

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Tulla - An Tulach** Ref: **521**
County: **Clare** Mark: **321**
Category: **B** Date(s): **08/06/2023**

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2022 | Mark Awarded 2023 |
|---|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Community – Your Planning and Involvement | 80 | 40 | 42 |
| Streetscape & Public Places | 80 | 44 | 46 |
| Green Spaces and Landscaping | 80 | 42 | 44 |
| Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality | 55 | 33 | 34 |
| Sustainability – Doing more with less | 55 | 18 | 19 |
| Tidiness and Litter Control | 90 | 60 | 62 |
| Residential Streets & Housing Areas | 55 | 36 | 37 |
| Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes | 55 | 36 | 37 |
| TOTAL MARK | 550 | 309 | 321 |

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....
You are welcome to the 2023 SuperValu TidyTowns competition and we thank you for your application form which included photographs and a map. We are delighted to see that you have a dedicated email address and also an active Facebook page which, we see, has 340 followers. You have a committee of 8 ably assisted by 25 volunteers. You list of state and semi-state agencies, many local businesses, and community groups who help and support you. In addition to social media, you inform the community of your activities with parish newsletters, meetings and newspaper notices. We love that you engage the youth through the Gaisce award – this is an excellent way of involving them. Tulla Tidy Towns has entered the SuperValu Tidy Towns competition since 2005 and in the intervening time the marks for the village have increased and the residents see the benefit of the competition which has brought sense of pride of place to all. We also suggest that you prepare a Five-Year Plan with projects under each category and a timeframe so that you have targets. Don't make it too onerous – just add projects which you know are feasible to achieve. You can add partners to this plan who will help with the projects. Ask for advice/ help from the Environmental Officer in Clare Co Co.
See Concluding Remarks for advice on filling out the application form and producing a map.

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

There are a great variety of architectural styles in your built environment which give character to your village. The buildings in the centre are primarily single and two storey with an odd three storey which is unusual for an Irish village of your size. The street pattern is interesting: two almost right-angle bends along the R462 and the main street a spur off one of these bends. We were delighted to see where a shop has been converted to a residence the shop name has been retained. This is part of the social history of the town – please encourage those who have removed the names to reinstate them. Overhead service cables diminish the visual amenity of the streetscape especially where they feature several cables radiating from a single pole; the local engineer should be approached regarding a possible date for ducting starting with the most unsightly poles first. Dereliction is a problem for most rural towns and villages and every Tidy Towns committee struggles trying to get the owners to carry out routine maintenance. We see that you are relatively successful here and if results aren't forthcoming contact Clare Co Co for assistance. We see that the old convent has been converted into a Cultural Centre, which is a great use for such a building. We loved the many flat iron gates we saw in the village and surrounding countryside.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

You have a number of green spaces in and around Tulla which you maintain. We particularly admired the green

space near the Library (Old Market House) and the graveyard and the wonderful views afforded us from Tulla Hill were worth the walk. The picnic benches are well located and we're guessing are well used due to their central location. We admired 'The Green' but question the planters. Why not make planting beds? Guidelines for plant containers is to use them only where planting directly into the ground is not possible; they should not in themselves attract any notice. The new stone-built flower beds along the roads look good – well done Clare Co Co. The 'Bag of Seasonal Bulbs' was a great idea and now you will have great displays which will benefit the proposed Sensory Garden at St. Mochullas. We loved the displays of guelder roses which we saw in quite a few locations around the village. The main structural elements in the landscape are trees and there are many places in Tulla where trees would enhance the buildings and streetscape. We suggest you do a Walk About and see possible locations – a build-out can be made to accommodate trees in the streetscape.

