

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Fenagh - Fiodhnach** Ref: **1440**
County: **Carlow** Mark: **312**
Category: **B** Date(s): **13/06/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	43	44
Streetscape & Public Places	80	40	41
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	42	43
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	23	24
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	16	17
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	64	64
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	41	42
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	37	37
TOTAL MARK	550	306	312

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 Fenagh! Many thanks for your submission and beautifully hand drawn and easy to navigate map. For next year see can you include whether projects are new/maintained and which category they align to on the map. It is clear you are open to engaging with all sectors in the community and this will continue to help guide and achieve success for FIG. A huge well down on accessing grant aid under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme. This is often the unseen and incredibly time intensive work of Tidy Towns Groups throughout the country. For next year's submission see can you align each project per category to the SDGs also. There is also scope to reduce the size of your submission by placing photos beside the text description and putting several side by side.

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

Your efforts have led to several notable projects that have positively impacted the village. Upgrades (planned or completed) at Kearney's Shop & Pub, Hunter's Rest and The Black Cat will significantly enhance the streetscape. Is there potential for works in the car park opposite the Hunters Rest – maybe put your heads together and see if it can be enhanced whilst preserving its function. On the day of adjudication I very much enjoyed my walk through the main street. The wall at Fenagh GFC could do with freshening up though the grounds were well kept. I note there is new development planned here; I hope wildlife friendly lighting will be part of the scheme. You have demonstrated a dedication to improving village amenities with efforts to persuade the council to buy land for community use. While this purchase ultimately fell through, your advocacy efforts for essential services like playground equipment, transport hub, and recycling collection point show you care deeply for all village residents' wellbeing. As well as an array of new ventures well done on taking great care to maintain and enhance existing features like stonework by the bridge and displaying the eye-catching Nativity scene – make sure to include a photo of this in next year's submission. On the day of my visit it was covered but I look forward to my next trip to Fenagh given your decision to make it permanent and explore its use as a mural. This speaks to your innovative thinking and creative spirit. Some of the planters and benches on the main road needed freshening up.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The tree planting initiative at the church car park shows your dedication to improving the landscaping appeal of Fenagh as well as implementing a positive biodiversity and climate action; win-win. I will discuss residential green spaces further down in the report and for next year this form of landscaping is more appropriate in the Residential Streets & Housing Area category. The landscaping around Scallywags was wonderful – great to see the paths

created for exploration by the youngsters. There was exceptional planting alongside the main path, around the Nativity scene, The area around the water pump is quite large – perhaps some subtle planting here? The green area and public seating around Wellbrook Lawn were well kept but the planters weren't yet planted. I also noted one of the benches was chipped at the end – you may need a stone masons help in smoothening this section off. Your Ogham Stone sculpture and surrounding green area was well presented with wonderful planting.

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

Fenagh Improvement Group is working towards improving and protecting Fenagh's natural beauty. Planting initiatives such as camassia, roses, pyracantha, crocus, grape hyacinths, daffodils, bluebells verberna foxgloves and hollyhocks are an outstanding way to beautify villages while increasing biodiversity. Your committee members and volunteers actively participated in creating a Biodiversity plan, and showed great dedication in implementing its findings, showing an initiative-taking attitude toward sustainability. Acquiring ecological guidance through the Towns and Villages Grant Scheme on tree management shows foresight in providing informed decision making. Using bark mulchers for disposing of hedge/tree cuttings as well as controlling weeds in residents' gardens exemplify resourcefulness. You mentioned the All Ireland Pollinator Plan and some initiatives – well done, especially to Scallywags. However, there was evidence of herbicide use near the river wildlife area as well as in the Church grounds which had a 'No Mow May' sign in an area that was very recently cut quite low. Make sure to keep an eye on this and that everyone knows what measures are needed and when to do them. Herbicide use should only be used in the control of invasive species. The pollinator area at the Insect Hotel was wonderful as was the wildflower area at Dick's Corner.

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

The work done by you in this category is admirable, demonstrating a dedication to environmental sustainability and community involvement. The plant swap event in Ballon stands as testament to proactive efforts at promoting green initiatives throughout the locality – not just in Fenagh. Your functional water pumps demonstrate a commitment to providing accessible sources of water for both plant care and public consumption. The "Cycle to School" initiative underlines a key role in encouraging safer and greener forms of transport. Efforts to promote water conservation, including encouraging volunteers to use water butts given as prizes during litter picks show that your community engagement strategies are working effectively. Make sure to engage with your local Environmental Awareness Officer to see how you can make even greater strides in this category. Also looking at other entrants' adjudication reports and winners of the Sustainability Special Awards may provide inspiration!

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Well done on your annual Spring Clean which looked to be an resounding success, collecting 30 bags of litter. These events also foster a sense of camaraderie, turning it into an enjoyable social occasion. A big shout out for providing refreshments at the Hunter's Rest for participants. Hosting regular litter picks encourages active involvement from all village residents. Great idea on partnering with Mount Leinster Community Employment Scheme to hire someone part-time to undertake village maintenance. Some issues noted during my visit which can form part of a future work plan include:

- You have a lovely stone welcome sign; it could do with a clean.
- Timber fencing along the main road adjacent Woodglade needs attention in spots.
- Road markings at the Church Roundabout need repainting.
- The rubbish bin on the path outside Scallywags needs cleaning.
- Remove the cable ties from the Stop sign at the roundabout.
- As you leave the village the white directional sign needs cleaning.

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

You are obviously getting great support from local estates and homeowners with everyone taking great pride in their appearance. The Granite Cottages, for instance, have successfully balanced heritage preservation with maintaining functional homes and a special shout out to the owner with the amazing garden beside the Hunters Rest. Woodglade, even without an active residents' association, has accomplished remarkable results in terms of maintaining its meadow and tree areas. As you enter the nameplate could be cleaned and some more gravel put in place – perhaps a project FIG can assist with. The beds in Ashgrove are in need of attention and also clear some vegetation so the nameplate can be seen clearly. There appeared to be herbicide use in Ballydarton Mews, see can this be stopped. There was a wonderfully biodiverse front garden at the entrance as well as two more amazing gardens behind the Ogham Sculpture.

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

Your approach roads were well maintained and complimented by colourful planting. Well done on seeking advice from your local Heritage Officer, a tremendous resource in each of the County Councils. Keep an eye on directional signage, some were obscured by growth on the day of adjudication such as the Garryhill sign.

Concluding Remarks:

Keep up the great work Fenagh and I have no doubt you will go from strength to strength.

