

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Rathvilly - Rath Bhile** Ref: **45**
County: **Carlow** Mark: **327**
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	42	43
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	45	47
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	28	29
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	16	16
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	64	65
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	39	40
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	37	37
TOTAL MARK	550	320	327

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 Rathvilly! Comprised of 12 committee members and two volunteers, your strong level of dedication was evident from my visit. Engagement with various agencies, businesses, and individuals shows their great support from across the locality. Well done on utilising various communication channels, including the Parish Newsletter, Facebook and The Nationalist Newspaper to ensure effective outreach. This will ensure you reach as many of the community as possible. Partnerships with Foróige and Rathvilly National School also showcase your efforts at engaging local youth. 65 years in the competition – truly amazing, many thanks for your dedication. Well done on accessing grant aid – an often unseen yet time intensive part of your volunteering effort. Perhaps for next year include photos alongside the project descriptions, start with new projects then maintained and align each with the UN SDGs. Your map was clear but often it is very useful to have a legend indicating the name of the project, whether it is new or maintained and which category it aligns to.

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

Your efforts demonstrate an extraordinary dedication to improving the aesthetics and amenities of the village while creating a sense of pride among the community. Relocating the river signs have enhanced visibility and revitalised ironwork demonstrate your attention to detail and preservation of heritage. Installation of bike racks and benches demonstrate an attentive approach to enhancing public spaces for residents and visitors alike – and promoting net zero forms of transport. The establishment of the Community Garden stands as testament to your dedication in creating accessible and vibrant public spaces – this is dealt with in the next category. The Shrine on the way into the village was well presented as were the Church grounds. Some of the benches here need some freshening up. Halligan Brothers, the Post Office, Lawlor's Bar and the Green Lemon all deserve special mention. I look forward to seeing the impact of the Town Rejuvenation plans when the Phoenix Centre will get a new lease of life – front and rear – as they face the main street and the graveyard to the rear.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

You deserve tremendous praise for all your efforts in developing the community garden. Through thoughtful designs benefitting both residents and wildlife this is a win-win initiative. Fruit trees, wildflower patches and nesting boxes demonstrate your commitment to biodiversity in this garden. Compost bins and colourful seating further add value and functionality. Gala Hutton's mural adds artistic interest as an area of focus for visitors. Tree management involves both the removal of unhealthy trees and an emphasis on maintaining existing ones - evidence of responsible stewardship. Planting daffodils, tulips and bluebells together shows the community's dedication to

creating an inviting and visually appealing space. Fr. Cullen Garden was a lovely space as were your street planters (perhaps the plants were a bit too small for the containers?) and around the Kevin Barry monument. There was a planter in need of attention near the entrance to Station Road.

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

Rathvilly Tidy Towns work in this category exemplifies its dedication to environmental preservation and enhancement through various commendable projects. Your efforts in response to issues surrounding Slaney River weir and salmon jump show a dedication to safeguarding natural habitat. Navigating complex environmental and ownership concerns has proved challenging but your resolve remained clear. Well done to the owner of the Old Mill where consideration for wildlife, collaboration with experts while protecting biodiversity demonstrates a responsible approach. At Cuckoo Corner, your efforts to support local wildlife can be seen through expanding wildflower areas and building a bug hotel. Well done on constructing bird boxes from recycled materials and strategically positioning them along the Tullow – a biodiversity and sustainability project! Also, great to see you Transitioning away from conventional weedkillers towards more eco-friendly options. A 100% ban would be great – except for control of invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam which I noted. Overall, your work reflects a dedication to sustainability, biodiversity, and living harmoniously with nature. Keep up the great work.

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

You have made strides towards encouraging sustainable practices and environmental awareness. Prioritisation of perennial plants since 2018 shows a forward-thinking approach that results in financial benefits as well as decreased maintenance efforts. Mulching larger planting areas to deter weeds and retain water is an admirable effort towards responsible resource management. Addressing dog fouling is more aligned to the next category so I will deal with it there. Rathvilly National School has earned high praise for their collaboration in fostering sustainable futures through encouraging green living and environmental consciousness among their students. For more ideas in this category look to winners of Tidy Towns Special Awards and engage with your local Environmental Awareness Officer.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Your efforts in maintaining a clean and litter-free environment in the village has seen great success – I did not observe a single item of litter on my visit. Your dedicated team of CE Scheme workers and locals actively cleaning local areas have reduced litter. Implementation of a poster-free policy is also a great initiative. By addressing recycling area concerns and participating in National Spring Clean, you have successfully reduced dumping while upholding cleanliness. Your Bring Centre was very well maintained. I look forward to the outcome of the pole removal project. Rathvilly National School sets an outstanding example for its community through their commitment to litter awareness and their numerous green flags, serving as a beacon. Some issues noted on the day of adjudication include:

- The aforementioned cleaning of benches in the church grounds.
- Painting of some street planters.
- Removal of empty flowerpots around the Shrine.
- Paint an old galvanised gate and beautiful old wrought iron gates on Phelan Street.
- Clean the Do Not Litter sign and other road signage.
- Remove unnecessary tree stakes.
- Investigate what looks like a redundant pole outside the National School.

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

Rathvilly Tidy Towns has made good strides toward maintaining and improving various aspects of Rathvilly village and this is being supported by local residents. Ard Bhile is making great progress and this should be supported. The Phelan Street old heritage homes were wonderfully presented. The nameplates at some estates need to be opened up from surrounding planting such as The Orchard and Slaney Meadows. Indeed in Slaney Meadows tree stakes can be removed and I was intrigued by an upstanding stone – what is this?

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

Keep up the great work on maintain your approach roads. Your commitment to repair Bough Road path and collaborate with the council in repainting "bumblebee" curb markings at Cuckoo Corner shows a resourcefulness and dedication that personifies Tidy Towns volunteers. Ensure approach road signage is kept clean and visible as well as road markings such as the pedestrian crossing at the National School.

Concluding Remarks:

Congratulations Rathvilly Tidy Towns on all your tremendous hard work and dedication – keep it up and you will continue to do well in the competition.