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## Judges are 'inspired' by Limerick Community Grocery

by Nick Rabbittsd 6 Dec 2014

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**JUDGES** from the national Get Involved competition were “inspired” by what was on offer at the Limerick Community Grocery in the city centre on a visit to the facility. The grocery at the former Esso garage in Mulgrave Street is the area’s only food co-operative, and made it to the final of the Local Ireland-backed Get Involved competition.

Privacy

JUDGES from the national Get Involved competition were “inspired” by what was on offer at the Limerick Community Grocery in the city centre on a visit to the facility. The grocery at the former Esso garage in Mulgrave Street is the area’s only food co-operative, and made it to the final of the Local Ireland-backed Get Involved competition.

And last Thursday, judges from the initiative made a visit to the business, which is the Limerick Leader’s entry into the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland-backed initiative.

This came after the Community Grocery - only in operation for just over a year - made it to the final six of the competition.

“The day seemed to go very well,” Bill Kelly, one of the grocery’s founding members said, “There were representatives there from City Hall, the PAUL Partnership and the health board, as well as members of the local community.”

He added: “The word we kept hearing was ‘inspiring’. We don’t want to read too much into it, but we would be confident.”

The Limerick Community Grocery offers a range of locally sourced food.

And unlike conventional business, it is owned entirely by its members, with all monies being pumped back into the company.

Up to now, the grocery has stocked fruit and vegetables.

But in the run up to Christmas, demand from members has led to the stocking of organic chicken, lamb and beef.

On top of this, Bill says they will be offering Christmas gift vouchers.

The Community Grocery used its visit from the judges from Get Involved to hold a community day, inviting the Garryowen Community Development Project, the Woodlawn Residents Association, and the Southill Residents Association to come in and see what they are all about.

Also in attendance last Thursday was RTE presenter Duncan Stewart, who has reported on the grocery on his Eco-Eye programme twice.

It will be the third week of January before the grocery finds out how it got in in the competition, with a final at Dublin Castle.

The winning project - drawn from towns and cities across the island of Ireland - will be awarded a bursary of €5,000, while two further payments of €1,000 each will be presented to two runners up.

The board of the grocery is to meet this Wednesday night, where plans are expected to be finalised to allow extended opening hours.

Up to now, the facility is open three days a week.

Bill is seeking a grant from Limerick City and County Council of up to €100,000, a move which will allow an increase in the product range, and an extension to the building.

"I want to believe we are on the cusp of something. We have something truly transformative here, and our thinking is that the new council should take the initiative and make Limerick the leader for urban co-operative development," he concluded.

This Wednesday night's meeting is also expected to see plans put in place for various community events to take place in Mulgrave Street over the festive season.

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