

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Bridgetown - Baile an Droichid** Ref: **61**
County: **Clare** Mark: **312**
Category: **A** Date(s): **13/03/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	37	38
Streetscape & Public Places	80	42	43
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	47	48
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	29	31
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	15	15
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	66	68
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	37	38
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	31	31
TOTAL MARK	550	304	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 TidyTowns competition. You forwarded a completed application form which included photos and maps and also forwarded your Bridgetown 3 Year Plan 2023-2025 in PowerPoint format which has projects/actions under each category of the competition.

Your committee of 5 has the help of another 10-12 volunteers when work needs additional hands.

You list 4 agencies/bodies who support you – we assume there are more? You use the more traditional methods to communicate with the community - posters, local newspapers, local radio. We strongly advise you to begin communicating on social media – Facebook and/or Instagram and possibly Twitter. Ask a teenager to take charge of this and let it be his/her contribution to the TidyTowns committee. You'll be surprised at the amount of interest a Facebook Page generates. You have been involved in the SuperValu TidyTowns competition for 33 which has resulted in the development of great sense of togetherness as 'the Tidy Town remains the one steadfast activity around which the village can come together and develop new activities and projects that enhance and make the village more charming'. This is the true spirit of Tidy Towns. We saw your Clare in Bloom 2016 Special Endeavour Award certificate proudly on display.

Please see Concluding Remarks for advice on filling out the Application Form and producing the map.

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

Set in rural Clare, your village is surrounded by neat farmhouses with adjacent yards and well-kept fields. The buildings in the village itself consist, in the main, of single and two storey vernacular houses. St. Thomas's RC church sits on a large site and is the dominant building in the village. The National School looked good and the stiles at both sides of the entrance gates were admired. The kissing gate into the church grounds and some flat iron gates were also we admired. All these little features/structures in the streetscape are very special and add to the beauty of your village. Was there a pump in the recess in the stone wall near the Bridgetown sign on the entrance road from the south? Could you reinstate it? Ask Clare Co Co if they have one you could install. We loved the double-arch rubble bridge with the cut stone voussoirs over the river – ensure that ivy doesn't encroach on it as stone structures deteriorate quickly when ivy roots penetrate the joints between the stones.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

There are large undulating green areas in the centre of the village and adjacent to the river which are quite beautiful.

These have mature, and more recently planted trees, and also you have added picnic and seating areas. We suggest that areas not required for ball play (i.e. the sloping sections) are left unmown to allow wildflowers to grow. Trim around the outside of these so that it is obvious that they are being cared for no need to put up signs which detract from the village, as they are clutter. The low floral displays at the village name signs looked good, but were a little sparse. Some trailing plants could be planted which would create more of an impact. In the centre of the village (opposite the entrance to the church yard) the planting bed was also lacking in flowers and trailing plants. The hanging basket on the bridge looked good and were very colourful – again add trailing plants for additional effect. The new hedging surrounding the picnic area will take time to form a circle. We're assuming this will be kept low?

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

To promote biodiversity, we need to manage habitats in such a way that we provide food and shelter for our fauna and a place to grow and thrive for our flora. The natural stone walls around the village are a great habitat for insects. You also have a great many hedgerows and tall trees which are wonderful nesting and roosting sites for birds. You introduced a hedgerow education project into the school and will extend this to include trees and other plants. Let us have copies of any documentation you developed in conjunction with the school. This year your focus as a community group has been on the rehabilitation work to your river which you documented under Community – your planning and involvement. We read with interest that silting, reduced sunlight, bank collapse and blockages have all combined to reduce the quality of the habitat of the Black River Catchment and that there are now seven different rehabilitation works being carried out which will hopefully improve the spawning potential for fish. We look forward to hearing about the success of this project in the coming years.

