

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ardpatrick - Ard Pádraig** Ref: **441**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **362**
Category: **A** Date(s):

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	46	48
Streetscape & Public Places	80	48	49
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	50	52
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	40	41
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	25	26
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	67	68
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	36	37
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	40	41
TOTAL MARK	550	352	362

Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Na mBailte Slachtmhara SuperValu 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.

What a wonderful place is Ardpatrick to arrive in! It is our first time to set foot in Ardpatrick and there is something soulful about such a small place surrounded by hills and you have made such an effort to display the best of your wider village of just over 390 people and 50 or so population locally.

Your involvement in Tidy Towns commenced in 1990 and your efforts are there to see. You have a committee of 5 and with another 15 persons who volunteer. You have a practical way in undertaking your work. You meet when you can and discuss as you work. Practical common sense. You are well versed in the Sustainable Development Goals, and you have catered for those who have mobility issues. And you have that most welcome of facilities – a toilet! Well done.

You have a Committee Member who is on the Board of Ballyhoura Heritage and Environment. This is a great idea as it links your village to the wider world outside Ardpatrick. You have a gathering at the Hill of Ardpatrick for the Dawn Mass at Easter. This tradition is wonderful to maintain. Your Committee and Volunteers work to maintain the landscape of Ardpatrick. And you do not rest on your Laurels – you have participated in training. For example, Sustainable Gardening and talks on the Native Irish Honeybee Limerick Tidy Towns Seminar.

You have contact with over 15 organisations that can help in your work and learning. Getting your message across includes Word of Mouth, Parish Notes, The Limerick Leader, and Vale Star. Simple but efficient. You have contact with the local School and the Green Schools Committee. This is education for the future.

The growth of walking and cycling has impacted positively on Ardpatrick.

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

We could not miss the amazing building that is the J O'Brien Sunvale Inn. What an impressive building. We were not sure if it is still occupied? It is a building to be treasured and it is part of the Streetscape of Ardpatrick. If it is not vacated, then perhaps it could be a building for stop overs for walkers and cyclists?

Arriving at Ardpatrick we could not miss the beautiful triangular flower display. And then on the right-hand side we noted the display of old tools, the large rock, beautiful planting, old agricultural implements. This is Carraig Mór. We saw a picture of the Old Creamery and wondered if perhaps it should have been retained? But that was then and what is there now is a fitting and interesting display effort.

The land slopes down to the Church that was constructed in 1835 and across the way is the Bishop Murphy Park. It is wonderful that you have catered for the disabled and that you have toilets.

Adding to your attractions is the Spruce and Willow Café and this also facilitates visitors. So, there is tourism of a gentle and healthful kind. And this is not just confined to tourists – it is also local. Good for everyone.

Life must go on and the O'Sullivan Garage is well maintained and part of the local fabric. So Ardpatrick is not mothballed! It is a living community.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The great advantage of Ardpatrick is its proximity to Ballyhoura Mountain and with it the Bike Trails and walking opportunities. On the way you have the Beara-Breifni Way. We spotted the signage, and it is very good and informative. You have a plan for a new path from the Spruce and Willow to Carraig Mór. This is good for safe walking. You are involved in the maintenance of the path to the graveyard.

You say that "you are also keen to learn new things, so we have attended the following training. Sustainable Gardening in Lifelong Learning week, The Limerick County Tidy Towns Seminar, The Ballyhoura Tidy Towns award and A talk on the Native Irish Honeybee".

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

You have House Martins nesting in the Church and it is inspiring that there is an awareness of these. It is good to see that you have used Wildlife friendly planting as far as possible. You also have lots of Wildlife signage and these are discreet, well designed, and well thought through. It is so important to have signage that visitors can use to interpret the environment that they are in, the history of the area, the wildlife of the area and the local buildings. You have great groups of trees beside the church and along the road. And you have not forgotten the Nóinín Stream that enters the Maigue River and the Shannon Estuary. It is inspiring that you have a Citizen Science Project that monitors the quality of the Nóinín Stream. We hope that the quality of the water will improve. Streams and rivers are so vulnerable to pollution, and it is great that your community are aware of its significance.

Letting the grass grow and letting Nature do the work is a recent phenomenon and your community has taken part in No Mow and letting what is in the soil grow. Further away in Ballyhoura Mountains you have this nature in abundance, and you have also constructed a display of the vegetation from that area in Carraig Mór.

Your local school has a school garden maintained by the students and with the supervision of one of your Tidy Towns members. This is learning for the future, and it is no surprise that the school has 10 Green Flags. Well done! A local Tidy Towns member monitors the local Rookery and has recorded 42 nests. In fact, there is a wealth of bird recording in Ardpatrick. National Tree Week was celebrated by planting native trees.

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

You are well versed in Sustainability! From water harvesting at Carraig Mór and in the school and the community centre to having a Local Link Service! And changing from annual plants to perennial plants and working with Emly Tidy Towns seed saver. You have so much in this category: grass is mulched, you are choosing re-useable water bottles, you have energy saving devices in the Community Centre. All of this adds up. You have even worked with the Sustainable Energy Communities Programme, and you have received refurbished computers from Regeneron. And there is more - the products grown in the school garden are harvested and shared by the senior pupils. This is wonderful. This is real education.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

It is a wonderful change to see that your community noticed a decline in Fly Tipping. That is change. You segregate the rubbish that you collect, and your committee members do regular litter picks. Like many other communities you have no bins in Ardpatrick – take the rubbish home is the motto! Dog fouling is still a filthy problem everywhere but, keep at it and it will gradually decline.

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

You say, "All residents in the community maintain their properties and gardens to the best of their ability." And your Tidy Towns volunteers help with those who need support. That is a practical way of doing things. In the larger urban environment this would not always work but in Ardpatrick, the Tidy Towns volunteers are there also!

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

You are working to improve the line markings in Ardpatrick. You mow a narrow margin to allow for wildlife, including plants. And importantly, this mown margin facilitates pedestrian safety.

Concluding Remarks:

Ardpatrick is a wonderful place and well tended by your local community. We will definitely do a walk from Ardpatrick to the Ballyhoura Way at some time in the future. Thank you.