

# Tidy Towns Competition 2023

## Adjudication Report

Centre:	<b>Abbeyfeale - Mainistir na Féile</b>	Ref:	<b>437</b>
County:	<b>Limerick</b>	Mark:	<b>315</b>
Category:	<b>C</b>	Date(s):	<b>06/06/2023</b>

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2022</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2023</b>
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	43	45
Streetscape & Public Places	80	44	46
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	35	37
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	39	40
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	19	21
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	57	60
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	30	31
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	34	35
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>315</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...

Thank you for the comprehensive entry form and map of the town which was greatly appreciated by the adjudicator as it allowed him to identify places of interest and work activities with relative ease.

Street names would be a worthwhile addition to the map for next year

The Sustainable Development Goals are at the heart of the United Nation's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Tidy Towns has now fully integrated them into the competition to ask groups to demonstrate how SDGs impact their activities.

It is clear from your submission that you have embraced the programme and aligned many of the relevant SDGs with your work activities under different categories.

It took quite an amount of research, editing, and time to put together this entry form and credit to those within the committee who were entrusted with the task.

That said it is a rather large tome of 38 pages and it would not be possible to make comments on all the content in a 3-page concise report.

Feel assured that all material was examined and that the adjudication was done fairly and objectively in line with the competition guidelines.

Maybe for next year consider reducing the narrative content substantially.

The Tidy Towns Unit has, in their pre-competition material, encouraged groups to be mindful of keeping entry forms concise.

The adage "Less is often More" has its advantages.

You have an excellent committee and volunteer structure.

The local wider community must see you as an effective influencer in the future development and promotion of Abbeyfeale and this you have demonstrated in this submission.

Well done on being involved in the proposed Feasibility Study for the old convent and let's hope that the results of the study will culminate in the development of a community-oriented project.

You have listed 19 major supporters of your work activities from public service bodies businesses, local sports clubs, and cultural societies to the individual sponsors who value your work.

Well done on interacting with other nearby Tidy Towns groups to share ideas.

Has Limerick a County Tidy Towns Network?

Methods of communication are a mix of the traditional forms of social media and it is nice to know that you still acknowledge the importance of word of mouth.

The adjudicator accessed the Facebook Pages you have detailed and all are up to date with relevant content.

Involvement with the schools is a continuation of what was in last year's entry form and well done to the Boys National for attaining success in the Green Schools Competition  
Your specific project is a practical one and the adjudicator spent some time in the Town Park.  
Thanks for outlining the benefits that have accrued to the town as a result of the Tidy Towns Committee's involvement over the last 10-plus years.

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

The day of adjudication was one of bright sunshine so it allowed the adjudicator to walk at will and see Abbeyfeale and its built environment at its best.

Let's that the recommended 10k steps were well and truly overstepped.

Some of the new projects that you have undertaken in partnership with others are exceptional and the adjudicator was particularly impressed An Bosca Beag.

This was a fine example of collaboration that involved a school's art competition.

The actual artist's name was not mentioned but huge credit for such a creative body of work that certainly was an enhancement to the town.

Good to note that there was a positive result in your deliberations with Limerick County Council which resulted in some properties being transformed and will once again become family homes.

Abbeyfeale has some very distinctive and historical premises with unique facades and porticos.

You have outlined your involvement in having these refurbished or painted.

Thank you for the update on the Odd Convent Building hopefully over a short time the plans for development that will include an E-Business Centre but as you state this could be a "slow burner"

The Biodiversity Park will be assessed under the Nature & Biodiversity in your locality Category.

West Limerick Towns and Villages will benefit in many formats from the new Greenway and the adjudicator has seen the new branded signage in other villages along the route.

The following are a few personal observations made in line with the guidelines during an extensive walkabout.

It is noted that the Town park has won a Green Flag Award and the keepers of the Park are to be commended for the work that achieved this accolade.

There are a few negatives that the adjudicator felt needed highlighting, the toilets were closed on the day in question and the playground area was quite busy at the time.

It was felt that the perimeter of the all-weather pitch/basketball court needed painting as it looked a little jaded.