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

This category's aim is to encourage people to recognise, engage and celebrate the biodiversity and richness of the wildlife habitats in their surroundings. Around you are stone walls, hedgerows, trees, eaves of buildings, fields, grasslands forests and Clondorney Lake and its banks – all habitats for insects and mammals and also locations for our wildflowers to thrive. The homemade insect hotel was spotted which we are sure delights the local children. We couldn't see all the signs and objects in the Nature Park as the bushes have partially hidden them. We see you work with the schools which in the long term will benefit these children, giving them a sense of belonging and contributing to their community. We suggest you collect wildflower seeds as wildflowers native to your area are far more suitable to bought varieties. We strongly encourage you to monitor the impacts of your planting regime on pollinators and biodiversity. This could be achieved by carrying out regular bee and butterfly counts in your area to ascertain whether populations are increasing as a result of the measures that you have taken. Why not collaborate with the schools to carry out these surveys as they make excellent school projects? Full details of how to undertake simple surveys of pollinators can be found online <https://pollinators.ie/record-pollinators/fit-count/>.

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

This category is about tackling the growing waste mountain that is creating problems of pollution, unwanted land use, and the use of dwindling resources. We encourage committees to get the basics right and focus on simple but effective measures. You could make your own compost for use in your landscaping schemes as this avoids all of the associated packaging and other waste that comes with shop bought fertilisers. Growing your own pollinator friendly plants, harvesting your own seeds or sourcing donations of plants from keen local gardeners is recommended as this also avoids the waste associated with shop bought varieties. Is there an area in Tulla that you have as a Tidy Towns work area? Could one be developed in a 'waste' piece of ground – perhaps donated to you for your use by a local developer/business/commercial company. We saw the recycled weed membrane from the local quarry – it will take a few years for these beds to be presentable, so be patient. We liked the idea of the running/walking track around the athletic field and we spoke to a lady who uses it regularly. It's good that C&M foods facilitates you with a rain water harvester. The vegetable beds in the National School were being harvested – good to see.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

If you don't take part in the An Taisce All Ireland Clean-Up in April, we encourage you to join it. This event focuses the attention of a community on the need to be vigilant on litter, fly-tipping and weed growth. Those taking part will be more alert to litter etc around the village and will report any fly-tipping as soon as it is noticed. When we visited the village was virtually litter free. Weed growth was noticed at kerbs, base of walls and in open gravel areas in a few areas which gave them an unkempt feel. The black plastic in the planting beds on the walkway to the graveyard is visible. This needs to be trimmed back and/or additional stones added. Would you consider planting grass here instead as it's easier to maintain? There is ivy growing on the stone monument near the Library – remove the ivy. Here too the planting bed was unkempt. We love the concept of 'Adopt a Patch' as it gives ownership to volunteers of a small area which they feel is manageable. If dog fouling is a problem for you just paint 'Clean up after your Dog' along the streets. This is better than signs – which are clutter in a streetscape. There was a considerable amount of litter around the bring banks particularly at the back of them.

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

Vernacular single and two storey houses line the main streets of Tulla. Generally, these were well presented and some had floral arrangements in hanging baskets or window boxes which added colour to the area. There are a number of housing estates in Tulla – some quite large. Remove the planting from in front of the Cuirt na Bhelach sign and put it to the sides and perhaps add some taller planting to the rear. Powers Court has its name proudly displayed between two tall piers. We admired the well-maintained communal space with trees and the little tígín painted on the wall surrounded by the cottage garden is very attractive. Ardmore was also well maintained – but trim the suckers from the trees and cut the grass at the base of the trees. We loved that the mature trees were left in Cúinne an Bhroic and the houses built around them. The compost areas were noted in the estates – who is in charge of rotating the compost so that it is fit for use?

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

The village is quite undulating, which adds interest to your roads, streets and lanes. Roads had neatly cut grass margins and hedges neatly trimmed giving the motorists good visibility of the approach to your village. We are pleased to hear that developers are contributing to upgrading paths. We see that Clare Co Co has also installed new paths in a number of locations. We were delighted that a path extends as far as the Athletics Track as this will

encourage more residents to avail themselves of this facility. The new pedestrian crossing near the National School was noticed – road markings had yet to be undertaken. We liked the village sign – Tulla, The Windswept Hill.

Concluding Remarks:

We enjoyed our visit to your village, our first. We hope you find the suggestions in the report helpful and we add the following in terms of your application form and map.

You will have seen that request that applicants number their projects as, new projects (N), or improved/maintained projects (M). 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. 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. A legend listing your projects with their New or Maintained numbers should be included. We would appreciate it if these points could be taken into consideration when preparing your 2024 application.

You also need to reference 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.