

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Carrigaholt - Carraig an Chomhaltaigh** Ref: **732**
County: **Clare** Mark: **304**
Category: **A** Date(s): **06/07/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	39	40
Streetscape & Public Places	80	42	43
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	40	42
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	26	27
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	17	18
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	57	59
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	35	37
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	37	38
TOTAL MARK	550	293	304

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....

Thank you for your completed entry form, map and child's anti-litter winning drawing. You are a committee of 10 with 8 volunteers who help you when a project needs extra hands. You thank those who made donations but didn't mention any state or semi-state body who advise/help you. We strongly recommend that you make contact with Clare Co Co area engineer, heritage officer, conservation officer and environmental officer. You communicate your activities to the general public via your newsletter and the parish newsletter in addition to local newspapers. We were delighted that you have a Facebook Page and a What's App group as with these you'll reach a wider audience. This is your tenth year entering the Tidy Towns Competition and we read that the competition helps you to focus on the projects in your list of six in the 3-Year Plan. You also communicate with villages of a similar size to share ideas. This will not only improve the village as a community but also add to the visual appearance of the village as you undertake new projects and maintain the old ones. Please see Concluding Remarks.

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

The village located, in the main, south of the Moyarta River and pier is a mix of houses and businesses set side by side. The RC church of The Blessed Virgin, while quite plain externally has very elaborate timber details in the interior which are very beautiful. We also admired the single arch bridge with the pyramid capping on the piers. Carrigaholt Castle is very imposing both for its size and location. The Castle Pier and Carrigaholt Pier are important features along with the Square in the centre of the village. All these structures make for the unique streetscape of your village. You have carried out repairs to various stone walls around the village. Stone walls by their nature require some maintenance so we are delighted to see you involved in this. We noted the new fence as we crossed over the bridge. Repairs have been carried out to the picnic benches in the park. Like most Irish villages you have your share of dereliction in and on the outskirts of the village and we see that you carried out work on the derelict house opposite the Long Dock. This needs to be redone again this year as the gutters are full of weeds and the paint is flaking from the walls. If you know the owners of the other unoccupied/derelict buildings approach them and ask that they be made presentable. The information boards at the castle were very informative. We loved the old Great Southern and Western Railway cast iron sign threatening us with a penalty of forty shillings if we left the gate open. The freshly painted edges to the steps to the church looked good in addition to being a safety feature. The old pump with the lovely cow's tail handle was well painted and adds to the streetscape. Adjacent to this is a flat iron gate with great flowing leaf decoration – very, very beautiful. We admired the commercial unit which has been converted to a residential unit and were delighted to see the name 'Blake' retained. If you could convince others to

reinstate the names where they have been removed this would ensure the historical connections within the village would continue.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

You maintain a number of green spaces around the village which were well-kept and looked good. You also have planters and window boxes in your care. There are planters on a few green spaces which we recommend are changed into one or perhaps two permanent stone surround (or timber surround) beds. Plant pollinator friendly perennial flows and shrub mix in these which will cut down on maintenance for you. The planters can be used in an area which is unsuitable for a planting bed and where impact is needed for affect. Group them together for maximum impact. You have a great number of planters along the main streets – again if any area could facilitate a permanent planting bed, we would encourage its construction. You might look at the streetscape with this in mind. The picnic area on the main street (we're not sure if it's private) would benefit from the removal of the gravel and sowing grass seed instead. A grass area is easier to maintain than a gravel one where it is difficult to control weed growth.

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

You have a great variety of habitats for our insect and mammal life - stone walls, hedgerows, fields, trees, barns, house eaves, the castle, the Moyarta river and of course your long shoreline. The aim of this category is to encourage people to recognise, engage and celebrate the biodiversity and richness of the wildlife habitats in their surroundings. 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. We read that the school partakes in the Green Flag programme and we recommend that you assist the teachers in this programme which will be of benefit to both you and the children. You mention a Junior Tidy Towns Programme but failed to include it. Please attach it next year. Bird nesting boxes are always exciting as we wait to see who will take up residence. Be patient as this can sometimes take a few years.

