

# Tidy Towns Competition 2023

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Labasheeda - Leaba Shíoda** Ref: **79**  
County: **Clare** Mark: **353**  
Category: **A** Date(s): **07/07/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	50	52
Streetscape & Public Places	80	50	52
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	47	49
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	39	40
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	22	23
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	61	62
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	34	35
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	39	40
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>353</b>

### 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 and thank you for your completed application form which included photographs and a list of Long-Term Plans which you will undertake in phases. You also sent a map, a drawing of the proposed amenity area at the harbour and a brochure on Labasheeda prepared by the pupils of 6th class. Your committee of eight has an additional twenty-eight who volunteer when a project needs extra hands. It is wonderful to see that you have a large number of volunteers as it shows the community holds you in high esteem. Your Instagram account informs those on social media of your activities. Is the Tidy Towns Committee Facebook Page 'Labasheeda History & Heritage'? Social media is important in spreading information about your activities in addition to traditional methods of posters, radio and newspapers. You list state and semi state organisations in addition to businesses, individuals and local community groups who support you. This is your twenty-eight year to enter the competition and you have seen a marked improvement in the visual appearance of the village. In addition, the competition has encouraged residents to take pride in their village and to work together as a close-knit community for the benefit of all. This is the spirit of Tidy Towns.  
Please see Concluding Remarks for advice on filling out the Application Form and referencing the projects on your map.

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

Your village hugs the coastline with its single and two storey vernacular structures which are well presented giving Labasheeda its architectural character. Add to this the descent of the entrance road from the north giving a framed view of the Shannon estuary through the trees giving further interest to the village. We admired the recently whitewashed stone building on the roadside as we entered from the north, which gives a very good first impression to the visitor. We noted the locally owned commercial units which we saw were being supported by residents and visitors. You have a long list of projects New and Maintained which you are involved with/lead. We noted the work to Labasheeda Quay is progressing well – the camper van and carparking area and toilets have yet to be completed. We loved that the new church carpark is enclosed behind a low wall making it safe for users but could it be laid out in parking bays interspersed with trees which would greatly improve its visual appearance? We look forward to seeing the Labasheeda brochure on the Shannon Estuary Way website – it's not there yet. The bicycle repair area and bike stands were noted.

### Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Although you are a 'coastal' community with the wide Labasheeda Bay and Shannon Estuary beside you, Labasheeda is fortunate to have a wealth of trees and hedgerows all around the village. That is very important because trees are long lasting and provide the main structure of the landscape. We see that you have year-round colour planting and have pollinators in mind when selecting plants and flowers. You are also choosing perennials, which we recommend, as this will cut down on some of your work. You work closely with other community groups and in particular with the ICA who have developed a garden near the church. Truthfully, we cannot call it a 'work of art' and we suggest that the planting and additions (pots, stones etc) here are rationalised so as to give uniformity along this large important feature in the streetscape. We noted that Labasheeda was alive with bees and butterflies visiting your pollinator friendly planting at various locations around the village. The recently planted trees at the quay and also in the community centre and school were noted – cut suckers and keep an eye on stakes and ties, removing them when the trees are strong enough so that the ties don't damage the bark. There are a number of areas along your streetscape where a permanent stone surround planting bed could be made and the pots/planters/wheelbarrows can then be removed. We recommend that you survey the village and only use pots where ground planting is not possible and a planter is then used for maximum impact. The three small stone beds at the junction could be made into one really large bed (there is great space here inside the new pavement), which would give a wonderful welcome to your village.

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

With trees, hedges, stone walls, gardens, the old and new churches with surrounding green spaces, and the river and coastline you have a great number of habitats for flora and fauna. Did you become involved in measuring the difference your actions for pollinators have made? Flower-Insect Timed Count (FIT Count) from the National Biodiversity Data Centre ([biodiversityireland.ie](http://biodiversityireland.ie)). We love that you are alert to your visiting birds – one being the Curlew. You have a number of information boards depicting your fish and birds which you maintain. We are delighted to see that the school had a talk on Bird Watching which resulted in the production of two murals – the curlew and aquatic life. It would be wonderful if you could follow up bird watching with them and perhaps make it an annual event where all the villagers are invited. Participation in the Green Flag Programme is wonderful for the pupils and we are delighted to see that you will assist the teachers in this. Please commend the students for their murals and their work in the school grounds.