Other than that a lovely space to walk and avail of the excellent Gym Equipment.

Nice to see the stone plaque to the Sisters of Mercy and their contribution to education in the town.

Well-maintained memorial to Partick Hartnett and Jeremiah Healy who were killed during the War of Independence.

Good to note the retention of old shop front signage around the town something that is not seen too often in other places.

Public buildings such as the schools both primary and post-primary were well maintained and presented and the Church of the Assumption on Convent Street is a fine ecclesiastical building.

The adjudicator would also like to commend the members of Fr Caseys GAA Club part of the grounds must be in Kerry. Abbeyfeale United FC's excellent facility and the pitch resurfaced on the day and not forgetting the homely ground near Collins Park of Abbeyfeale RFC.

The boundary wall at the latter needs a coat of paint and the area around is tidied up a little.

Overall road surfaces, footpaths, street lighting, traffic calming measures, and signage were in acceptable condition.

The following are some shop fronts that appealed to this adjudicator: The Winners Circle very colourful, Ferndale Family Practice, John J Burke lovely colour combination, AIB Bank, W J Moloney and J M Fitzgerald, D J Murphy, An Siopa Milséain and J D Harnett sharing the one iconic building, Mairéads Shoe Shop and Ruairí Dennison a surname synonymous with a momentous sporting occasion.

Sad to see such a wonderful building of J D Daly dating back to 1859 in such a bad state.

Some excellent information panels were noted around the town and finally, Fr Casey's Monument never looked so resplendent.

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

Thank you for the first-rate input in this category backed up by some fine pictorial evidence of work undertaken in the last year.

The pollinator planting at the entrance to the Town Park was noted as the park was the first port of call at the start of the adjudication.

The Park is an excellent amenity and whilst the adjudicator noted a few negatives in the previous category he was very impressed overall.

The Reflective Garden is a space of tranquility and quite reflection

Last year's report alluded to the fact that a site map with legends would be a welcome addition.

Maybe the committee could give some consideration to the suggestion.

There were some excellent examples of colourful window boxes and hanging baskets in the core of the town including in front of Foleys Bar which seems to be up for sale.

Yes of course we are advocating the need for sustainable all year round low maintenance but it is good to have a mix of colourful petunias and the like in certain circumstances.

The revamped planting at the Church of the Assumption was noted and it will require low maintenance over time.

Trees are part of any urban landscaping and the adjudicator thought that parts of the town lacked a little by the absence of trees.

This is a discussion that the Committee might have with the Area Engineer and maybe a "slow burner" as well but it's no harm to start the discussion

Plenty of permanent shrub beds were observed in the town and at the extremities, most were well-managed but a

few had become a little overpopulated.

The beds at the junction that enters Tesco were a little choked and the dreaded briar had taken hold.

Overall the standard was very good and your active work has been rewarded with an increase in marks.

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

Once again thank you for an in-depth report on the work that you have undertaken under this category heading. The key issues in respect of this adjudication category are a) knowledge of local species and habitats and b) knowledge of local designated areas (SACs, SPAs, NHAs) and the preservation of these.

It is also important to be aware of the Law and Biodiversity before embarking on any biodiversity related project. The adjudicator feels that Abbeyfeale Tidy Towns Committee has embraced these concepts and principles fully judging by your submission.

Some of what you have submitted is historical and indeed very important but was referred to in last year's report so there is no point in walking you back through it.

The adjudicator did link in to the Feale Biodiversity Facebook Page and it was relatively up to date with information.

The adjudicator is a little confused in relation to the development of the Community Nature Park resulting from Tony Kenneally B.Sc. extensive survey and the conclusions within.

The layout map suggests that the site has been identified and that it will form the basis for submission for tender.

Maybe the committee might give an update for next year's entry.

Well done on addressing the needs of school children many of whom as you say are losing touch with nature and the outdoor classroom will be a key element of the Community Nature Park.

More information available in the section of the Tidy Towns Handbook under Nature and Biodiversity in the Community

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

This category has been evolving in keeping with current EU and government policy as well as 'best practice' guidelines.

It summarises how we try to reduce our use of all resources within the community so that we lessen our environmental impact.

