

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Hacketstown - Baile Haicéid** Ref: **39**
County: **Carlow** Mark: **281**
Category: **B** Date(s): **13/07/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	41	42
Streetscape & Public Places	80	37	38
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	36	38
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	23	25
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	17	19
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	50	51
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	31	32
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	35	36
TOTAL MARK	550	270	281

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 Hacketstown! Many thanks for the effort put into your submission, all the wonderful photographs greatly helped with my adjudication. You have demonstrated impressive dedication and collaboration, creating significant positive effects in your community. Initiatives such as the Easter Parade, First Responders and Day-Care Centre services have successfully brought the community closer together, instilling a strong sense of unity and care among its residents. Carlow Youth Service's investment in young people will reap rewards by investing in future generations. The active participation in arts such as "The Long and the Short of It" illustrates this commitment, showing their eagerness to explore new ventures and engage in creative projects. Your map was clearly laid out. Next year see about indicating which projects are New or Maintained and which category they belong to. Also see about aligning each project to the UN SDGs.

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

Your work here is commendable, focusing on many essential aspects that contribute to the growth and prosperity of your village. This is evidenced through the Core Information and Training Hub as well as future renovation of unoccupied buildings into family homes, cafes and takeaways demonstrates investors' faith in Hacketstown's potential. Also, wonderful to see Carlow Tourism and the community joined forces to establish the heritage trail to highlight the village's vibrant past and cultural significance. Opting to invest in native timber planters and bee-friendly plants instead of hanging baskets demonstrates your environmentally responsible approach in the public realm so a win for this and the next category and indeed for Biodiversity and Sustainability! The streetscape was well presented as was the school, The Corner Bar, St. John's Caring Centre, Bolands and the local Supervalu – well done to all involved. The 1798 Memorial was splendid though the bench needs attention as do the flags which were a little frayed. The newly funded playground at Mountain View serves as an amenity for local children.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Your Green Areas and Landscaping are having a very positive effect. The Biodiversity Garden at Slate Row was an absolute delight - a huge congratulations to all involved. It reflects a collective vision for an engaging yet eco-friendly space. St. Joseph's National School offers its students an ideal environment to learn about sustainability and gardening thanks to their outdoor classroom, bug hotel and bee-friendly plants - with raised beds designed specifically to enable this learning. Well done to Clonmore GFC grounds in providing an accessible community walkway to encourage physical activities of all ages. Your group's focus on green spaces extends to its

new plan for the area near the 1798 monument, which will boast biodiversity, year-round color and reduced mowing thanks to red clover's incorporation. Collaborating with organizations such as Willow Wonder, Garden Wildlife, Irish Seed Savers Association (ISSA), Irish Heritage Apple Tree Society and the All Ireland Pollinator Plan showcases your commitment to wildlife, habitats and natural amenities. The landscaping across from The Hill needs some attention but I am sure this is all in your future plans.

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

Well done in encouraging biodiversity and creating wildlife-friendly spaces. A special mention for including young people in your work. Participation in workshops such as the Free Wildflower and Biodiversity & Pollination workshops demonstrates your dedication to learning sustainable practices. Establishing a dead hedge as an innovative and eco-friendly measure, providing shelter to insects, birds, and wildlife is testament to creative thinking and an eco-conscious approach. Marian Terrace and Hillview Terrace have implemented several initiatives to attract bees and butterflies, along with installing insect hotels at both locations to demonstrate community friendly initiatives to support pollinators species. Involvement with BirdWatch Ireland shows your commitment to bird conservation efforts, while participating in National Tree Week is evidence of your environmental stewardship commitment. Overall, your work exemplifies an effective balance among community engagement, wildlife protection, and sustainable practices. Keep up the great work.

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

Hacketstown Tidy Towns has demonstrated tremendous commitment and determination in creating a cleaner and more sustainable environment. Your efforts, both as advocates and implementors, has produced significant benefits across various initiatives: installation of modern LED streetlights on Main Street has not only improved visibility but also contributed to energy savings; APA Charity Shop has successfully diverted tons of clothing and household items away from landfills; while the monthly car boot sale not only raises much-needed funds but promotes reuse and recycling. St. Joseph National School's book rental scheme encourages resource efficiency and cost-effectiveness for parents. The Core's Free Refill Water service has taken an important step toward eliminating single-use plastic waste while encouraging sustainable practices, as has the Conscious Cup Campaign. Colaiste Eoin Vocational School's project "The Green Award Bin" showcased by young environmentalists is evidence of their dedication towards sustainability and is to be applauded. Furthermore, Hacketstown Sustainable Energy Community Network (SECN) stands as testament to Hacketstown devotion towards renewable energy and community engagement; the establishment of an Energy Master Plan indicates efforts at providing energy efficiency with sustainability at heart. This was a most impressive category to read – congratulations.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

You have made significant strides toward addressing various environmental concerns and instilling a sense of environmental responsibility. The efforts against illegal dumping through monitoring roads and discouraging improper usage of street bins is truly admirable. Addition of new street bins is a practical step toward combatting littering and encouraging cleanliness within Hacketstown. Posters displayed in residential areas to deter dog fouling demonstrate your commitment to maintaining clean streets, and working alongside Carlow County on a positive programme to alter attitudes about it are commendable initiatives. Adopting a poster-free town policy and installing notice boards at local businesses has proven successful in decreasing unnecessary posters in the area. Some issues noted during my adjudication:

- The entrance signs to the village needs to be cleaned as does signage across from Bolands by the seating area.
- Some of your footpaths require weeding but all in all a great effort.
- The stone wall surround at the landscaped bed near The Hill needs attention.
- Some of the road markings need repainting – discuss this with your Local Area Engineer.

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

You are supported by all homeowners which is wonderful to see. Efforts to promote affiliation with the PPN and access funding opportunities from Carlow County Council illustrate your dedication to supporting local residents. You actively involve Residents Associations in the annual "Spring clean" campaigns promoting a clean and appealing environment throughout their entire community. Participation in Carlow Pride of Place awards was fruitful this past year; three awards were received – well done to all involved. The entrance sign to Mountain View could do with a clean and make sure the newer sign opposite isn't obscured by the pollinator area – just a thin strip around will make sure visitors can see it. Many of your town centre houses had wonderful window boxes.

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

Well done in maintaining and improving approach roads to the village, despite facing six of them! Although challenging, you have done your part with dedication and resourcefulness. You are most fortunate to have TUS and CE as well as local farmers to help maintain verges during summer months while Carlow County Council provided new tarmac surfaces at each entrance that increased accessibility and safety for everyone in Hacketstown. Installing new native whitethorn hedging along the footpath leading from Town to Bridge is a commendable effort that adds natural beauty to the village and helps enhance biodiversity. Transforming the lane into an accessible route between Mountain View and Town was a great project – could the fencing be screened with pollinator creepers or ivy?

Concluding Remarks:

Overall, the Hacketstown Tidy Towns has succeeded in creating an inclusive environment and meeting all residents' needs. Your dedication in addressing aspects of community life ranging from well-being and health to local economy and social cohesion are truly commendable. Keep up the fantastic work.