

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Inagh - Eidhneach** Ref: **1976**
County: **Clare** Mark: **238**
Category: **A** Date(s): **16/06/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	35	37
Streetscape & Public Places	80	27	30
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	27	29
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	22	24
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	12	13
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	47	49
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	26	28
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	27	28
TOTAL MARK	550	223	238

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. Thank you for your completed application form, photos and map. You also include a list of projects/activities you will undertake in the next five years. Put some dates on these as this will help you to focus on your work. You are a committee of 10 who have the help of 30-50 volunteers when needed. This is wonderful for a village of your size. You list state and semi-state organisations and agencies, businesses and community groups who support your work financially or with advice and help. We are delighted to see that you have a dedicated email address and you use the Inagh Facebook Page which has 807 followers. The last posting here was 3rd May and truthfully, you'd need to be posting information on your work/activities more frequently. You also use the more traditional methods for those not on social media – parish bulletins and local newspapers. We are delighted to welcome you again, this your third year, to the SuperValu TidyTowns competition and you will find that as the village develops more and more of the community will become involved and take an interest in their village which will result in a great sense of togetherness, pride and community spirit. This is the true spirit of Tidy Towns.

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

You are a dispersed rural community, located primarily to the west of the busy N85, with a mix of vernacular single and two-storey buildings and these with the topography of the village and its great vistas across the countryside gives the area its character. Add to these your RC church of the Immaculate Conception, Inagh National School, Inagh Ark, Inagh Hub and Community Centre, the 1930's Scoil Náisiúnta Eidhneach and the beautiful triple-arch stone bridge over the River Inagh to complete the architectural merit of the village. We are delighted to read that you revealed a stone wall that had been hidden under many years growth of ivy and shrubs and this has been cleared so that it's now visible for all to admire. There are others that need this work too. The new playground was visited – the ground finish isn't really suitable for winter use so we advise you to change this when funding allows. The bench on the riverside walk was noted.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

As a small village, green spaces are all around you - in the surrounding fields and woodlands and in your village itself you have the river walk, the development of which has had become a major project for your committee. We read that the area had been neglected for some time and that you commenced by removing overgrown shrubbery and clearing litter etc. We look forward to further developments of the walkway and to a return visit in a few years. Within the confines of the village there are many places where trees would enhance the buildings and streetscape.

The carpark of the church is quite barren as are the carparks on the N85 opposite the commercial units. We recommend a close examination of these spaces and a redesign so that trees can be accommodated, which would greatly enhance their appearance. Perhaps a line of trees along the road into the childcare facility and an in /out arrangement for cars to better define the church car park? We suggest that you examine your grass mowing regime so as to present a semi-wild habitat and cut a narrow strip of tidily mown grass along the outer edge of the green spaces (roads etc) to show that the wilderness behind is deliberate. Japanese Knotweed exists along the riverside path and we see you are getting professional advice on its elimination. This is a slow process so be patient. Remove the tyres which are around the apple trees in the children's playground / people's park – these are unpleasant and take away from the beauty of the trees and from the area in general. The photos of the daffodils along the roadside were admired.

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

The wonderful banks of the River Inagh, and your multitude of stone walls, mature trees and hedgerows in addition to your rural location make for a great variety of habitats for insects and mammals. 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. Knowledge of your area and promoting this knowledge to the local population and passing visitor are the key components of this category. This could be done by installing information panels in some central location in the village. We see that you had a talk on biodiversity – has there been any development as a result of this? There are many simple things you can do to advance this category. What about organising a tree walk along the river bank for adults and children? We suggest that you also consult the Heritage Council (2004) Conserving and Enhancing Wildlife in Towns and Villages – a guide for local community groups. The bank from the wall beside the Community Hall down to the river would be a great location for a vast display of wildflowers – something for your group to consider. Is there public access to Rooskagh Lake and the wood beyond?