When it was first introduced it created some difficulty of interpretation for many groups but as it evolved people became familiar with what was required in terms of relevant projects.

You have listed a number of measures that you are involved with some are very particular to Abbeyfeale and others have been replicated around the country.

The adjudicator has noted a number of contactless bottle stations at other locations around the county.

Is this a Limerick City and County Council initiative?

Well done to both the girls and boys national school on the continuous achievements in the Green Flag Programme.

You have some very pertinent measures that fit within the ethos of this category.

Making one's own organic fertilizer reduces the need to dispose of plastic containers and the website promotion of sustainable living options keeps the public aware of the need to take relevant actions.

Thank you for your very fine inputs on Transport, Energy, Waste and your note on Climate Action all have been assessed under the category guidelines.

Overall the standard in the category is worthy of an increase in marks

For more information on ideas that contribute to a more sustainable environment consider looking at the following websites for idea generation

[www.localprevention.ie](http://www.localprevention.ie), [www.greenhomes.ie](http://www.greenhomes.ie) and [www.sustainableprocessing.ie](http://www.sustainableprocessing.ie)

Also consult the revised Tidy Towns Handbook and the first-rate advice section on this category

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

First off the adjudicator would like to state that the Recycling Centre near Tesco was well managed, easily accessible and tidy and this considering that it caters for a large catchment area.

Thank you for recognizing the good work of the TUS personnel as they are critical to many villages and towns who have to depend on their support.

You have a good interaction with other organisations, residents associations and sports clubs in combining to spread the message that Abbeyfeale is against litter and dog fouling

The adjudicator traversed the most of the inner part and the extremities of the town by foot and have to say that the standard of litter control was good

Abbeyfeale is a large town and it is hard to manage litter control and other related problems such as dog fouling.

Many volunteers through various groupings are involved in regular litter picks and do Trojan work in keeping the place as litter free as possible

There are people in every town or village that don't seem to have a pride of place mentality but unfortunately that's something outside a voluntary group's control

Well done to the local residents associations who work hard to keep their respective residential areas tidy.

Dog fouling wasn't that problematic but the adjudicator felt that some more mutt bins might be necessary in the extremities of the town.

Dereliction was addressed in a previous category but it was noticeable that some of the properties had planning permission notices for redevelopment or replacement by new units.

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

The residents associations play a big part in the work of the committee by ensuring that homesteads are presented to an acceptable standard and that communal areas are maintained in an equal fashion.

This kind of practical involvement helps to generate a pride of place mentality and indeed takes the pressure off the main Committee as it can depend on the representatives of these associations to raise any concerns that need to be addressed,

The Adjudicator visited a cross section of estates all over the town including St Ita's Drive with its very nice well maintained green area, the older Collins Park, Grove Road, The Orchard and Foxfield on the Killarney Road, Hilary Close and Cryle View Close.

For future reference and to whoever is responsible – desist from treating grass verges with chemicals as observed at the entrance to Collins Park near the Rugby Club

The vast majority of properties were in very good condition with green areas and planting arrangements well looked after.

A large number of individual homesteads were observed during the walkabout and some had very fine front gardens that took the eye.

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

The adjudicator would certainly concur with the statement in the introduction to this category that the entrances from both sides of the busy N21 have been enhanced significantly over the last number of years.

This is due in no small measure to additional enhancement features such as new name signs and traffic calming measures.

Entrances from both sides have cycle lanes but cycling can be a bit hazardous as one comes into the town due to the incessant traffic.

The planting planned for the entrance of the Town Park was in place and was commented upon in a previous section.

Actually, some of the content that you have included under this category is more suited to inclusion under the Built Environment and Green Spaces categories ie derelict buildings and painting of individual properties.

The adjudicator also went to the extremities of both the R555 to Listowel and the R524 to Athea as well as the road out to Dromtrasna and Tounafulla.

All these were presented to a very good standard as well.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

It was good to revisit Abbeyfeale and spend some time traversing the town and its extremities.

Many positive changes have taken place over the last 5 years and the Tidy Towns Committee has played a key role in bringing these to fruition.

You are wished well for the future.