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

This category has become increasingly important in the Tidy Towns competition as it now has a marks allocation of 55 – the same amount as the key categories of nature and biodiversity, residential streets and housing areas and approach roads, streets and lanes. Tidy Towns committees are encouraged to try and prevent the generation of waste when carrying out their day-to-day activities. You are also encouraged to educate others about how they use the resources of the planet and so cut down on waste. You mention an Electrical Equipment Collection Day ... what happens to the equipment collected? Who collects the equipment – you or Clare Co Co? You also mention a Paint Exchange Service – what is this? We visited the Loop Community Garden but we feel this is no longer in use, which is a pity, as community gardens are a great way to grow flowers etc from seed for you to use in your planting beds. You mentioned that businesses have rainwater harvesters in the village. We're guessing they're around the back of the premises as we didn't spot any. The bike repair station in the Square was noted.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Like many communities in Clare, you take part in the National Spring Clean Campaign. We commend the community for this as it helps to focus attention on the need to be vigilant with litter, fly-tipping and weed growth. As you are a coastal village you also have the beach to maintain and you link with the Coastal Care Group for this. You are a village which attracts a considerable number of tourists and you have the support of local businesses who clean the area around their properties, especially after busy weekends. We loved the winning entry for the Anti-Litter competition that you organised in the local school and we commend the teachers for allowing you to do this. St Mary's Hall needs attention – clean the gutters and paint the walls. Is the Garda Barracks in use? The grounds were full of weeds but we noticed a window open on the first floor. The school pallet benches will need painting shortly – will you help with this? We see that your weed control programme is in the spring and late summer. But you probably need to update this as weed growth was noted in quite a few areas. There are strong ivy roots growing into the walls (stone and brick) at a few places around Carrigaholt Castle – bring these to the attention of the conservation officer in Clare Co Co and ask that they be carefully removed (weed killer will be needed) before serious damage is done to the walls. It would be a pity to see them fall due to lack of attention

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

The houses in the village are a mix of single and two storey vernacular houses interspersed with businesses which makes for a vibrant village. In the surrounding area there are neatly kept bungalows and farmhouses with adjoining farmyards which add to the beauty of your area. Some of the village houses had been recently painted and presented well. Window boxes with great displays of colourful flowers adorned some of the houses along the main streets adding to the beauty of the street. We visited the housing estates/complexes – Cois na nAbhainn, Suan na Mara, Cluain Mhin and Irish Holiday Cottages. Amigo's Holiday Park is well kept and caters for visitors in mobile homes and caravans. We noted the road gullies in Suan na Mara are higher than the road surface which indicates that the road surfaces are incomplete. The residents should approach the council and request that the road construction/surfaces be completed. We almost missed the name sign tucked into the planting bed. The open space would benefit from trees – grow them in a group (or in groups) to help their survival. We see you have organised a grass cutting rota in Cluain Mhin and when we visited it was neat tidy and tidy. We recommend painting the name in white so that it stands out against the grey stone. There was considerable amount of weed growth along the kerbs in this estate so ask the resident to take charge of this too.

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

The approach roads to the village are quite different. From the north (L2006) we enter along the sea front with the low wall and railings as our barrier giving us wonderful views along the coast and to the village and from the west (R487) we pass through fields with low hedgerows making the roadway quite exposed to prevailing winds. The surfaces and markings of the entrance from the north (R488) and along Church Street were good. Elsewhere, however, road surfaces were in need of repair in many locations. There were no road markings along West Street or the Square which would definitely benefit from them – maybe a work in progress? You maintain the grass verges on the approach roads. The kerbs and roads along the main pier are a work in progress and you maintain contact with the area engineer to ensure that this work progresses.

Concluding Remarks:

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your village as we rambled around and visited the general area.

There appears to be a large number of archaeological sites in the area – is it worth considering an archaeological trail?

You need to update the application form – in quite a few instances the date was 2019.

The projects should be marked as New (N1, N2, N3 etc) and Maintained (M1, M2, M3 etc) in the application form and these numbers should then be transferred to the map so that the adjudicators can easily locate them when they visit. We wish to state that this is not a criticism of your work but to explain to you that as adjudicators we rely on a clear application form and accompanying map to inform us of your projects and make our visit rewarding.

We suggest you consult the Tidy Towns Handbook which has been revised and includes plenty of suggestions for suitable projects to consider under the various categories. It is available to download from the Tidy Towns website.

We also need you to make reference to the Sustainable Development Goals. 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.