

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballymurphy - Baile Uí Mhurchú** Ref: **34**
County: **Carlow** Mark: **311**
Category: **A** Date(s): **12/06/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	44	45
Streetscape & Public Places	80	37	38
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	47	48
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	24	24
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	14	15
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	65	66
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	40	40
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	35	35
TOTAL MARK	550	306	311

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 Ballymurphy! Congratulations on entering the competition now for 19 years – where does the time go, though I am sure your community is very grateful for all you have accomplished over this time. Many thanks for your succinct entry with lots of wonderful photos. Perhaps next year place the relevant photos underneath the text and do your best to align all the projects, not just each category, to the UN SDGs. You have a targeted 3 Year Plan which is great to see and well done on addressing the comments from last year's adjudication. A thought for next year would be to start each category with the previous year's issues and how they were addressed? Your map was well laid out and made my visit very enjoyable and efficient! You engage with everyone in the community and this is wonderful to see – the real purpose of Tidy Towns; collaboration and partnership for the common good. I noted your 'call to action' on the pedestrian bridge.

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

You have a wonderful village with lots of charm and character. Great to see Carlow County Council's purchase and renovation plans of the derelict building. You are lucky there is this commitment to revitalising the village. Also well done on the walking festival which I assessed under Community and the Water Butts under Sustainability. Though I agree there is scope to include them here too. I will also look at the mixed Whitehorn hedging under Biodiversity. The new seating as you enter the village is a great asset, I noted some empty platforms – is more seating on its way? It was sad to see the use of herbicide. Please use your standing in the community to ensure this comes to an end. In one area the herbicide use was beside an All-Ireland Pollinator Sign! The plaque at the tree on the way into the village needs attention. The Hilltop Bar, Grotto and Church grounds all looked very well. The Water Pump also looked well, though there were two empty planters in front. The wrought iron black and white gates are a wonderful feature. Could the Forge and mural opposite be freshened up? The school also looked amazing during adjudication, though the stone plaque could be cleaned. The Community Centre was well presented and well done on procuring new seating made from recycled plastic. However, the planters at the front door needed attention.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

You have shown great commitment to improving various areas of the village. Indeed, as I adjudicated two dedicated volunteers were out attending to flowers. A number of empty planters were observed around the village such as at the name plate, on the ground along main street and indeed empty stands for hanging baskets. If you are proposing to discontinue hanging baskets make sure to inform your adjudicator. The flowerbeds on the

approach roads were of a very high standard especially the R702. Well done on your dedication to tending beech saplings and encouraging their regeneration. I noted oak trees planted by the new pedestrian bridge – will these not grow to an excessive size and cause issues? If so, there may be time to translocate them.

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

The efforts of your community in this category group are commendable, with an obvious emphasis on wildlife conservation and sustainability. By installing and maintaining "manage for wildlife" signs in designated areas, nature can flourish while biodiversity increases. Be careful of the large stand of Japanese Knotweed at the old Forge. This should be tackled by professional as soon as possible before it spreads further. Overall, your work represents a positive and constructive approach towards creating a greener and more environmentally-friendly community.

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

Ballymurphy is quite rightly placing a lot of emphasis on sustainability and environmental consciousness – well done. Your adoption of an eco-friendly lawn mower that mulches grass rather than collecting cuttings demonstrates a sustainable eco-conscious approach to landscaping but be careful on sies managed for pollinators as leaving grass cuttings will enrich the soil allowing more grasses rather than wildflowers to grow. Well done on easy wins such as book sharing shelves in the community hall, rainwater harvesting, "No Single Use Plastic Policy", Refill Tap and use of compost bins. The involvement of school kids in recycling, junk art and STEM projects using recycled materials exemplify creativity in sustainability initiatives. Furthermore, the shoe appeal charity initiative of giving old sports shoes to children in Africa shows their social and global responsibility commitment. Overall, you are making great strides toward creating an eco-friendly and sustainable environment, setting an excellent example for others to follow.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

You are very dedicated to ensuring cleanliness throughout the village, with an impressive focus on eliminating litter and keeping kerbs and paths free from weeds. Participation by local school children in monitoring and addressing litter issues demonstrates effective community engagement while instilling a sense of responsibility in them. Maintaining "Litter Free" status in the Carlow "Pride of Place" competition is testament to your dedication and hard work. I noticed your 'Keep Ballymurphy Litter Free' wheelie bins. Some small issues on the day:

- Remove the mound of gravel on the approach road
- Paint the galvanised gate at the old Forge
- Perhaps too many dog waste signs at the bridge
- Paint the railing here
- Fallen directional signage at the bend of the R702

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

Ballymurphy's residents deserve praise for contributing to the overall welcoming look and feel to the village. The efforts in maintaining Inse na Phuca housing estate show shared purpose in keeping the area maintained. Some of the planters here were empty but overall the trees and planting beds were well cared for.

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

All approach roads were maintained to a high standard and once again try and engage with those using herbicide and ask them to stop. Another shout-out to the exceptional planting on the R702 – truly breathtaking and a tremendous vista as you enter the village.

Concluding Remarks:

Your village is a hive of community spirit with wonderful features, planting and commitment to biodiversity and sustainability. Keep up the amazing work.