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

This is a category where many communities struggle but it is just about being aware of how we use the resources of the planet so that we cut down on our waste. We are delighted to see that an E-charge point will be installed in the Quay Area which will benefit/encourage visitors to the village.

Your Junior Tidy Towns planted nasturtiums, maintained an herb garden and planted peas, lettuce, pumpkins and other vegetables in the beds to the rear of the school, which we visited. We see that you make your own compost and that others in the community do likewise. Well done to the student on building 8 window boxes and a bird feeding stand for use by Tidy Towns. There are many other initiatives you could undertake and we recommend that you look at the Tidy Towns handbook (available online) for ideas under this category and others.

### **Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:**

We are delighted that you encouraged the community to become involved in An Taisce's 'National Spring Clean'. Involving the community in this event will let them see the amount of litter, weeds and fly-tipping that accumulates over a winter and hopefully encourage them not to throw litter. We also note that volunteers assist with litter pick during their walks. You have your coastline/estuary location to contend with where litter is washed on the grassed shoreline and rocks – well done on maintaining this area too. We are happy to report that when we visited, the village was virtually litter free – so please commend your volunteers. Unfortunately weed growth was noticed in a few areas which detracted from them. Weeds can be sprayed using organic weed killer or with a mix of salt, vinegar and washing up liquid. Ask the litter pick-up team to bring a hoe or a wire brush and to remove weeds from the base of walls, and roadside kerbs. We recommend that you sow grass in any area possible where there is gravel at present, as grass is easy to maintain whereas maintenance of gravel is ongoing and due to our climate is very difficult to keep weed free.

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

The houses on the approach roads are a mix of single and two-storey roadside houses and farmhouses with yards and outbuildings. All were well maintained and those with gardens had trees, shrubs and colourful floral displays with great varieties of pollinator friendly planting. Your residential properties within the village are a mix of single and two storey vernacular houses and many of these had been freshly painted. Those on the street had planters, baskets or window boxes and gave a great colour to the village. We note that some of the villagers also maintain the pots and baskets installed by the Tidy Towns. Mountshannon Park was visited and here the communal space is quite special with the stone walls, trees and picnic areas. We see it is a work in progress. We suggest trimming the low branches of the trees in this Park so that a view of the estuary and village is possible – it seems a pity to have them close by and not visible.

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

The approach road into the village from the north (R473) is quite beautiful as we enter through a canopy of trees with the view of the Shannon Estuary in front. Trim a narrow strip along the edges of the grass margins from the Labasheeda name signs into the village to let the motorists know that they are entering a village that's cared for. We noted a new footpath at the road junction and also at other locations including at the coffee shop. Will this be

extended along both sides of the road from the north? The footpath outside the school is in a very poor state of repair and hopefully this footpath is the next to be replaced with a concrete footpath. Generally, road surfaces were good and signage clear making it safe for pedestrians and motorists. Road markings are worn along the road around the school – another job for your area engineer.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

This was a return visit for us to your community and we were delighted to see the progress made in the intervening years - well done to all concerned.

In terms of your Tidy Town's application form you will have seen that we requested that applicants would number their projects as, new projects (N), or improved/maintained projects (M). You are to give each action/project a number as New (N1, N2, N3 etc.) or Maintained (M1, M2, M3 etc) and this numbering system, along with a legend, should be used to indicate the locations of these projects on your map. This is to help the adjudicators to negotiate their way around your town and see the various projects or locations of projects. 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.

Reference to the Sustainable Development Goals is also required. 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 2023 Tidy Towns competition.