not solely a place to choose a direction by which to leave, but through the ages it has also offered a destination. Birdhill combines the traditions of the past with the efficiencies of the present, the solitude of a rural location with the support of a vibrant community, sustenance for the body and space for the soul. Birdhill has a long history, from mythical times to a 19th century traveller's resting place. Birdhill's past and present combine for a bright future made by its people acting together for the betterment of all.

