

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dowra - An Damhshraith** Ref: **1026**
County: **Cavan** Mark: **230**
Category: **A** Date(s): **13/07/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	30	31
Streetscape & Public Places	80	28	30
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	33	34
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	14	16
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	5	6
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	49	50
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	30	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	32	33
TOTAL MARK	550	221	230

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

Failte chuig Comortas Na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu don bhliain 2023. Taimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrala a chur chugainn, agus guimid gach rath ar bhur gcuid oibre amach anseo. Adh Mor. Welcome to the 2023 Supervalu Tidy Towns competition. You have good volunteer support for a small village with 5 on the committee and 15 volunteers. We are delighted community involvement is growing especially with the younger generation. It is to your credit that you have a long list of sponsors with knowledge in several disciplines to help you carry out your activities. You reach out to the community via Facebook and the Leitrim Observer along with notices in the mass bulletins of Killinagh and Ballinaghara parishes and we noticed many posters in the local shops. Since 2017 great strides have been made to focus on the areas issues that need to be dealt with. Your main project this year was Dowra Water Quality & Biodiversity Awareness and Citizen Science Project. Delivered by LAWPRO it has established an ongoing interest to monitor water quality in the catchment. We are thankful for your workshops and fieldtrips and are delighted they were well attended by members of the community. Great achievement.

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

Located in a valley, Dowra is a picturesque village with a landmark bridge connecting the townlands of Cavan with its Leitrim counterparts on the other side. At the bridge, brilliant work has been completed to the viewing area along the river Shannon. Stone walls were built and picnic benches and bicycle stand installed overlooking the river. In addition, new signage featuring information on the Breffni Beara Walk will no doubt encourage walkers, cyclists and visitors to spend more time now in the village. Three trails converge at this historic crossing; the Miners Way, the Leitrim Way and the Cavan Way and these are tastefully depicted by three local artists (made by local stone masons) using salvaged sandstone and built in a traditional manner. We noticed them straightaway as we approached. Lantern lighting on the bridge is attractive. Pavements in general are in poor condition in main village. We admired your reflection seat and note the use of the Irish language on a quiet road away from the traffic. We would have loved to Sui Sios but it was not possible because of the inclement weather. Pleasant surroundings to enjoy nature and perhaps hear the cuckoo or catch glimpse of a fox or hare like you mention. Many floral containers are fabulous and provide for bees. The Courthouse was well maintained and some private dwellings and businesses. The People Persons monument, benches, containers and Hollywood walk of fame could do with some maintenance. To help with wildlife plant the top of wall here could be planted with some herbs like thyme or oregano etc. We also noted a village pump that would be a nice feature if painted. We acknowledge the work of Dowra Green Village Group, TT and Cavan County Council.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Some new planting has been undertaken on the Leitrim side of the village around signage posts and all are looking

well. We recognise your input with the installation of the Timber Framed lockable information board at the courthouse. It was filled with posters on events for July. Nice planters beneath. Fence maintenance on the Blacklion approach around the recycle bins and greenspace were power washed and painted with wood preservative. Great work. Many hours and months have been invested working with the local authority on presentation of landscaping and signage for all approach roads. Signage with the theme 'First village on the River Shannon' and with a special reference to the TT, 'Keep village Tidy' was delivered giving the community a strong identity. However, we are disappointed to hear an iconic chestnut tree which was felled without any consultation - which you are most unhappy about. We can only assume it was for safety reasons. We understand how challenging planning new projects can be. Many thanks to Clarenbridge Garden Centre for all the Spring bulbs and well done to all the children for planting. It looks like they enjoyed themselves. Many thanks for the all the photographs. Shrubs planted at Dowra Resource Centre. Great work everyone.

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

As mentioned earlier Dowra Water Quality project was your main project this year. It included an evening session held in the courthouse on the importance of water quality in the area, next a field trip with the children from St. Hugh's national School involving stream dipping and getting up close with water invertebrates and lessons on how to record them. Over the last 2 days the local streams and lakes were covered in detail by ecologists. From the pictures it looks like the local invertebrates were well examined and we hope some volunteers can get out and about and bring us some data about water quality in the near future. To launch this event Pobal sponsored a promotional video outlining the Communities Biodiversity Plan. We are thankful for the link. Following on from this, to celebrate science week the secondary school participated in another workshop. With regret report farmyard waste was dumped close to a stream unravelling the great work you are trying to achieving with environmental protection. We understand how challenging planning new projects can be.

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

We are aware you encourage the community to get active with the many trails in the locality. Why not promote a walk week, cycle to school event to keep people healthy and nature is also great for our mental health. We see creative pottery classes in the courthouse, how about sewing, teach the younger generation new skills, then recycle old clothes and host a fashion show for example; what about a campaign on fast fashion etc. We applaud your low mow practices and sustainable planting in this category. Well done.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Great turnout for over 4 days in April for An Taisce Spring Clean. Litter control was good. Recycle banks were spotless. Bit of weed control takes from the bridge area and some of the street areas. Do you segregate the litter collected?

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

We acknowledge you have a number of properties that are vacant and you are working with the owners regarding maintenance. We would advise seeking the help of the Heritage Officer to find out what help is available.

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

Approach roads are looking great and have benefited from some enhancement over the last few years. We loved the new entrance signage and we note your plans to add the rest over time. Landscaping was well maintained and street furniture.

Concluding Remarks:

First up, Dowra is doing a great job. Each community has its own dynamics and staying attentive to these will help you navigate to the desired result. Secondly, it is important the committee continues to liaise with the local authorities in trying to achieve its collective goals. Overall you have demonstrated great planning and organisation and this will help get things done. Best of luck in the future.