

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Askeaton - Eas Géitine** Ref: **442**
County: **Limerick** Mark: **332**
Category: **B** Date(s): **05/06/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	48	49
Streetscape & Public Places	80	42	43
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	47	48
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	39	40
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	20	22
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	58	59
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	35	36
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	33	35
TOTAL MARK	550	322	332

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 well prepared entry form, excellent numerated map, and other supplementary material including excerpts from the local Askeaton News and a summary of projects on Moths by Liam Dillon.

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.

Judging from the entry form you have embraced the SDGs programme fully by aligning different goals to elements of your work in different categories.

This is the second year of the revamped committee and you have done a large volume of work over the last year so well done on that score.

You have a good support structure with a combination of the local authority, other public agencies, local organizations, and clubs.

It is noted that you sought advice from a neighbouring Tidy Towns Group with a long and successful tenure in the competition.

You have an excellent communication set up making use of the local newsletter, local paper, a number of social media platforms, and of course the oldest reliable of all word of mouth.

Had a quick look at both Instagram and Facebook presence and both were up to date.

Well done on being selected hosts for the launch of the JP Foundation supported Going For Gold Competition a competition that has led to an increase of Limerick participants in the National Tidy Towns Competition.

Involvement with the local schools is very important for the revamped committee in the years ahead.

Youth Space is an excellent initiative under the auspices of the Limerick Youth Services and well done on bringing them on board.

Well done on your success in the Going For Gold Competition and that was your specific project for 2022/23

The town has been a long time entering the competition and as a new committee, you are wished well for the future.

An increase in marks has been awarded.

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

Thank you for the input in this category most of which is maintenance oriented and extremely important as it addressed important areas of the town that needed revitalization.

This adjudicator would be reasonably familiar with Askeaton from a past life and the work that has been on the slipway near Brewery Lane has made huge difference since he last visited that part of town.

Some Brewery Lane Cottages looked as if they were to be subject to compulsory acquisition under the Dereliction Act back in 2021.

What is the up to date position ?

The clearing of debris and general tidy up of the area leading to Franciscan Friary was welcome and well done to the volunteers who took on these tasks.

The Friary founded in 1389 by Gerald Fitzgerald 3rd Earl Of Desmond and Lord Justice of Ireland is one of the most important historical monastic settlements in the Island of Ireland.

The following are some observations made under this category heading and guidelines during an extensive walkabout that certainly outstripped the recommended 10k steps.

Twohigs Supervalu at the entrance to the town at the top of Church Street is a very well run and busy establishment with ample car parking.

Askeaton GAA Ground was well maintained and

St Marys Church of Ireland on Church of Ireland is another historical ecclesiastical building and is featured in the National Inventory of Architectural History and has a belfry of the Knights Templar Tower and of course is the burial place of poet Aubrey De Vere.

Askeaton Credit Union Building, Deel Pharmacy, Maireads Hair Affair and were all well-presented and looked as if they had been recently painted.

The Belfry Coffee Shop, which had a nice hanging baskets in front, is a very nice establishment.

That area of Church Street has been enhanced by an elongated section of new footpath.

Cagney's and Ranahan's Bars on East Square are long established hostelrys in the town and both were in very good condition with old style shop fronts.

Further up in Main Street Davidson's Pharmacy and the Post Office were also admired.

Ryans Inver Service Station and Centra Shop is another fine convenience stop over that serves the town on the Foynes Road/Clonreask exit.

Both St Marys RC Church and The National School across the road were well maintained buildings with adjacent grounds and play areas tidy.

Well done to the personnel that look after the upkeep of these public buildings.

Kingspan Askeaton, formerly, the Aeroboard factory one presumes ?, is a big premises that was tidy and well organised and adhering to good health and safety practice

Sad to see that Askeaton Swimming Pool seems to be permanently closed !

The Community Centre is a very multifaceted facility with a colourful mural that adds a bit of vibrancy to the area.

It has a large parking area that has designated units to ensure organised parking.

Parking options in the centre of town are good.

Finger post signs look as if they have been put in the wrong place.

Good to see the defibrillator in a central spot and dedicated to a former local Garda.

Road surfaces, street lighting and traffic calming measures were up to an accepted standard.

A few very fine historical information panels, including one to the history of the Hellfire Club, were noted during the walkabout.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Some excellent work under both new and ongoing maintenance headings has been undertaken under Green Spaces and Landscaping.

No point in walking you back through what you have submitted but some of the maintenance work in particular has been very painstaking.

Well done to all who contributed.

The adjudicator noted the change in the old famine wall and the immediate area near the exit for Rathkeale.

You have mentioned that you do not have a designated composting area that serves the town.

The adjudicator suggests that you make it a priority over the next year as the town has a number of communal green areas as well as homesteads that need to get rid of garden waste.

Bindweed is a common enough problem but one that is very hard to counteract as this adjudicator is well aware as it just seems to infiltrate through shrubs such as red robin.

This year has also seen an increase in the common briar which is also a nightmare to get rid of.

The areas you have mentioned were visited by the adjudicator and the entrances into the town have been enhanced by the excellent planting that you have put in place.

You are to be commended for taking action in relation to the wildflowers at the Mound.

This adjudicator has seen instances where wildflowers were planted near junctions on narrow roads and have got totally out of control and created a hazard for drivers.

The adjudicator admired some very lovely movable planting arrangements in the town centre and on the outskirts.

There were a few nice window boxes on the window sill of a house on Church Street and it was noted that a defibrillator was placed on the wall nearby.