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. Growing your own pollinator friendly plants, harvesting your own seeds or sourcing donations of plants from keen local gardeners is something for you to undertake as this also avoids the waste associated with shop bought varieties. Consider harvesting rainwater in order to avoid using treated water when maintaining your planters. This is a simple process which involves placing a water butt on a downpipe to capture rainwater. We were delighted to see that you held a talk on Solar Power and invited the community to attend to learn of the technology, grants etc. Have many residents decided to further investigate this? As you have two commercial units selling coffee, we're delighted to read that you will get the waste coffee grinds and if used with care and common sense, they are a worthwhile addition to your compost heap and soil.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

If you haven't yet registered for the An Taisce Spring Clean-Up in April we recommend that you do this from now on. This event focuses the attention of a community on the need to be vigilant on litter, fly-tipping and weed growth. It also makes them realise that if they drop litter someone else has to pick it up. Although situated on a very busy main road, the N85, and a second equally busy road from local traffic, the R460, we are delighted to report that when we visited, the village was virtually litter free. Please commend those involved in keeping your village litter free. We noted ivy on quite a few stone walls. We know that you removed ivy from the wall along the river but you'll need to do it on other stone walls too. While ivy is a wonderful for insect life and is acceptable/good on rendered (plastered) walls it is not acceptable on stone structures as the roots penetrate between the joints in the stones, making the walls unstable and leading to their collapse. Natural stone constructions are in themselves great habitats for insect life and also very beautiful in the streetscape. The black plastic is visible in a number of flower beds beside the large carparks – cut it back or add extra stones. We commend the pupils of the school for their involvement in your litter pick-ups.

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

Being only 15kms from Ennis has seen an influx of residents in recent years and you now have housing estates in the village in addition to one-off houses close to the village. The housing estates of Callan View, Riverside and Annaghdún were visited and generally houses were well presented. Many had freshly painted houses and boundary walls and looked attractive. Gardens were well tended with flowers and shrubs attracting our pollinators while others had specimen trees which looked good. The communal green space in Annaghdún would benefit from a few coppices of trees in areas where ball play doesn't take place e.g the corners of the green.

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

We entered from the south along the R460 past neatly trimmed grass margins and hedgerows. We noted quite a few trees along this road were ash and had ash dieback – a job for the owners in the near future. We see the speed limit is 50kms and truthfully many motorists were doing considerably in excess of this along the N85. Are you in line for traffic calming? It really is badly needed. We parked in the carpark across from the commercial units (as did a few others) and found it difficult to cross the road as the N85 was extremely busy the day we visited. We noted quite a number of new concrete pavements and was surprised that the sections at the road junctions didn't have dipped kerbs to facilitate those with mobility issues and people pushing buggies. We admired that the footpath extends a long way out along the R460 giving pedestrians a safe passage to the village, school and GAA facility.

The new 'Welcome to Inagh' name stones weren't in place when we visited something for next year's adjudicators.

Concluding Remarks:

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your village – our first. We hope the report has been of some help and look forward to your application next year.

In addition to the comments above, below are recommendations regarding your application form and map. We requested that applicants number their projects as new projects (N), or improved/maintained projects (M) and all 'future' projects should only be included in your 5-Year Plan and NOT in the Application Form. You are to give each action/project a number as New (N1, N2, N3 etc.) or Maintained (M1, M2, M3 etc). This same numbering system to be used to indicate the locations of these projects on a map – N1, N2, N3 etc and M1, M2, M3 etc. This is to help the adjudicators to negotiate their way around your village and see the various projects or locations of projects. 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.

Please also attach a legend of the projects with their numbers.

Don't duplicate information. Select the most suitable category and put the action/project there. This year you had the poster regarding the Biodiversity Talk inserted into three different categories.

And, lastly, remember all categories are applicable to the competition – so you need to let us know what actions/projects were carried out (either by you or others) under each category.

Thank you for entering the SuperValu Tidy Towns 2023 competition.