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

The Green Flags awarded to the National School pupils were proudly on display and we congratulate the pupils and staff. The vegetable planting beds in the school grounds were quite overgrown (not as shown in your photos) – perhaps you could help the children with the planting and maintenance of these? We were delighted to see solar panels on a few houses which, in time, we will all install as is seen in other countries. We noted the beautifully painted clothes recycling bin tucked in along the hedge in the large green space. Is it used? Compliments to the artist on her work. The book swap box was not in situ when we visited. We hope that this will be replaced as it is a good way of books being recycled. We loved the Bridgetown Walking Routes – we took a map. While we don't have time to undertake walks such as these when we visit a community, we are delighted that they have been put in place by a local community. Compliments to the author – the directions for the three walks are clear. Check the TidyTowns website for ideas of projects to undertake for this category.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

We are delighted that you took part in the An Taisce annual clean-up in April. This event is now well known and is a great way of involving the volunteers in the work of a committee. The manmade McNamara's Lake was also a target in this year's clean up. When we visited, the village was virtually litter free so compliments to your litter pick-up team. Kerbs at road edges were clean and free from weeds in most areas. Weed growth was noticed at the base of some walls but this was minimal.

The Bridgetown Village Notices cabinet needs to be stained /repainted and the glass cleaned. We couldn't read some of the notices which appeared to have been there a long time – replace these.

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

In addition to the single and two storey well maintained vernacular houses there are three housing areas/estates within the village. The small cul-de-sac of dormer bungalows in the centre of the village were well presented with neatly trimmed hedges and well-tended gardens with colourful flowers. The 14-17 sign was unfortunately partially hidden behind the planting – carefully select plants and flowers so that they don't hide signs when they grow to full height. Equally well presented was Clonboy Estate where some of the houses had freshly painted walls and most had well-kept front gardens, some here too boasting pollinator flowers and shrubs. Specimen trees were planted in some gardens for added impact. The houses in Riverdale estate were also well presented as were the communal green spaces. The name Fahey, if painted white, would stand out and be easily read from a distance, as white paint on limestone is more suitable than black – a recommendation. Have you a Best Kept Garden award? This is a very popular award and is keenly coveted. A presentation could be made at an annual social event where the press and local councillors are invited - publicity of your work is always helpful.

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

The village name with stone planting bed and colourful flowers welcomed us as we entered the village from the south. The roadway has mature trees and hedges were neatly trimmed giving good visibility to the motorist. A footpath extends to the village name sign (R466) making it safe for residents to walk into the village. The sloping bank along the R466 had a great variety of wildflowers and grasses which were in full flower and buzzing with insect activity. Trim a narrow strip of grass along the road edge so that it will be obvious that the wilderness behind is deliberate. Road markings were worn in quite a number of areas – maybe you're on the list to have these repainted?

Concluding Remarks:

This was our first visit to your village, and we wish to compliment you for the care and attention you give to your

local community. Keep up the good work and we hope that this report provides some guidance for your programme next year. Below are some recommendations; this not a criticism of your work but purely to encourage you to improve your application so as to reap the rewards.

The Application Form, in Community – your planning and involvement, asks 'Briefly identify ONE specific project where particular effort was applied since June 1st, 2022'. You wrote almost 7 pages on one project and then wrote about three others. Please help the adjudicators and just BRIEFLY identify one project. The details of the project (7 pages aren't required) can be put into the relevant category in the form.

While you identify the projects as new (N) and maintained (M) you fail to number them. As you undertake more projects as a community you will need to number them so that the adjudicator can find them. These numbers should then be transferred to the map(s).

While you say that you raise awareness of the SDGs you failed to refer to them in any of your projects – this you must do. Tidy Towns in conjunction with Limerick City and County Council ran a webinar on the SDGs in 2021 and the presentation is worth reading as it will be helpful for your application next year.

The link is: [https://www.limerick.](https://www.limerick.ie/sites/default/files/media/documents/2021-03/sustainable-development-goals-helpful-hints.pdf)

[ie/sites/default/files/media/documents/2021-03/sustainable-development-goals-helpful-hints.pdf](https://www.limerick.ie/sites/default/files/media/documents/2021-03/sustainable-development-goals-helpful-hints.pdf)

Thank you for entering the SuperValu Tidy Towns 2023 competition.