The plastic tub in front of St Marys's Church of Ireland needs to be replaced with a more appropriate planter and filled with colourful begonias, bidens or petunias.

The boat feature near the defibrillator in the town centre could be replicated in other parts of the town.

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

The main objective of this category is to ensure that groups have knowledge of local wild life species and habitats, knowledge of locally designated areas (), and the preservation and maintenance of these

It is also imperative to be aware of the Law and Biodiversity before embarking on any mini project

The adjudicator feels that Askeaton Tidy Towns Group has embraced these concepts and principles fully.

Worthy work is being done in the area of wildlife preservation and promotion in and around the town.

It is worth pointing out that Askeaton has a myriad of habitats that would be the envy of other centres notably of course the River Deel and its banks and the ruins of both the Castle and the Franciscan Friary. The projects that you have listed are varied and practical and certainly fall within the spirit of the category. Brewery Lane has been dealt with in a previous category. Certain parts of the River Deel had some rubbish strewn on the banks and in the river itself. It's good to report that you have engaged with the County Council on the matter so let's hope for next year that a plan will be in place to clean the River and its banks and that the area will be a haven for wildlife. The rainwater gardens are a novel idea and they also contribute to the ethos of the next category. The funding from Local Authority Water Programme is money well spent and maybe more options could be supported by LAWPRO. Additional information on Bio-Diversity matters can be got by accessing www.biodiversityireland.ie where one can get updates on the All Ireland Pollinator Plan. The National Parks and Wildlife Service www.npws.ie is another source of exceptional information on biodiversity matters. Overall the standard was very good and deserving of an increase in marks.

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

This category has been developed in keeping with current EU and government policy. It summarizes how we try to minimize our use of all resources within the community so that we reduce our environmental impact. "Doing more with less" is just not a catchy slogan it is a necessity if we are serious about environmental impacts and how certain practices cannot continue at will. It is a broad category so you may be surprised at how many of your existing community initiatives are relevant. You have listed some measures that you are involved with that fall within the objectives of this category. Some are very particular to Askeaton and others have been replicated around the country. The rainwater planters are very much in keeping with the ethos of this category and we look forward to seeing more in the year ahead. Yes of course wood is a far more environmentally option than plastic so well done on getting a local tradesman to do these for you. The purchase of a flame weed killer is as you say an option that helps to do away with harmful herbicides. The Colour to Communities is a national campaign associated with Paint Reuse Network Ireland not to be confused with a similar-sounding named project under the auspices of Creative Ireland. You are wished well with your entry. To get more ideas that contribute to a more sustainable environment consider looking at the following websites for idea generation www.localprevention.ie, www.greenhomes.ie and www.sustainableprocessing.ie. Also, consult the revised Tidy Towns Handbook and the superb advice section on this category.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

The adjudicator traversed most of the inner part and the extremities of the town by foot and have to say that the standard litter control was acceptable. Very little litter was on the streets and the litter-picking schedules that you have put in place are having the desired effect. Well done on your involvement in the Limerick Clean Up Project and a very nice touch in that you dedicate your Sunday Morning Litter Pick to a deceased and devoted member of your past committees. Being selected for an "undergrounding" of overhead cables from West Square to East Square is a big coup on the part of the Committee as the funding for this Nationally is very limited. More attention to the promotion of Anti-Dog Fouling measures could be done for next year's competition. General tidiness was good and credit to all businesses and homeowners who keep properties and side areas tidy and free of weed and rubbish. One or two dissenters but these are found everywhere. The issue relating to dereliction has been fully dealt with in another section but it doesn't seem to be a major problem in Askeaton. The bring bank at the Supervalu Car-park was in an ideal location and was very presentable and free from any access rubbish. Good to note that you recognize the worth of CE Scheme workers in this category.

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

Last year the adjudicator mentioned that a list of the housing areas were supplied under this category this did not seem to be the case this year. Anyway the adjudicator was able to identify all and visited most during the walk about. The mentioned Church View Estate is very well-maintained estate where residents have pride of place in their homesteads with boundary walls painted. The stone bed at the entrance to the estate needs replenishment and the adjudicator notes that there are infrastructure works planned for the area. Lismakeera nearby was also well looked after. Deel Manor is a newish estate that has a few small green areas with fledgling trees that seem to be making good progress. A fairly detailed comment on this area was made in last year's report and this year's adjudicator would endorse the

sentiments expressed.

Plunkett Road is an old established scheme of houses that look very well with nice frontages and boundary walls painted.

The work on the Riverwalk will make a huge difference and will allow for safe passage for locals and visitors who want to avail of it.

The hanging basket and painted poles will add to its enhancement.

Well done on reseeding the green strip at Barrack Street and top marks to the local family living on this street who have offered to maintain it.

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

Thank you for your input in this category and it is clear that you have done some excellent work on the entrances in the Town.

As one enters Askeaton from all entrances you are met with appropriate and visible name plates and these create good first impressions of the town.

The double entrances off the N69 are extremely well-maintained and presentable.

The entrance from Rathkeale on the R518 was of a similar standard.

The road out to Creeves although narrow and the verges were a little overgrown in parts was also acceptable.

Well done on maintaining the N69 cycleway in a safe manner for cyclists.

Overall the standard was very good and worthy of an additional mark.

Concluding Remarks:

It was good to re-visit the historic town of Askeaton and to see the positive changes that have occurred in the interim

The committee has been re-vamped and is keen to maintain a high standard in the competition.

You are wished well for the future.