

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballinabranna - Baile na mBreatnach** Ref: **1816**
County: **Carlow** Mark: **309**
Category: **B** Date(s): **13/07/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	49	50
Streetscape & Public Places	80	41	43
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	34	35
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	29	30
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	21	22
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	61	62
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	36	37
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	30	30
TOTAL MARK	550	301	309

Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu don bhliain 2023. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála a chur chugainn, agus guimíd gach rath ar bhúr gcuid oibre amach anseo. Adh Mór! Welcome to the 2023 Supervalu National Tidy Towns Competition Ballinabranna! You have demonstrated remarkable dedication and commitment, despite facing some difficulties recruiting volunteers due to busy lives – this is an issue faced by all TidyTowns groups, keep at it though and don't lose faith. Cooperating with local schools' Green Flag Committees and supporting environmental projects shows a dedication to engaging youth while supporting green initiatives. Well done on the use of social media to help spread the good word and attract new volunteers. Make sure to list your projects as new or maintained and how each one aligns with the UN SDGs.

Streetscape & Public Places / Sráid-Dreach & Áiteanna Poiblí:

Local efforts in renovating the GAA clubhouse and creating a community gym with modern windows, increased insulation, and LED lighting demonstrate your commitment to creating a safe and energy efficient space for community events. Attention to details such as installing lighting sensors to minimise energy wastage is indicative of your commitment to sustainability, while the preservation of historic landmarks such as the old water pump and village walls shows an appreciation of local heritage – the plaque behind the water pump could do with a clean, however. It was lovely to see the pump with nice planting around it, not hanging off it as is often seen. The new window boxes on the old forge and improvements to school hall facilities further elevate both aesthetics and functionality in the village. Care taken by your group towards public spaces can be seen throughout the village. I enjoyed a lovely cup of coffee at Barrow Brew, a great new local community amenity but also helps boost tourism and provides employment opportunities. Perhaps see about a screen for behind the shop to hide supplies. Milford car park now benefits greatly from Carlow County Council and Waterways Ireland installing picnic benches, bicycle racks and a new portaloo courtesy of their proactive initiatives, increasing amenities while supporting its popularity among walkers and cyclists alike.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

You deserve great praise for their commitment to maintaining and improving green areas throughout the village. Regular weeding and watering by groups of volunteers demonstrates a dedication to the long-term success of planted areas. Pollinator-friendly bulbs strategically planted near Ballinabranna name stones add vibrant color, as well as provide pollinators with essential food sources after hibernation. The group's consideration of past adjudicator recommendations and plans for future bulb planting exemplify your openness to feedback and commitment to further improving community green spaces. I particularly liked the planting around the water pump

and lovely trees around the school.

Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality / An Dúlra agus an Bhithéagsúlacht i do cheantar:

Community efforts have been commendable, focusing on various environmental projects that positively influence local communities. The collaboration with LAWPRO for Water Heritage Day proved highly successful, with all session tickets booked out and strong demand for future similar events. Installation of signage for the Biodiversity/Pollinator project and reduction in mowing to create a wildflower meadow demonstrate this your dedication to bees, butterflies, and wildlife. Removal of Himalayan Balsam with help from local volunteers underscores their dedication to safeguarding native habitats. Engaging with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan via Facebook posts and parish newsletters helps raise awareness about biodiversity loss while inspiring positive changes for positive transformation. Engaging Ballinabranna School for the INTO 1 million trees initiative and sowing a wildflower area shows their dedication to environmental preservation efforts, education and engaging young people in environmental preservation. I noted the wildflower seeded area near the Barrow – be careful about introducing seed mixes into wild areas, especially those designated as a Special Area of conservation. I also noted some Winter Heliotrope near the old stone house on the way from the village down to the river. Be careful this does not spread. Overall, your group's work is encouraging and displays a commitment to maintaining and increasing biodiversity within the local community.

Sustainability – Doing more with less / Inmharthanacht - Mórán ar an mbeagán:

Ballinabranna has demonstrated extraordinary dedication and commitment to environmental initiatives, sustainability practices and fostering eco-awareness within both its community and school settings. Your efforts included activities such as the Mini WEEE event and their sponsorship of prizes for environmental projects in schools showcasing your proactive nature. An impressive Green Flag Award for Global Citizenship-Litter & Waste attests to their continuous progress and efforts in creating a greener environment. Engaging students in climate action and clean air campaigns shows a dedication to education and involving younger generations. The installation of a bicycle shelter serves as an impressive testament to encouraging sustainable forms of transport. Collectively, your endeavors have had a very positive impact – keep up the great work.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

The village was litter and weed free during my visit – well done. You have demonstrated great efforts at monitoring littering and recycling. The Litter Squad, led daily by students, is encouraging leadership and organisational abilities in local children, well done. Your Spring Clean event had a great attendance and your bring centre was spotless.

Some small issues noted on the day included:

- The black street bollards need attention.
- Entrance name plates could be cleaned
- The disabled parking bay needs maintenance

Residential Streets & Housing Areas / Sráideanna Cónaithe & Ceantair Tithíochta:

Bushfield, Milford Park and Gort na Gréine estates have made remarkable efforts in order to maintain their estates, as well as promoting biodiversity. Bushfield stands out as a pioneering green initiative by participating in DC for Bees Orchard Planting Project and successfully cultivating fruit trees, an example of their commitment to sustainable initiatives. Bushfield and Milford Park's newly planted shrub beds, designed specifically to attract pollinators insects, demonstrate a proactive approach to environmental conservation. All other homes in the village were also presented to a high standard. The nameplate at Milford Park was slightly obscured by the planting around it, this is a small issue to remedy.

Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes / Bóithre Isteach, Sráideanna & Lánaí:

Excellent work in maintaining roadside verges. Try and advocate for the continuation of the footpath all the way to the River Barrow. This would be an amazing amenity – and so much safer than the walking on this road. The wall at the junction needs repairing and some of the road signs were obscured by bushes.

Concluding Remarks:

Overall, you have demonstrated commitment, creativity and adaptability in your work; with a dedication to improving the village and engaging various stakeholders – well done and keep up the great work.